

NEWSLETTER

Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

Menai Bridge and District Civic Society

CYLCHLYTHYR

Ebrill/Spring 2023

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Dates for your meeting diary, any Internet links to be issued closer to the day. Meetings are mainly in the War Memorial Community Centre, Water Street, Menai Bridge and start at 7.00 p.m. May Meeting will be in Capel Mawr School Room.

Thursday 20th April 2023 Prof G. Ffowc Roberts. Bangor giants: Sir John Morris-Jones and Mr X. The talk has an intriguing title that may keep you guessing, but all will be revealed! (in the War Memorial Community Centre)

Thursday 11th May 2023 Prof Gareth Wyn Jones. Climate Change. This illustrated talk is in Welsh with translation facilities available. (in Capel Mawr School Room)

Saturday 24th June 2023 GARDEN PARTY AT PLAS CADNANT

Wednesday 26th July 2023 at 2.00 p.m. Visit to Anglesey Paper Co./Imbue Lighting, 21 High Street, Menai Bridge.

Thursday 14th September 2023 Annual General Meeting starting at 7.00 p.m. in the War Memorial Community Centre. Talk to be arranged.

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MENAI BRIDGE SUSPENDED, STILL.

What's happening to the Suspension Bridge? For all the latest information have a look at the Website <https://pontmenaibridge.co.uk/>

It is the official Menai Suspension Bridge information page developed by YGC for UK Highways A55 Ltd.

Listed below are the companies involved in delivering the programme of maintenance works for 2023.

UK Highways-A55 DBFO Ltd Company (DBFO stands for design, build, operate and finance company). For a thirty year period, since December 1998, UK Highways A55 Ltd is the DBFO (Design, Build, Finance and Operate) Company that have operated and maintained the Menai Suspension Bridge (in accordance with the DBFO contract).

Vercity Group. Vercity Group Award winning infrastructure and real estate project leadership.

Eco-scope Ecoscope Ltd. provide a full range of ecological, arboricultural, wildlife landscaping and environmental engineering services throughout the UK.

GCE Gwynedd Civil Engineering is incorporated into the Highway Works Services of the Highways, Engineering and YGC of Cyngor Gwynedd. This service has overall responsibility for all aspects of highway maintenance within the Authority and on the A55 DBFO Contract.

Sandberg. Sandberg is a privately owned organisation able to provide wholly independent professional and technical services to all concerned with the quality and performance of materials.

Mott Macdonald Our purpose is to improve society by considering social outcomes in all we do, relentlessly focusing on excellence and digital innovation, transforming our clients' businesses, our communities and employee opportunities.

The Spencer Group. We are Spencer Group, a UK leader in engineering with a vision for creating a greater future.

CowI Together with partners we create

innovative solutions that cut down carbon emissions and have a positive impact on societies around the globe.

Who is doing what? Who owns what?

Apparently the Spencer Group and COWI have been "selected to revitalise a historic crossing ahead of the structure's 200th anniversary year." "Revitalise" doesn't really capture the urgency felt when the engineers said the Bridge risked becoming 'unzipped'!. With the temporary work completed there still needs to be regular inspections of the repairs while the permanent hanger replacement are prepared. There could be further tests needed and further work is scheduled towards the end of the summer.

The issue with the hangers is inherent in the design of the Bridge's suspension system and completely unrelated to the ongoing maintenance of the bridge apparently.

What about UK Highways -A55 etc? They had the contract to maintain the Bridge and the A55. Let's remember that the contract was awarded under a PFI Initiative i.e. Private Finance Initiative similar to the financing of hospitals years ago. UK Highways etc., the private company was later controlled by Equitix Fund VLP and this is now a part of the Tetragon Financial Group, 'diversified alternative investors' based in Guernsey.

I hope that's now clear and you are reassured at the expertise available and that work will be completed promptly, or perhaps you're not?



Bridge supports April 2023

50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOCIETY

– continued. Our last Newsletter encouraged members to come along to a Public Meeting; this you did splendidly. Thank you. I don't think we achieved all we hoped for at the meeting i.e. a review of the Conservation Appraisal Plan but we certainly tapped into the concern about second homes, holiday lets and really the need for greater public consultation. We'll try to meet your expressed concerns, indeed by further consultation. See the report below and also the 'Notes' of the meeting are enclosed/attached or can be found on our Website. Notes/Minutes are an essential way to measure what we achieve or don't and to hold ourselves to account. Our records are on our Website (currently being updated) or available on request. Last month a

small group of Committee members went to the Archives Section of the Council in Llangefni to help reference, in more detail, the many photos and records about Menai Bridge. **We were delighted to come across the very first Newsletter of the Society.** Then the issues raised were the history of Menai Bridge, painting the High Street, Suspension Bridge celebrations, a Town map, litter in the Streets and a request for "Street Wardens— do you CARE ABOUT Menai Bridge? Then join the Civic Society, become a street warden and look after a street. Trees being cut down, buildings vandalised, roads not made up: these and many other situations can be reported to the appropriate authority through the Civic Society. A group can do more than an individual." True then and true now.

Liz Moyle

RECENT PROGRAMME NOTES

Thursday 12th January 2023 Migldi Magldi Môn -

A short history of Welsh Clog Dancing and demonstration. Great fun and extra clogs allowed members to join in too. "Welsh clog dancing is unique and is not a revival, as it is danced in the style of the unbroken tradition." Welsh clog dancing (Welsh



Migldi Magldi Môn

stepdance/ Dawns stepio or Cloccio) is stylistically distinct from English clog dancing with new steps and "tricks" constantly being invented. Welsh clog dancing, especially solo dancing has evolved to become much more dynamic than English clog dancing. Not to be confused with Welsh Folk dance (Dawnsio Gwerin)

Thursday 9th February 2023 An Open Public Meeting entitled, 'Our Conservation Area— is it fit for purpose?'

This meeting was in the Capel Mawr School Room. For this, as well as letting members know about the meeting by e-mail, we also reverted to the old style of putting 'flyers' through letter boxes.

First time we've had a Public Meeting for about 10 years. The school room was full—about eighty people present. We were surprised that the main concerns expressed were still about 'second homes' and holiday lets. We did not get on to discussing the Conservation Area in any detail, apart from the old Moreia Chapel Site in the Town Centre. The owner of the site, R.L Davies Ltd has since gone into Administration. Will this cause more delay or the reverse?

Other people/organisations owning property nearby and previously involved with development plans are the Town Council, the County Council and now the owner of Glyn Derw (redbrick house opposite the Library). The Town owns its old offices, adjacent to the Library which is owned by the County. The car parks are owned both by the Town and County. Notes of the Meeting are attached or available from our Website and we will follow up issues raised.

We have already met with the Chief Planning Officer and Mr John Ifan Williams, MRTPI has attended a Committee Meeting to let us know about the Council's Bio Diversity Plans and will answer further queries.



Anthony Tavernor's vote of thanks

We are grateful to Gareth Huws (Meeting Chair), Cllr. Robin Williams and Avril Wayte for their contributions. If you have concerns relating to the Conservation Area or Planning do let us know in writing and we will raise relevant matters. i.e. if you have difficulties with a personal planning matter your first call for help should of course be to your Town and County elected repre-



Jane Cherrett, Liz Moyle provide information

Thursday 9th March

2023 Mr Gareth Roberts — Mapping Local History.

Well the weather beat us here!

Plunging temperatures and forecast snow meant caution won. With apologies for the short notice, we postponed the meeting and look forward to hearing Mr Roberts in the Autumn. Thanks to those who came to see if any brave souls made it to the non-meeting. Parts of Menai Bridge had a power cut too.

FUTURE EVENTS

Welcome to the Winter and Spring Programme of the Civic Society. Meetings will mostly be held in the War Memorial Community Centre, Water Street, Menai Bridge to start at 7.00 p.m. on a THURSDAY. Coffee and biscuits will be available from 6.30 p.m.

Please note that the meetings in February and May will take place in the Capel Mawr Sunday School Building, Chapel Street, Menai Bridge. The room available there is quieter, larger and has a public address system installed.

Reminders will be sent out by email the week before a meeting. If you don't have email you may telephone Jane Cherrett on 07812186119 or Liz Moyle on 01248 460163 for the latest information. £2 fee for non members

Thursday 20th April 2023 Prof G. Ffowc Roberts. Bangor Giants: Sir John Morris-Jones and Mr X. The talk has an intriguing title that may keep you guessing, but all will be revealed!

Thursday 11th May 2023 Prof. Emeritus Gareth Wyn Jones. Climate Change. This illustrated talk is in Welsh with full translation facilities available.

This meeting is in the Capel Mawr School Room, Menai Bridge. A lecture in memory of Dr W. Eifion Jones. (See page 4)

Saturday 24th June GARDEN PARTY AT PLAS CADNANT from 2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. Town Band, Migldi Magldi Mon, Choir, various stalls. Entry £7.50 if tickets bought beforehand; £9.00 on the day. Unused tickets bought for 2022 will be honoured.

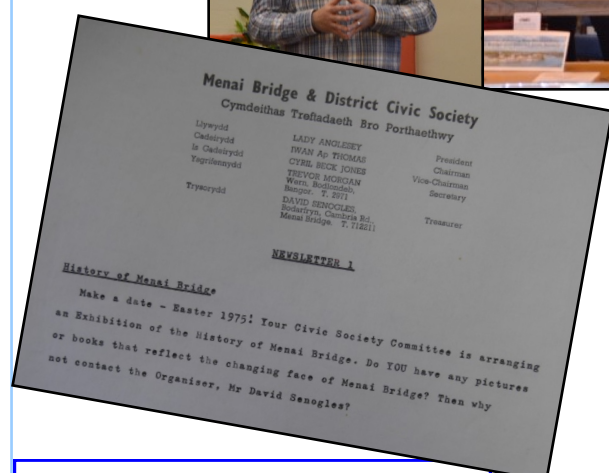
Wednesday 26th July 2023 at 2.00 p.m. Visit to Anglesey Paper Co./Imbue Lighting, 21 High Street, Menai Bridge. Learn about how the special paper, lights, bases are made with tea and cake too. Places limited to 20.

Thursday 14th September 2023 Annual General Meeting starting at 7.00 p.m. in the War Memorial Community Centre. Followed by a lecture to be arranged.

Jane Cherrett



Gareth Huws,
Robin Williams,
Avril Wayte
contributing to
the discussion



Newsletter Photos: N. Kneale, L. Moyle

Our lecture in May recalls the contribution to the Town and its community by Dr. W Eifion Jones (see overleaf). In later Newsletters we will also highlight the work of other Society stalwarts. We are all familiar with the name of Lady Anglesey but how about Iwan ap Thomas, Cyril Beck Jones, Trevor Morgan and David Senogles? Photos and more information would be welcome to complete our own history.

National Library of Wales: Peace petition from 1923 comes home.

Continuing the theme of the value of Archives you may have seen a report in the press/media very recently about the 1923 Peace Petition. What Peace Petition you may ask?

"A Welsh petition for world peace sat forgotten in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington D.C.) for nearly 100 years. This week, it finally returned to Wales (the National Library) for its signatures to be digitized and its history remembered.

"Dreams of world peace are as old as wars. But as the women of Wales were recovering from the First World War, they demanded peace in droves. One hundred years ago, 1923, a group of Welsh women drafted a petition for peace, and they got three-quarters of all the women in Wales to sign on. Then they packed up the document into a big oak chest and sent it across the Atlantic so that women in America could join the movement, too. Well, now it has made the journey back home to Wales. Professor and poet Mererid Hopwood is overseeing the effort to start digitizing the signatures and find out just who all these women were."

A full report and some of the records are shown in the website of the Welsh Centre for International Affairs; it took over from the Welsh League of Nations Union. From these records we can see that the main organiser for Menai Bridge Urban District, as it was then, was Miss Davies, J.P. of Tyncaeau. Annie Mary Davies was the daughter of Richard Davies of Treborth. She helped with the Red Cross Hospital at Bodlondeb, her brother Arthur died at Gallipoli; she was very active in helping establish the War Memorial Community Centre and all sorts of good works e.g. the TB Hospital at Penhesgyn. So yes, we know who 'Miss Davies' is; does anybody else have more information?

COMMITTEE

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Hon. Vice Presidents:

Medwyn and Gwenda

Williams

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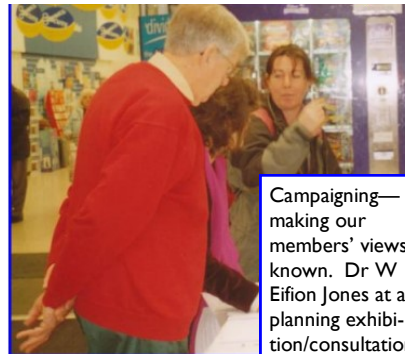
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society.org.uk

DR.W EIFION JONES

(1925 –2004) was a marine botanist, noted for his study of marine algae. The more formal details below are given below. What they don't mention though was his enthusiasm for natural history and conservation; his sense of



Campaigning—making our members' views known. Dr W Eifion Jones at a planning exhibition/consultation in Llangefni.

fun and the wide range of his interests - from his local community and Church to opera and making some of the best 'punches' for New Year's Day parties.

I think he would almost be embarrassed that we are to hold a lecture in his memory; delighted though at the topic and the presenter.

After service with the REME, in India, with the rank of Captain he returned to Aberystwyth and gained a First Class Honours Degree in Botany from the University.

He moved to Bangor in 1953 to join the newly founded Marine Biology Station as a lecturer with Denis Crisp, and completed his PhD in 1957. Here in Menai Bridge he met and married Marian, and they raised their two children, Rhiannon and Aled.

He retired early in 1986, but went on to lecture in Kuwait, returning to do part-time lecturing at the University of Wales, Bangor. He died in 2004.

He wrote *A key to the Genera of the British Seaweeds* (1962). It was most valuable as an update to Newton's Handbook of 1931 had become out-of-date and this was required to identify the genera of algae to be found on the shores of the British Isles. He joined the British Phycological Society in 1955 and served as a Member of Council and in other roles. He edited and wrote a chapter for the 'Natural History of Anglesey' published in 1968 and later the 'New Natural History of Anglesey' published in 1990 by the Anglesey Antiquarian Society. He was President of the North Wales Wildlife Trust and Bardsey Bird and Field Observatory and for a short while Chair Elect of our own Civic Society.

YNYS FAELOG FOOTPATH

The properties on Ynys Faelog, close to the Pier, have been renovated and are now holiday accommodation for up to 22 people. The entrance is via a tidal causeway and also a raised footpath which gives access to other property, mooring sites and the foreshore. This path has been used freely by generations of Menai Bridge people. Attempts to limit entry and perhaps claim ownership, by 'adverse consent' have not been well received locally. The gate below has been removed, rebuilt, removed, rebuilt, etc. over the past months. We have brought this to the attention of the County Council and will keep you informed of progress.



History of the Post Office in Menai Bridge.

Many thanks to John Cowell — this booklet is in preparation for the Civic Society. A unique record not only of the Post Office but of the development of the Town.

ADNEWYDDU AELODAETH / MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

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Rhif Ffôn/ Tel.

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Dyddiad/Date