

NEWSLETTER

Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

Menai Bridge and District Civic Society

CYLCHLYTHYR

Hydref/Autumn 2023

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Dates for your meeting diary, any Internet links to be issued closer to the day. Meetings are in the War Memorial Community Centre, Water Street, Menai Bridge and start at 7.00 p.m. and 2.00 in January 2024

Thursday 14th September 2023 7.00 p.m. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING followed by a talk by guest speaker Mr Gareth Roberts — **Mapping Local History.**

Thursday 12th October 2023 7.00 p.m. an illustrated talk on **Early geologists of Anglesey** by Robert Crossley

Thursday 9th November 2023 7.00 p.m. an illustrated talk by Stewart Hayter on **Hidden Anglesey**

Thursday 14th December 2023 7.00 p.m. Christmas Cheer with our own Civic Society History - a PowerPoint presentation, mince pies, bara brith

Thursday 11th January 2024 at 2.00 p.m. A life in medicine and sport. Dewi 'Dai' Roberts

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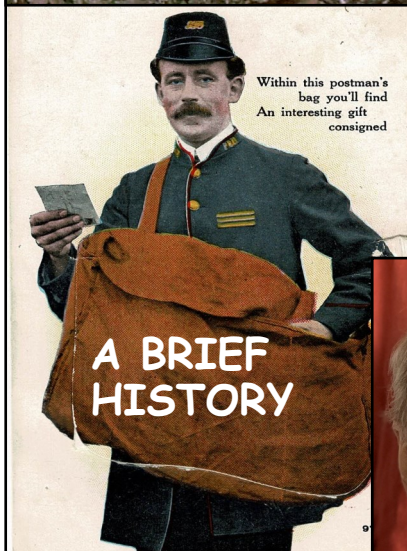
SWYDDFA BOST PORTHAETHWY - HANES BYR



Blwch llythrau wal Fictoraidd o'r 1890au, ar y pryd wrth y fynedfa i Stryd Cambria er hwylustod y rhai oedd yn byw ger y dŵr. Ymddangosodd blychau wal gyntaf yn 1857, ac roedd ganddynt yr arwydd VR a phlât casglu. Roedd hwn yn cael ei ddefnyddio'n rheolaidd cyn daeth un safonol QEII ar stand metel, y math a ddefnyddir pan nad oes cymaint â hynny o lythrau'n cael eu postio. Ers hynny gwerthodd y Swyddfa Bost nifer o flychau llythrau Fictoraidd i gasglwyr preifat neu mae rhai i'w gweld mewn amgueddfeydd.

MENAI BRIDGE POST OFFICE—

'A Victorian roadside wall letter box of the 1890s, then located at the entrance to Cambria Road for the convenience of those living near the waterfront. Wall boxes first appeared in 1857, bearing a VR cipher and a collection plate. This one was in regular use before being replaced by a standard QEII box mounted on a metal stand, the type used where the volume of mail posted is relatively small. Many Victorian letter boxes have since been sold by the Post Office to private collectors or preserved in museums.'



Our new publication to help us celebrate our 50th Anniversary, is by noted local historian, John Cowell, (photo right). We are grateful for his support. It is now available, appropriately, from

the Post Office in Menai Bridge. The booklet, quoted above, traces the development of the town itself as well as the postal service; the two are so closely linked. The changes we've seen in our lifetime are a salutary reminder that **nothing stays the same!** (Continued on page 2). Details of the Garden Party 50th Anniversary fund raiser and celebration are given in pages 5& 6.



Newsletter Photos:
G. Clarke, P. Davies,
N. Kneale, L. Moyle.

NOTHING STAYS THE SAME.

Where will we be in another 50 years?

Well it's something most of us won't see, but we do care about, especially for the families who come after us and inherit the results of our actions. Social **housing** in this country dates back as far as the late 19th century. The 1919 **Housing** and Town Planning Act that Lloyd George's 'Home fit for Heros' **government** embarked on (the **first** comprehensive plan to build social housing) and the Labour Government's National Health Service through Aneurin Bevan's work tackled inequalities in access to medical care. In 1919 houses were built in Rhyd Menai and in 1930 at Bro Hyfryd and New Street. Menai Bridge's slum clearance plan from 1933 was put on hold during WW2

but in "1945 the Urban district council requested the Government grant them favoured treatment as a development area, because Anglesey had been one of the most distressed areas in Britain between the Wars"* Clearance orders were made for Well Street, Wood Street, Dale Street and Dew Street. By 1937 houses in Mount Street were completed and plans were made for development in Tyddyn Tô. In 1963 Maes-y-coed was bought and completed by 1970.

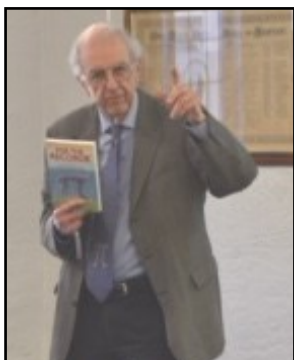
The Town's population grew by 50% after WW2 increasing to over 2700 "all housed in reasonable comfort under modern conditions"* What has happened since? (continued page 4)

* *Menai Bridge and its Council* by H. Anthony - one time Deputy Head and Senior History Master, David Hughes School

RECENT PROGRAMME NOTES

Thursday 20th April

2023 **Prof G. Ffowc Roberts. Bangor Giants: Sir John Morris-Jones and Mr X.** - revealed to be **Prof G H Bryan of Bangor** University, little known today, but his theory of 'Stability in Aviation', published in 1911 is still relevant. A contemporary of Sir John Morris-Jones also a mathematician but who devoted his energies to Welsh grammar and literature. Knighted in 1918 and the first Professor of Welsh at Bangor. Fascinating how their careers developed.



Prof Bryan's plane, the "Bamboo Bird" at Red Wharf Bay. Photo from Wikimedia Commons. Probably taken about 1911 Prof Bryan was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1895.

Thursday 11th May 2023 **Prof. Emeritus Gareth Wyn Jones. Climate Change.** This presentation was given in Welsh, with full translation facilities, in memory of Dr. W. E. Jones, in the Capel Mawr School Room. Cyflwyniad gan yr Athro Gareth Wyn Jones am y sefyllfa sydd ohoni yn fyd-eang o ran newid hinsawdd, a rhai syniadau am sut i ymateb i'r sialens hon.

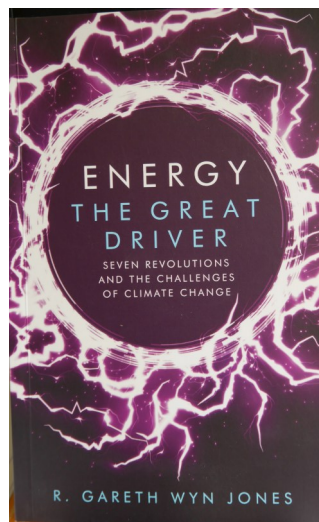
Newid Hinsawdd. Y GWIR YN ERBYN Y BYD: Sut mae'r hinsawdd? Dechrau doethineb yw adnabod dy hun!

Prof G W Jones reviewed the world wide situation regarding Climate Change and looked at some of the ideas of how to meet the challenge. Climate Change—the truth

versus the world'. First start by knowing yourself.

A thought provoking and very timely presentation, especially in view of the more recent storms, fires and floods.

AND aren't we lucky to have two such renowned but 'down to earth' academics who are willing to come and share their knowledge and enthusiasm with us!



Friday, 2nd July 2023 to St Julitta's Church, Capel Curig. An extra visit. Minibus courtesy of Seiriol Alli-



ance (Community Centre, Beaumaris) and guided visit, just for the Society, thanks to the Friends of the Church. The former parish church, now not consecrated, is located near Plas y Brenin Outward Bound Centre. This Grade2* listed church was built probably in the fifteenth century. It has been much restored and is maintained by volunteers. Sad to see the memorials in the grounds commemorating those from far and near who died in climbing accidents. See the Friends of St Julittas website for details of when it will be open next. www.stjulittas.org/ Well worth a visit

FUTURE EVENTS

Welcome to the Winter and Spring Programme of the Civic Society. Civic Soc. Lectures starting September 2023 On the second Thursday of the month in the War Memorial Community Centre, Water Street, Menai Bridge. Refreshments from **6.30pm lectures start at 7pm during September to December and from 2.00 p.m during January to March.** This change to the afternoon in the winter is a trial—tell us what you think please? All welcome. Non members £2. Membership £10/year **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.

Thursday 14th September 2023 7.00 p.m. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING followed by a talk by guest speaker Mr Gareth Roberts — **Mapping Local History.**

Programme notes continued.

St. Julitta's continued. On the way back we called at Zip World (Penrhyn Quarry) in Bethesda; just for refreshments I might add. Some brave soul, not from our party, got stuck part way down the 'zip' and had to be lowered to safety; which added unexpectedly to our afternoon entertainment and undoubtedly theirs.

50th GARDEN PARTY 24th JUNE 2023

How do you get a 12 tonne fire engine through a 'small' gateway — fold in the wing mirrors, then slowly and carefully drive, with just inches to spare! Reversing through the gates to get down the central path was even harder and they did it twice! The Fire Brigade was called out to an emergency during the afternoon.

The Fire Engine on the right may have been easier? This is the Merryweather fire engine from Menai Bridge (being transported on a trailer following restoration by the

Mapping Local History -This is the talk postponed from our March Meeting because of bad weather.

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Thursday 9th November 2023 7.00 p.m. an illustrated talk by Stewart Hayter on **Hidden Anglesey**

Thursday 14th December 2023 7.00 p.m.
Christmas Cheer with our own Civic Society History
- a PowerPoint presentation, mince pies, bara brith

Thursday 11th January 2024 at TWO p.m Dr. Dai Roberts

[Jane Cherrett](#)



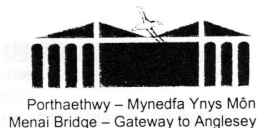
shop (now the Chinese takeaway?) at the bottom of Bridge Street., more or less opposite the old Post Office. For more about the old engine see the Memories section (Vol 2) on our Website and read some of the stories 'Rol Bach' has to tell.



apprentices at Wylfa Nuclear Power Station; now in storage and **looking for a new home where people can see it.** The pumps for the fire hoses were steam powered and the vehicle itself was drawn by horses. We're lucky that the proposed cuts to services don't affect the fire station in Menai but what about the people in Beaumaris? For a fire 'call out' in the 1900s first find your horses! Horses were stabled and for hire generally from Chisholms, a baker's



Some of the firemen from Menai Bridge who helped to tackle the fire on the Britannia Bridge in 1970. Recognize anyone?

**COMMITTEE**

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Town Council :

Canolfan Coed Cynol,
Menai Bridge

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Society Cymdeithas Ddinesig
Bro Porthaethwy

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A 'small charity', HMRC Charities
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www.menaibridgescivicsociety.org.uk

NOTHING STAYS THE SAME.**Where will we be in another 50 years?**

(continued from page 1)

I don't know whether people at the time agreed with Mr Anthony's statement that "all (were) housed in reasonable comfort under modern conditions", but I would hazard a guess that there would be much disagreement with that statement today! The problem isn't so much the quality of the housing, as access to **any** housing at a reasonable cost for local people. We have been swept up by increased demands for holiday homes, second homes, student and homes and Houses are being squeezed into tiny spaces, long neglected sites pounced on and houses split into multiple apartments.

Much of this is reflected in the many and various Planning Applications being submitted seemingly contrary to our Conservation Area status. We are seeing increased demands that the infrastructure of a small Victorian Town was never designed to meet. County wide planning is detailed in the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan for 2011 - 2026. the Written Statement, dated 31 July 2017 and accompanying policies can be seen at <https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Environment-and-planning/Planning-policy/Anglesey-and-Gwynedd-Joint-Local-Development-Plan-Written-Statement.pdf>

I hope that the long name/link doesn't put you off— it really is worth looking at and is due for review shortly. Your comments on the effectiveness of existing policies will count and indeed should be counted. If you take just one type of housing policy—Houses of Multiple Occupancy - a Freedom of Information Request (not ours) in 2022 showed that there were 63 HMOs on Anglesey; of these 25 are in Menai Bridge, 20 in Holyhead and the rest spread throughout the Island. The suggested number allowed in each Ward e.g. Aethwy is 10% of the housing stock, so we have room for more apparently? That doesn't include the houses taken up by second homes and holiday lets, shared or dedicated student accommodation. A recent search for holiday lets revealed 66 houses with 420 'beds' available within a couple of miles of Menai Bridge. Holiday lets are profitable— one terraced house in the 'old town' shows letting income of over £40k per year. HMOs too are a valuable resource for needy people and for student accommodation but are other essential resources added at the same time? Another recent proposed plan for Town Centres regeneration revealed that Menai Bridge has a

'Resident Population of 3,376 and a low deprivation index (WIMD) but has poverty pockets'. Of the town centre Commercial Premises 91 are occupied, and 8 are vacant (8%), with 2 eyesores'. Compared with Holyhead and Llangefni, Menai Bridge is a more prosperous town. Are resources sent elsewhere on the Island? This situation isn't new, but what isn't mentioned is that one of the eyesores covers half the town centre (Moreia chapel site), and if you earn a regular ordinary salary you can't afford to buy a house or rent one here. Phoning round Estate Agents we found virtually nil for long term rental but one discovered for rent (not yet vacant) was £1000 for two bedrooms + bills, after that the nearest was in Amlwch. Present house owners are more likely to be older and if they decide to downsize and perhaps move into the proposed supported living flats to be built in Tyddyn Mostyn, will they sell their property to the highest bidder or a local person for less? Would you? Who has tackled this? Have a look at the Ymddiriedolaeth Clough Williams-Ellis Foundation. www.cloughwilliamsellis.org/Foundation Amongst their aims is to "Provide good quality rural housing to help maintain a vibrant community able to retain people in the area and sustain its language and culture." What do you think? Is Government action enough, does it work for us?

ADNEWYDDU AELODAETH /
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Teitl/Title Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms.....

Enw/Name.....

Rhif Ffôn/ Tel.
Cyfeiriad/Address

.....Post Code.....

Your E-mail address

Please contact me by post ☐ or by e-mail ☐

Llofnod/

Signature.....

Dyddiad/Date

Aelodaeth /Membership £10 (Individual), £10 (Business), Llenwch y bylchau ac anfonwch i/ Please complete and return to: Miss L. Moyle, Bron Graig, Hill Street, Menai Bridge, LL59 5AD Cheques payable to Menai Bridge and District Civic Society or use the payment options in our Website at menaibridgescivicsociety.org.uk

Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy
Menai Bridge and District Civic Society
GARDEN PARTY GARDWEST
Saturday, 24 June 2023 Dydd Sadwrn, 24 Mehefin



Many thanks to these local businesses who have supported our Society by donating gifts for the Garden Party Raffle
Diolch yn Fawr
Sage Kitchen, Menai Bridge;
Theodore's of Menai Bridge;
Plus39 of Menai Bridge,
Hawthorn Yard of Menai Bridge,
Geraldine Hedderick, Textile Artist,
Medwyns of Anglesey and **Evans Bros of Menai Bridge**



Many thanks to these local organisations who have supported our Society at the Garden Party
Diolch yn Fawr

The Hidden Gardens itself, Menai Bridge Band with Frøyland Skulekorps Band from Kvernalandd, Threnody Choir, Migldi Magldi Môn, Wildlife Artwork and Sketches by Jane Bunce, Canolfan Beaumaris, Gwynedd Woodturners, Gwynedd Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers, Medwyns of Anglesey, Red Squirrel Trust Wiwer Goch, Sarah's Gardens, Llangoed, Gorsaf Dân Porthaethwy Menai Bridge Fire Station, Cardiau Jane Hanford Cards.



Many thanks to all the volunteers for their support at the Garden Party and throughout the year.
Diolch yn Fawr