

# NEWSLETTER

## Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

## Menai Bridge and District Civic Society

# CYLC HLYTHYR

Ionawr/Winter 2024

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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 for January, February and March will be in the afternoon starting at 2.30 p.m. April and May meeting begin at 7.00 p.m.

Thursday, 11th January 2024, 2.30 p.m. RSPB and RSPB Conwy Illustrated talk by Helen Jowett

Thursday 8th February 2024 2.30 p.m. Illustrated talk by Nigel Beidas about the Sheepfolds of the Carneddau.

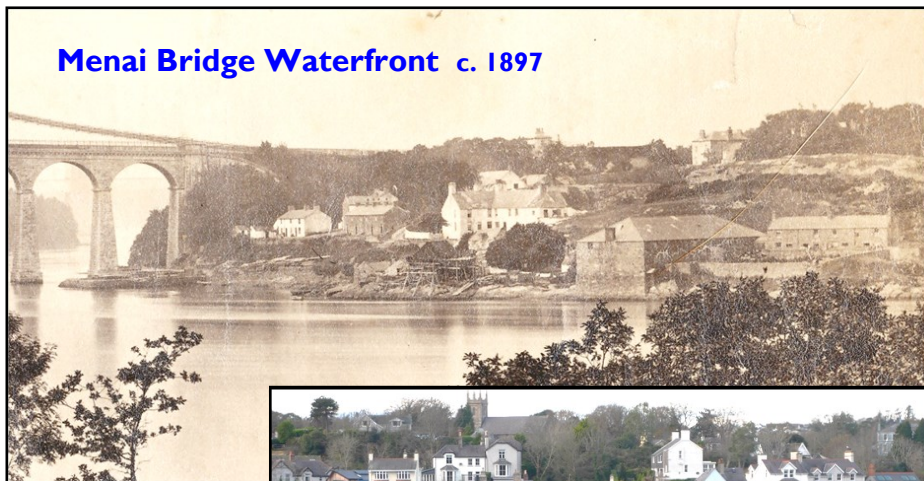
Thursday 14th March 2024 at 2.30 p.m. History of Penrhyn Castle. Illustrated talk by Tecwyn Vaughan Jones

Thursday 11th April 2024 at 7.00 p.m. details to be confirmed

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### Menai Bridge Waterfront c. 1897



The B & W photo above shows The 'West End', still undeveloped. The Cambria Inn, known previously as the Three Tuns Inn, Porthaethwy Ferry House (until 1839),

The Packet Inn and now the Cambria dominates the scene (large white building in the Centre). The Porthaethwy Ferry is first referred to in 1193. The Foundry, where the support cables for the Suspension Bridge were made, is the large grey building to the right of the picture.

The Cambria is now a private house and the Foundry has been made into flats (originally threatened with demolition).

Thanks to Maureen Parry Williams for conserving the old photo.



Waterfront 2024

The photos above are part of the Society's Photo Archive and were used in the talk before Christmas. Taken from round about Bodlondeb on the mainland they show the view the Davies Family would have of their shipping and warehouse businesses. Photos of the Town and the area are always welcome. We hope to hold an exhibition of photos next year and are particularly interested in identifying the people in the photos we have. Photos of Menai Bridge in the 1940s-60s would be really welcome.



**WRAP A LAMPOST!** An early morning visit to Ynys Fae-log to put up notices so we can register the footpath as a Public Footpath and ensure continued access. Beautiful area that the people of Menai Bridge have used and enjoyed for generations – let's keep it that way! Bonus to see an Egret and Oystercatchers too. Many thanks to all who contributed evidence statements. There's still time for you send in information as the County Council, while having accepted the 'valid' registration now has to process it.



**BARDS** **Richard Llwyd**, also known as **The Bard of Snowdon** (1752 – 29 December 1835), was a Welsh author, poet and expert on Welsh heraldry and genealogy. His most notable work is *Beaumaris Bay*, was published in 1800 and revised in 1832. A wonderfully exuberant work in the florid style of its time it described not only Beaumaris Bay but parts of Gwynedd as well. His comments on the Suspension Bridge are prescient “.... And the wish of ages, and of nations, is accomplished and the wonder a few years hence will be, not that it is done\*, but that it was so long undone; for the wealth and industry of a country is no way more rationally employed than in the promotion of and .... the consequent interchange of its produce.....”

Richard was born at the King's Head in Beaumaris, went

to Beaumaris Free School (later Beaumaris Grammar School) and made an honorary member of the Cymmrodorian Society. His name was recognised, I believe, as one of the named 'houses' in the old Beaumaris Grammar School.

**Cynan**, a founder of the Civic Trust for Wales, who lived by the pier in Menai Bridge for many years, wrote of the nature of 'power' in his poem on the opening of the Gas Grid at Menai Bridge/Llanfair PG in 1957. The marble stone inscribed with his poetry has now nearly all been eroded away. A disgrace to his memory and work. We cannot afford to lose the work of such greats and their insight is still just as relevant today. (See Cynan's poem on page 3).

**Liz Moyle**

## RECENT PROGRAMME NOTES

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

Gareth's family is from Menai Bridge and some remembered his Grandfather who looked after the Bowling Green Gardens for many years. A lively look at our history.



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

Geology so you can understand it! Robert/Rob is a professional geologist with the gift of explaining and illustrating the complex and unique geology of where we live. Did you know that the Menai Strait is not caused by a 'fault' but by melt water erosion from the last ice age.



**9th November 2023 Hidden Anglesey**—illustrated talk by Stewart Hayter. Stunning photos and detailed research from Stewart, an ex RAF pilot—including aerial views from the Solstice at Bryn Celli Du to Red Wharf Railway Station and the remnants of Baron Hill on the Bulkeley Estate.



**14th December 2023 Hidden and Forgotten Menai Bridge.** **Liz Moyle and Norman Kneale** An informal evening viewing some of the Society's Photo Archive.

Especially thanks to Norman Kneale for his photos of the results of the fire on the Britannia Bridge and indeed for recording the major events in the town over the past 50 years. The evening ended with a showing of a video of the Horse Fair and Ffair Borth in the 1950s— with kind permission of the Sound and Screen Archive, The National Library, Aberystwyth. Who spotted Hefin Wyn Jones, former Headmaster of the Menai Bridge Primary School? Continued on page 3.



## FUTURE EVENTS

Lectures are held in the Lounge of the War Memorial Community Centre, Water Street, Menai Bridge on the second Thursday of the month.  
**NOTE** January, February and March Meetings start at 2.30 p.m., April and May meetings will start at 7.00 p.m.

The Society reserves the right to make reasonably necessary alterations to arrangements, if for example the Speaker is ill or the Centre is not available. Where possible we will notify members by e-mail and offer an alternative venue and speaker. If you don't already receive our 'Latest News' e-mails, and would like to, please let the Secretary know (see page 4 for details).

Coffee/tea and biscuits will be available from 2.00 p.m. and for April and May from 6.30 p.m.

Thursday, 11th January 2024, 2.30 p.m. **RSPB**, and **RPSB Conwy**, illustrated talk by Helen Jowett

Thursday 8th February 2024 2.30 p.m. Illustrated talk by Nigel Beidas about the **Sheepfolds of the Carneddau** (using drone photography)

14th March 2023 at 2.30 p.m. **The History of Penrhyn Castle**, illustrated talk by Tecwyn Vaughan Jones

11th April 2023 at 7.30 p.m. **Details to be confirmed**

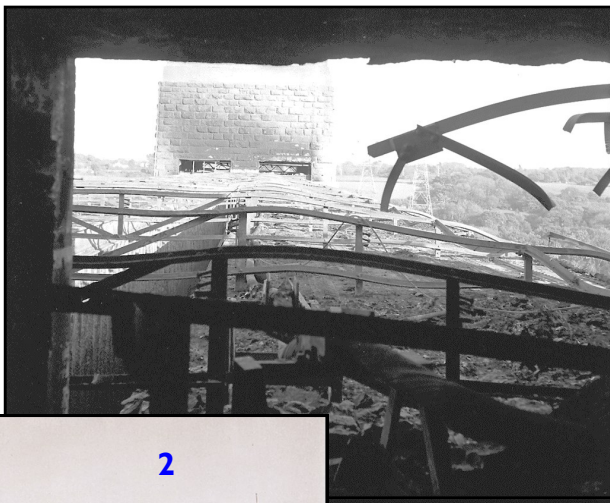
**M. Pryke-Davies**

O ddyfod yma'n ddifai - drwy Fôn dir  
 Afon dân, gudd siwrnai  
 Rhod maen uwch ffrydiau Menai:  
 Afon Ei Drefn ni fyn drai

gan CYNAN by

"Here flows a harnessed stream of hidden power,  
 From primal woods enriching Môn's dower,  
 By Menai's beauty think, who read this stone,  
 The source of hidden power is God alone".

14th December 2023 (continued)



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1. Aftermath of the fire
2. Inspecting work
3. New arches near completion
4. Norman Kneale at Plas Cadnant

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING April 2022—April 2023, notes of the meeting held on the 14th September 2023 in the War Memorial Community Centre.** The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and referred to the Annual Report already issued to members together with our Accounts. (now available on our Website) The Society's 50th Anniversary year has been a busy and successful period with many challenges not least being the plethora of Planning Applications in the 'old town' and the continuing disgrace of the derelict/overgrown Moreia Chapel Site in the centre of the town.

Meetings were well attended and varied from a delightful visit to Llandegfan Parish Hall and Church to Prof Gareth Ffowc Roberts' insight into the brilliant mathematician Prof George Hartley Bryan and the linguist (former mathematician Sir John Morris Jones. The Garden Party of Sept. 2022 was cancelled, due to the death of the Monarch, with a Coffee Morning raising funds for the Anglesey Food Bank being held in December. \*also see December Meeting notes. The Officers of the Committee were re-elected with some other members retiring or moving from the area and yet others playing a more active role. (Up to date list of the Committee is always included on

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Page 4 of the Newsletter. The business of the Meeting was followed by an illustrated talk from Gareth Roberts of Menter Fachwen about Mapping Local History (see page2)

**Newsletter Photos: N. Kneale, L. Moyle, and donors to the Society Archive.**

## COMMITTEE

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

**Liz Moyle\***

Cadeirydd/Chair  
Golygydd Cylchlythyr/  
Newsletter Editor

**Bridget Geoghegan\***

Ysgrifennydd/Secretary

**Maralyn Pryke-Davies\***

Ysgrifennydd Cymdeithasol/  
Social Secretary

**Gill Clarke\***

Trysorydd/Treasurer

**Jane Cherrett \***

**Marian Hirst\***

**Selwyn Williams\***

**Alison Wood\***

**Kevin Wood\***

**Norman Kneale**

Photos/Ffotograffau

**Rosemary Daimond**

**John Hughes**

**Maureen Parry-Williams**

**Hon. Vice Presidents:**

**Medwyn and Gwenda  
Williams**

\*Directors of the Limited  
Company

## CONTACT LIST

**Newsletter contributions -**

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**Bridget Geoghegan**

**Booking activities for events**

**and outings -**

**Maralyn Pryke-Davies**

**Tel. 01407 720418**

**County Councillors :**

**Dyfed W. Jones, Robin**

**Williams, Sonia Williams**

**Town Council :**

**Canolfan Coed Cynol,**

**Menai Bridge**

**For all correspondence please**

**contact the Secretary,**

**Bridget Geoghegan,**

**c/o Menai Bridge and District**

**Civic Society, Bron Graig, Hill**

**Street, Menai Bridge, LL59 5AD**

**See our Website at  
www.menaibridge  
civicsociety.org.uk**

## WHERE WAS IT?



In the publicity for our last meeting we issued the photo above, dated 1897, to see if anyone could recognise where it was. One or two made a good guess - it's the road to Beaumaris just before you get to Plas Rhianfa. The old photo from the Davies' Album shows the footbridge from one side of the road to the other, linking the grounds of Craig y Don. The road was widened in 1924 and the footbridge removed or do you have any better information about the date?



Craig y Don has been built upon, added to and modernised many times over the past 400 years but still retained its Grade 2 listed status for special features e.g. clock tower. It was the former home of Twm Chwarateg, multi millionaire and controller of much of the production of copper in the eighteenth century. A sensitive restoration project is underway making it a home/ holiday let. The proposal to rename the property Menai Hall, while work is carried out, seems most unusual; surely its original name shouldn't be lost?

## BRIDGE'S BICENTENARY

### 1826—2026

The Bridge's 200th Birthday is in 2026.

Seems like a long way off but will soon be with us and time is needed to plan community events. The Town Council, Rhun ap Iorwerth AS/MS and Menai Bridge Community Heritage Trust have, together, called a meeting on Monday 15th January 2024 in Ysgol David Hughes, starting at 6.30 p.m., to start discussing and planning ideas to celebrate. We will also attend but if you would like more information or have any ideas yourself you may contact Rhun ap Iorwerth direct at rhun.apiorwerth@senedd.wales Tel 01248 723599

Our Newsletter in January last year monitored the sad state of the maintenance of the Suspension Bridge. It is noted that **The Welsh Government's report** about the work was updated in December 2023 and states, "Works to replace the bridge hangers started on 4 September 2023. Other essential work to bring the bridge back into full use are also taking place. The construction programme has been developed by UK Highways A55 Ltd. They operate and maintain the bridge on behalf of the Welsh Government through a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Design, Build, Finance and Operate (DBFO) Contract. The plans have been discussed with stakeholders..... It is expected that all the required works will be completed by the end of August 2025 (subject to weather).

This will ensure the Menai Suspension Bridge is ready for its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026. "

Without wanting to be too cautious or cynical perhaps the first thing the Meeting could do is ask for regular reports on the progress of the 'required works' and just what the timetable is?

## IN MEMORIAM

It is with much sadness we note the death of long time members of the Civic Society.

**John Clive Tindal Perkins** - died 21st

October 2023, aged 76 years

John completed his Doctorate in Agriculture and Economics at UCW Bangor and became Assistant Registrar at the University. He was active in volunteering both locally and internationally as well as being a lay preacher in the Church in Wales. Sadly, John's wife Lis, also active in voluntary work and the Church died in April 2022.

**Jane Beryl Williams (J. B. Nyrs/ Nurse)** - died 4th December 2023, aged 96 years. JB, as she was known to everyone, was a District Nurse and worked at Ysbyty Gwynedd. She was a nurse in Liverpool during WW2. When asked to comment on her experiences during the 'blitz', all she would say was, 'Well we just had to get on with it'.

They loved Menai Bridge and the area and contributed much over the years to the community; we miss them.