

Capel



CYMRITHAS TREFTADAETH Y CAPELI
THE CHAPELS HERITAGE SOCIETY

Newsletter 50 Autumn 2007

Cylchlythyr 50 Hydref 2007

Carmarthen in the Springtime

The Spring meeting in 2007 was held on on 12 May in Carmarthen.

The members assembled in Heol Awst chapel at 10.30, and after a brief Annual General Meeting at 11.00 were treated to a fine, concise illustrated lecture on 'Carmarthen - Great Centre of Nonconformity' by Thomas Lloyd. Mr Lloyd is a specialist on the buildings of South West Wales, and one of the editors of the recent 'Pevsner' architectural guides to Pembrokeshire and to Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion.

This was followed by a video of Heol Awst Chapel with an introduction and commentary by the minister, the Rev. J. Towyn Jones. For more than



The wine glass pulpit at Heol Awst

forty years in the nineteenth century, the minister of Heol Awst had also been principal of the Academy next door, with which the chapel building was linked.

After lunch at the nearby Falcon Hotel we proceeded on our customary tour of the chapels within easy walking distance, visiting the Welsh Presbyterian Heol Dŵr, the Baptist Tabernacl and the English Presbyterian Zion. We then moved on to *Tabernacle Baptist Chapel*



view the site of the former Quaker Meeting House, the former Unitarian chapel Parc y Felfed, and the burial ground of Ebenezer, once a Welsh Wesleyan chapel. A new Methodist chapel now stands nearby. The tour ended at about 4.30 with tea.

Capel AGM 2007

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Carmarthen, 5 May 2007

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from seven members.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held at Ruthin on 15 October 2005 were accepted and confirmed.

4. Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

5. Secretary's Report

Since the last AGM in October 2005 at Ruthin members have enjoyed meetings in Abergavenny and in Llanrwst/Trefriw in 2006. This year the October meeting will be held in Colwyn Bay. We also have plans for future meetings in Pembrokeshire and in Welshpool.

Capel correspondence has been diverse, ranging over photographic projects, artistic events in chapels, research into Camm stained glass windows, searches for lost chapels as well as lost burial sites, to the transport of coffins from Paddington to Wales and what to do with a redundant 1911 Tin Tabernacle in Reading. The Director of the Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway Company happens to be building a new station at Furnace Sidings and wants to

build in the traditional Tin Tabernacle style. Yes, you have guessed it – both parties are in contact and pleased with the possibilities. I haven't heard the outcome yet but the station may be much larger than was originally planned!

Capel has been helping with ideas for a Welsh Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and last year Jonathan Jones and I helped arrange a visit to South Wales by a team from Design Alliance Architects in Pittsburgh. They wanted to see largely unaltered 18th century chapels like those at Maesyronnen, Beili Heulog and Capel-y-Ffin. A good design was produced but turned out to be \$200,000 over budget. The new bids are of the Deduct-Alternates type so they don't yet know how the final design will turn out.

You have seen the result of our chapel planning application operation in the lists in the Newsletters. We scan on average 170 applications every week – either by mail or on-line. These include conversions of cowsheds to granny flats, dog kennels to dwellings and even a courthouse to a Welsh quilt exhibition centre. For the chapel applications we obtain the plans if possible and send suggestions, comments and sometimes objections to the Planning Officers. It is encouraging to see many extensions and new facilities as well as rebuilt facades and some newly designed chapels in the recent lists. Currently we are concerned about a proposal to demolish a building at Cefn Bychan,

Newbridge, near Wrexham, which is still substantially the first purpose built Quaker Meeting House in Wales, dating from 1703. The relevant authorities have been alerted and CADW is trying to arrange an internal inspection of the building, which had a first floor meeting room. Some of you may have seen the pictures of it on display here today. Occasionally for listed chapels or for chapels with special problems I ask our architectural advisors for help. Recent examples have been Van Road, Caerphilly, where stone decay possibly caused by the incorrect layering of sandstone and limestone is a problem. At Christchurch, Llandudno, we objected successfully to the removal of an unusual set of stained glass windows. In Aberystwyth the conversion of Tabernacl into 14 appartments has been approved for which, we hope, Capel's suggestions for the spatial arrangements behind the front gable windows and the adjacent plasterwork will be adopted.

We have new designs for Notelets and Christmas cards, based on Catherine Masterman's watercolours of Swansea chapels and chapels painted specially by Xia Liu, a Chinese artist, living in Liverpool. The Christmas cards will be available this Autumn.

A Welsh version of the Llandudno chapel trail has been published and the Ruthin and Denbigh Heritage Groups were given Capel material to enable them to produce chapel trails intended for the Architectural Heritage Open Days. We are still waiting for members to produce trails for their local areas. The new website, which the Chairman was responsible for getting launched seems to be more succesful than the previous

hosted site – judging by the communications which refer to it. Most of you will have seen the large amount of information now available on the Capel site (www.capeli.org.uk).

I had hoped that a chapel maintenance scheme might have started somewhere in Wales, based on the Dutch Monumentenwacht idea (described as a man in a van with a rod and a ladder). The English Maintain Our Heritage (MOH) schemes are more like two men with a cherrypicker, and the latest Diocese of London scheme, launched in 2006, is available to all churches with no charge to smaller parishes. Many large urban chapels in Wales, including those being used for commercial activities, seem in urgent need of maintenance and repair, and a few MOH teams for the chapels would be good news. The Government white paper (dcms) on Heritage Protection for the 21st Century, published in March 2007, covers both England and Wales, and addresses the call for change and greater public scrutiny in the scheduling of historic buildings and landscapes. The proposal for lists of locally designated buildings would give local authorities power to prevent the demolition and loss of many distinctive local buildings, including some chapels as well. This could be an important piece of legislation affecting chapels, and on this optimistic note I conclude.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer had prepared the Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31 August 2006. In the Treasurer's unavoidable absence this was presented by the Chairman. Thanks were recorded to Mr Richard G. Waters for auditing the accounts.

7. Chairman's Report

As you have heard in the Secretary's report, this has been another busy year for Capel. I should like to thank all those who have helped in our work – you the members, those who serve on the executive committee, and my fellow officers. As you are aware from the latest Newsletter, we have an urgent need for more people to take responsibility for aspects of our work.

In addition to acting as Chairman I also have overall responsibility for our website. I hope you will agree that our website has shown a great improvement this year since we began to use the services of Technoleg Taliesin. It will be transformed again in the next few months as the layout is reviewed.

Our Secretary, Dr Peter Mason, will be retiring from office in October. On

your behalf I should like to thank him very warmly for his enormous contribution to Capel during the last five years. Perhaps only his wife Sheila and his fellow officers can appreciate how much time and energy he has devoted to Capel. On a personal note I wish to thank him for the extra work he undertook during my three months absence following surgery last autumn.

8. Election of Officers and Committee Members.

A Secretary is being sought to succeed Peter Mason. The other Officers and members of the Committee had agreed to continue in office for a further year and this was accepted by the Meeting.

9. Any Other Business

There was no further business.

CCB Capel 2007

Cofnodion Cyfarfod Cyffredinol
Blynnyddol

Caerfyrddin, 5 Mai 2007

1. Croeso'r Cadeirydd

Croesawyd yr aelodau i'r cyfarfod gan y Cadeirydd.

2. Ymddiheuriadau am Absenoldeb

Derbyniwyd ymddiheuriadau oddi wrth saith aelod.

3. Cofnodion y Cyfarfod Diwethaf

Derbyniwyd a chadarnhawyd cofnodion y cyfarfod yn Rhuthun ar 15 Hydref 2005.

4. Materion yn Codi

Ni chodwyd unrhyw faterion.

5. Adroddiad yr Ysgrifennydd

Ers y Cyfarfod Cyffredinol diwethaf yn Rhuthun ym mis Hydref 2005, mae'r aelodau wedi mwynhau cyfarfodydd yn y Fenni a Llanrwst/Trefriw yn 2006. Eleni cynhelir cyfarfod yr hydref ym Mae Colwyn. Mae gennym hefyd gynlluniau am gyfarfodydd yn y dyfodol yn Sir Benfro a'r Trallwng.

Bu gohebiaeth Capel yn amrywio'n fawr - gan gynnwys prosiectau ffotograffig, digwyddiadau celfyddydol mewn capeli, ymchwil i ffenestri lliw Camm, chwilio am gapeli coll a manau

claddu coll a phroblemau trosglwyddo eirch o Paddington i Gymru, beth y gellid ei wneud ag eglwys dun a godwyd yn Reading ym 1911 ac nas defnyddid mwyach. Mae Cwmni Rheilffyrdd Phontypŵl a Blaenafon yn codi gorsaf newydd yn Ffwrnais ac am ei adeiladu yn null traddodiadol y 'Tin Tabernacle'. Ydych, 'rydych yn iawn; mae'r ddau grŵp wedi dod i gysylltiad ac yn hoffi'r posibiladau. 'Chlywais i ddim eto beth a drefnwyd ond mae'n bosib y bydd yr orsaf lawer yn fwy nag a gynlluniwyd yn wreiddiol.

Bu Capel yn helpu gydag awgrymiadau ar gyfer Ystafell Genedlaethol Cymru ym Mhrifysgol Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania a'r llynedd bu Jonathan Jones a minnau yn cynorthwyo i drefnu ymweliad â Deheudir Cymru gan dîm o benseiri Design Alliance, Pittsburgh. Yr oeddynt am weld yn bennaf gapeli'r ddeunawfed ganrif megis Maesyronnen, Beili Heulog a Chapel y Ffin sydd heb gael eu newid llawer. Cynhyrchwyd cynllun ond cafwyd gwybod y byddai'r gost o \$200,000 yn fwy na'r arian oedd ar gael. Y mae ganddynt gynigion newydd wedi'u llunio yn null 'Deduct-Alternates' ac felly wyddan nhw ddim eto beth fydd y cynllun yn y diwedd.

Fe welsoch ganlyniadau ein trefniannau ynglŷn â cheisiadau cynllunio yn y rhestri yn rhifynnau'r Cylchlythyr. Ar gyfartaledd 'rydym yn sganio 170 o geisiadau yr wythnos, naill ai trwy'r post neu ar y We. Mae rhain yn cynnwys troi beudai yn fflatiau nain, cytiau moch yn drigfannau a hyd yn oed llys barn yn ganolfan arddangos cwiltiau Cymreig. Am y ceisiadau sy'n ymdrîn â chapeli, 'rydym yn ceisio os yn bosib gael copïau o'r planiau ac wedyn yn anfon awgrymiadau, sylwadau ac weithiau gwrthwynebiadau i'r Swyddfa Gynllunio. Mae'n ein

calonogi i weld llawer o estyniadau a chfleusterau newydd a hefyd ailadeiladu ffasadau, ac ambell gapel wedi'i newydd gynllunio yn y rhestri diweddar. Ar hyn o bryd, 'rydym yn ystyried cais i ddymchwel adeilad yng Nghefn Bychan, Pontnewydd ger Wreccsam, sydd i raddau helaeth yn dal i gael ei ystyried y Tŷ Cwrdd cyntaf a fu gan y Crynwyr yng Nghymru. Fe'i hailadeiladwyd ym 1703. Rhybuddiwyd yr awdurdodau perthnasol ac mae CADW yn ceisio trefnu ymchwiliad mewmol o'r adeilad, lle'r oedd yr ystafell gyfarfod ar y llawr cyntaf. Efallai bod rhai ohonoch wedi cael cyfle i weld y lluniau ohono a arddangosir yma heddiw. Ambell waith ar gyfer capeli a restrwyd neu sydd â phroblemau arbenig 'rwyf yn gofyn am help gan ein cyngorwyr pensaernïol. Enghreifftiau diweddar fu ffordd y Fan, Caeffili, lle'r oedd yn bosib yr achoswyd dirywiad yn y gwaith carreg gan wallau yn y modd y gosodwyd haenau o dywodfaen a charreg galch. Yn Christchurch, Llandudno buom yn llwyddiannus yn gwrthwynebu tynnu ymaith set anarferol o ffenestri lliw. Yn Aberystwyth rhoddwyd caniatâd i'r cynllun i droi'r Tabernacl yn 14 o fflatiau a gobeithiwn y gweithredir awgrymiadau Capel ynglŷn â threfniant y gofod y tu ôl i'r ffenestri yn y talcen blaen a'r gwaith plaster o'u cwmpas.

Mae gennym luniadau newydd i'n cardiau cyfarch a Nadolig wedi'u seilio ar ddyfrluniau Catherine Masterman o gapeli Abertawe a lluniau capeli wedi'u gwneud yn arbennig gan Xia Lia, artist Tsineaidd sy'n byw yn Lerpwl. Bydd y cardiau Nadolig ar gael yr hydref yma.

Cyhoeddwyd trosiad Cymraeg o drywydd capeli Llandudno a throsglwyddodd Capel i Grwpiau Treftadaeth Dinbych a Rhuthun ddeunydd i'w

galluogi i greu teithiau capeli ar gyfer Diwrnodau Agored y Dreftadaeth Ben-saernïol. Yr ydym yn dal i aros i aelodau eraill lunio teithiau ar gyfer eu hardaloedd hwythau. Ymddengys fod ein safle newydd ar y We y bu ein Cadeirydd yn gyfrifol am ei lansio yn ddiweddar yn llawer mwy llwyddiannus na'r wefan flaenorol - a barnu oddi wrth y sylwadau amdano a welsom. Bydd y rhan fwyaf ohonoch wedi gweld y stôr o wybodaeth sydd yn awr ar gael ar wefan Capel (www.capeli.org.uk)

Roeddwn wedi gobeithio y byddai trefn cadwraeth capeli ar batrwm y Monumentenwacht a geir yn yr Iseldiroedd - trefn a ddisgrifiwyd fel gŵr mewn fan a chanddo belyn ac ysgol. Mae'r trefniannau Seisnig 'Maintain Our Heritage' (MOH) yn debycach i ddau ŵr â chraen ac mae cynllun diweddaraf Esgobaeth Llundain, a lansiwyd yn 2006, ar gael i bob eglwys, heb gost i'r plwyfi lleiaf. Mae ar lawer o gapeli mawr trefi Cymru ddwys angen cadwraeth ac atgyweirio a byddai creu ychydig o dimau MOH ar gyfer y capeli yn newyddion da iawn. Yr oedd Papur Gwyn y Llywodraeth (dcms) ar Amddiffyn ein Treftadaeth yn yr 21fed Ganrif, a gyhoeddwyd ym mis Mawrth 2007, yn cyfeirio at Loegr a Chymru ac yn trafod y galw am newid a mwy o oruchwyliaeth gyhoeddus ar restru adeiladau hanesyddol a thirwedd. Byddai'r cynnig i greu rhestr o adeiladau a ddewisid yn lleol yn galluogi awdurdodau lleol i rwystro dymchwel a cholli llawer o adeiladau lleol nodweddiadol gan gynnwys rhai capeli. Gallai hyn fod yn ddogfen gyfreithiol bwysig ei heffaith ar gapeli. A gorffennaf fy adroddiad ar y nodyn optimaidd hwn.

6. Adroddiad y Trysorydd
Paratowyd y Datganiad Ariannol

am y flwyddyn yn terfynu 31 Awst 2006 gan y Trysorydd. Yn absenoldeb anor-fod y Trysorydd cyflwynwyd y Datganiad gan y Cadeirydd. Diolchodd i Mr Richard G. Walters am archwilio'r cyfrifon.

7. Adroddiad y Cadeirydd

Fel y clywsoch yn adroddiad yr Ysgrifennydd bu hon yn flwyddyn brysur eto i Gapel. Hoffwn ddiolch i'r holl rai a helpodd yn ein gwaith - chi'r aelodau, y sawl sy'n gwasanaethu ar ein pwyllgor gwaith, a'm cyd-swyddogion. Fel y welsoch yn ein Cylchlythyr diwethaf mae angen mwy o bobl i dderbyn cyfrifoldeb am agweddau o'r gwaith.

Yn ychwanegol at fy swydd fel Cadeirydd mae gennyf hefyd gyfrifoldeb am ein gwefan. Gobeithiaf y cytunwch fod y wefan wedi gwella'n sylweddol eleni wrth inni ddechrau defnyddio Technoleg Taliesin. Bydd yn cael ei thrawsffurfio unwaith eto yn ystod y misoedd nesaf.

Bydd yr Ysgrifennydd, Dr Peter Mason, yn ymddiswyddo yn Hydref. Ar eich rhan hoffwn ddiolch yn gynnes iawn iddo am ei gyfraniad enfawr i Gapel yn ystod y pum mlynedd diwethaf. Efallai dim ond ei wraig Sheila a'i gyd-swyddogion sy'n gallu gwerthfawrogi'r amser ac egni a roddodd i Gapel. Ar nodyn personol rwyf am ei ddiolch am y gwaith ychwanegol a wnaethpwyd ganddo yn ystod y cyfnod o dri mis pan oeddwn yn absennol yn dilyn llawdriniaeth yr hydref diwethaf.

8. Ethol Swyddogion ac Aelodau'r Pwyllgor

Rydym yn chwilio am Ysgrifennydd i ddilyn Peter Mason. Yr oedd aelodau eraill y Pwyllgor wedi cytuno i barhau yn eu swydd am flwyddyn arall a derbyniwyd hyn gan y Cyfarfod.

Chapels reported to Capel: building applications and threatened sites

List 1

Major changes or alterations have been proposed to the following chapels, but detailed plans or further information was not available to CAPEL. Written comments were not submitted to the relevant Planning Authority. Both lists cover the period from March 2007 to the end of July 2007. Grid references are included when possible.

- Blaenannerch Chapel, Blaenannerch, Cardigan: Alterations and an extension are planned.
- Salem Congregational Chapel, Llandovery, Carmarthenshire: The gable wall will be taken down and rebuilt due to an outward lean.
- Former Welsh Independent Chapel (Site), Deganwy Avenue, Llandudno: Erection of 13 residential units.
- Cross Hands Christian Centre, Tynewydd Terrace, Crosshands, Carmarthenshire: Extension to the chapel for a Sunday School.
- Capel y Dolau, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire (Listed) (GR 253308 219908): Refurbishment and internal changes to the chapel.

- Capel Sion, Llansaint, Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire (GR 238463 208160): Conversion of the chapel into 2 apartments.

List 2

Copies of plans and other information were available in the following cases, so CAPEL was able to examine and comment on the proposals. Norman Chang made detailed comments on the proposal for Christ Church, Llandudno and added his objections to the proposed demolition of an early Welsh Quaker Meeting House at Newbridge, near Wrexham. Jonathan Jones made a site visit to Alexandra Road Baptist Chapel and Hall, Newport, and made detailed comments on the proposal to demolish it.

- Christ Church, Llewellyn Avenue, Llandudno (Grade II Listed) (GR 77925 82589): Change of use to a children's soft play centre, with internal and external alterations and the removal of historic stained glass. Norman Chang made a strong case for the retention of the windows and against proposals for the main floor area. Removal of the windows has been withdrawn and the revised proposal might be a good option for preserving this large chapel.
- Peniel Chapel, Carno, Newtown,

Powys (Listed) (GR 295740 297290): Revised application for a conversion to a dwelling. A good interior conversion and the exterior will remain unchanged. No objections were raised.

- Zion Baptist Chapel and Zion House and Schoolroom, Begelly, Kilgetty, Pembrokeshire (GR 211830 207597): Conversion of the chapel into a dwelling and the renovation, conversion and extension of the adjacent house and schoolroom. A good conversion in a Conservation Area, the external appearance of the chapel will be preserved.
- Former Alpha Chapel (URC), Greenfield Road, Greenfield, Holywell, Flintshire (GR 319469 377555): Outline planning permission sought for demolition and residential development. A strong case was made for a structural assessment and retention and conversion of the chapel.
- Former Quaker Meeting House (Chapel Farm), Cefn Bychan, Newbridge, Wrexham: Outline planning permission was requested for the demolition of Wales's earliest surviving purpose-built Quaker Meeting House (1703) for residential development. Capel has previously suggested that this building should be assessed internally and listed on historic grounds. Capel made a strong case against this new proposal to all the relevant bodies, (including CADW, Wrexham Council, Cefn

Mawr Community Enterprise Officer and the Quakers' HQ). Norman Chang also supported the case against demolition. The proposal has been withdrawn and a new outline proposal, which includes the retention of the building, has been submitted. It is hoped that an internal assessment of this important building will now be arranged by CADW and the Wrexham building conservation team.

- Capel Cefn Berain (Presbyterian), Llanefydd, Conwy (GR 99885 69302): Extension for Sunday School and community area with kitchen and disabled WC. No objections were raised by this development.
- Former Sion Chapel, Brook Street, Llanfyllin, Powys: Amended design (original 2005) for conversion to a dwelling. Front elevation remains unaltered and preserves the chapel as an important townscape feature. A good conversion.
- Capel Bwlchgwynt, Chapel Street, Tregaron, Ceredigion (Grade II Listed) (GR 267780 259628): Alterations and renovations including changes to the slate hung walls incorporating new corner pilasters, other improvements and the renovation of doors and windows.
- Capel Bethania, Bontddu, Dolgellau, Gwynedd (GR 267323 318928): Sympathetic conversion of a prominently sited 1865 chapel into a dwelling. Original external symmetric entrance

steps will be reinstated. A double height entrance area with a focus on the ceiling rose is a good feature.

- Capel Carmel, Llwyngwrl, Gwynedd (GR 257382 307508): Retrospective application to keep a retaining wall, access steps and two rear rooflights. New application for two front rooflights, external flue and water tank, in association with use as an artist's studio.
- Capel y Morfa, Borth, Ceredigion (GR 260892 289991): Application for a balcony on an already converted chapel. Balcony design is very unsympathetic. Capel suggested that a more appropriate design should be sought.
- Alexandra Road Baptist Chapel and Hall, Newport, Monmouthshire: Application to demolish and construct a 10 unit sheltered housing development. The 1884 Lombardic Gothic Revival style chapel was found to be in a very neglected and dangerous state when visited by Jonathan Jones. The building is currently in mixed residential and office use and the Hall serves as a tea room and museum. Jonathan Jones has concluded that demolition is likely but has suggested that the gable elevations could be retained and incorporated in a new development, which could reflect the original design of the chapel building. Chapel records and items may remain in one room and a survey of the chapel by the RCAHMMW and the removal and examination of any material has been suggested.
- Capel y Fadfa, Bwlchfadfa, Talgarreg, Llandysul, Ceredigion (GR 243761 249481): Erection of small extension for toilet and storage facilities. Capel raised no objections – the style and finish are in keeping with the existing building.
- Former CM Chapel, Pontrobert, Meifod, Powys: Revised application for a conversion into two dwellings. Not as elegant internally as the original single dwelling proposal. However CAPEL has supported the application as the best way to preserve a good chapel. The prominent external elevations are unaffected.
- Church of Christ, 14 Talbot Road, Wrexham (Formerly 1879 Methodist Chapel) (GR 333390 349729): CAPEL objected to the demolition of this chapel in 2006. A new application for conversion into 5 flats. Main alterations and additions are confined to the rear elevation, with little change to the main elevations. CAPEL supports this sympathetic proposal which will retain this attractive suburban chapel.

News of Chapels

- Libanus CM Chapel, Garth, Maesteg (built 1861, altered 1871): This Romanesque style, gable entry chapel was reported as closed in 2006.
- Zoar Chapel and Sunday School (Welsh Congregationalist), Merthyr Tydfil is earmarked for possible conversion into a community centre and theatre.
- Capel Mawr, Talysarn, Gwynedd (Dated 1877 and replaces an earlier 1857 building): Possible conversion into a dwelling. Situated in a quarry village in a classic Snowdonia valley, this chapel interior has Italian plasterwork which is suffering from damp.
- Capel Hermon, Rhos on Sea, Colwyn Bay (GR 84055 79631): New amendments have been submitted by the Chapel Trustees to the approved plans for the demolition of the existing chapel and the construction of a new chapel and 8 apartments. The new chapel design remains unaltered.

Dates for your diary

The Spring Meeting of Capel will held on Saturday 10th May 2008 in Pembroke Dock. The meeting is being arranged by Mr Rob Scourfield.

Our Autumn Meeting in 2008, which will include the AGM, will be held in Newtown on Saturday 11th October. The meeting is being arranged by Mr Andrew Mathieson.

Some good news

Just after our last Newsletter was published our member Mrs Margaret Hughes sent us heartening news about Rhos y Gad Calvinistic Methodist chapel in Llanfairpwll on Anglesey. She wrote as follows:

'For once, this is not a story of closure, but some encouraging news of development this time!

The chapel itself is a listed building, I believe. It stands in the centre of the village and has a membership of over 350 with a good proportion of children and young people. Like many other chapels it now has to conform to Health and Safety regulations, so the diaconate is taking advantage of the fact and initiating some important improvements with an eye to expansion of interest in the community in the future.

This summer, chapel and schoolroom are to be fully decorated, and a new, more effective and environmentally friendly heating system installed.

This is the only building in the village with a large schoolroom boasting a stage, so this accommodation is to be offered to other organisations locally. A new kitchen will be built, with meeting rooms and storage space on the first floor, this to replace some outdated outbuildings on the site.

The whole project will cost in the region of £230,000, much of the money available through grants of various kinds, through the sale some years ago of a country chapel a few miles away and, of course, through personal contribution by members.

You may know of the intention of the Presbyterian Church of Wales to regard some of the churches as possible "mission" churches for their area - Rhos y Gad is one of these - with a view to ensuring support in the years to come.'

Darlith yr Eisteddfod

Traddodwyd darlith Capel yn yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol eleni gan ein haelod, y Parch. Eirlys Gruffydd. Testun y ddarlith oedd 'Arolwg ar Ymneilltuaeth Sir y Fflint'. Rhoes y darlithydd lawer o wybodaeth ddiddorol iawn am hanes yr enwadau yn y gorffennol a'r sefyllfa heddiw.

Eleni am y tro cyntaf rydym wedi penderfynu cyhoeddi'r ddarlith gyda chyfieithiad Saesneg a'i dosbarthu i bob aelod o Gapel. Rydym yn ddiolchgar iawn i Eirlys Gruffydd am gytuno â hyn. Os bydd y darlithwyr yn fodlon ein bwriad yw cyhoeddi darlithiau eraill yn y dyfodol.

Eisteddfod Lecture

The Capel lecture at the National Eisteddfod this year was given by our member, the Rev. Eirlys Gruffydd. Her subject was 'A Review of Nonconformity in Flintshire'. The lecturer gave a great deal of very interesting information about the history of the denominations in the past and the situation today.

This year for the first time we have decided to publish the lecture with an English translation and distribute it to each member of Capel. We are very grateful to Eirlys Gruffydd for agreeing to this. If the lecturers are willing we intend to publish other lectures in the future.

Jon James

20 May 1938 - 7 August 2007

We are sorry to announce the death of Jon James, one of the earliest members of Capel. The following obituary is by our former Treasurer, Geoffrey Veysey, with the assistance of Prue Probert.

Jon was born in Rhosllanerchrugog and attended Ruabon Grammar School. He was a member of Capel Mawr in Rhos which had a rich musical tradition. He trained as an architect at the Cardiff School of Architecture. He won an architectural scholarship to Rome and later joined the TACP practice in Wrexham.

In the early 1970s he became Flintshire County Council's first conservation officer (later Clwyd) where he devised a computer-aided system on conservation buildings. He lectured extensively (with slides) on the historic chapels and buildings of Clwyd and was a frequent broadcaster. He helped to create the Clwyd Historic Buildings Trust which took over the restoration of Nantclwyd House in Ruthin. He surveyed many of the chapels in Clwyd.

He was an early and active member of the Prince of Wales Committee and continued his voluntary work in retirement. Appointed a member of the St Asaph Diocesan Advisory Committee he was only able to attend a few meetings.

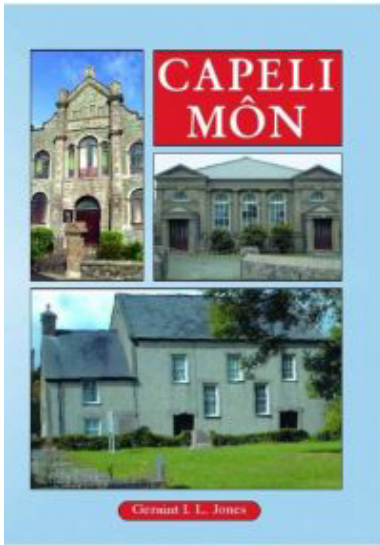
His marriage to Lyn did not last but they had a daughter Rebecca. While showing a party around Althrey Hall in the Maelor a few years ago he sustained a fall from which he never fully recovered. His funeral was at Mold Parish Church and he is buried at Rhydymwyn.

Jon led a very full and active life in many fields. Apart from his conservation work, one of his chief interests was as Musical Director of the Llwynegrin Singers since 1966. His choir gave many concerts in Wales for charity and toured North Wales, Germany and France. After his retirement he was the founder and director of the Delyn Festival.

He was an avid collector of books, many of them historical, and also enjoyed gardening and singing. Jon had so many interests that it is difficult to do justice to all of them. He will be sadly missed.

New Books / Llyfrau Newydd

Geraint I. L. Jones, *Capeli Môn*,
(Llanrwst: Gwasg Carreg Gwalch,
Gorffennaf 2007)



Dywedid er stalwm, 'Os rhowch chwi do uwchben Ynys Môn, fe gewch gapel Methodist' (Calfinaidd). Mae Dr Geraint Jones wedi chwalu'r fytholeg hon. Trwy gyfrwng mapiau, fe ddengys yn ei lyfr fod gan y M.C. 90 o gapeli ar yr ynys (pan oedd pob capel yn agored), a bod gan y tri phrif enwad arall – yr Annibynwyr, y Bedyddwyr a'r Methodistiaid Wesleiaidd – gyda'i gilydd 109 o gapeli yn yr un cyfnod. Y mae llawer llai gan bob enwad erbyn hyn.

Gwyddonydd yw Dr Jones, ac wrth olrhain hanes capeli'r ynys amlygir manylder ffeithiol y gwyddonydd. Mae enwau'r trefi a'r pentrefi yn nhrefn yr

wyddor, a noda leoliad pob capel â chyfeirnod grid. Ceir penodau arweiniol sy'n rhoi crynodeb byr o hanes arweinwyr a phregethwyr anghydfurfiol a godwyd ym Môn, ac eraill a ddaeth i Fôn yng nghyfnod sefydlu'r gwahanol achosion. Nodweddir capeli Môn bron ym mhob man ag enwau Beiblaidd, tra mai enwau seintiau sydd ar yr eglwysi. Eto, mae enw ambell gapel yn coffáu rhywun arbennig, er enghraifft Capel Ifan, Llanerch-y-medd, sydd wedi'i enwi ar ôl y cyn-weinidog, sef Evan Davies. Pennod ddi-ddorol yw'r un sy'n trafod pensaernïaeth y capeli (gydag enghreifftiau), ynghyd ag enwau rhai o'r penseiri. Mae'r capeli'n ddyledus i gymwynaswyr amrywiol a roddodd eu harian a'u tir i adeiladu arno. Cymwynas hanesyddol y gyfrol yw rhoi ar gof a chadw leoliad ambell gapel sydd bellach yn dŷ annedd, neu wedi diflannu'n gyfan gwbl, gan iddynt, yn eu dydd, gyfrannu'n gyfoethog i fywyd yr ynys.

Dywed yr awdur, 'Gellir dweud yn hawdd bod Anghydfurfiaeth nid yn unig yn grefydd, ond hefyd yn ffordd o fyw', ac fe restrir gweithgareddau amrywiol a berthynai'n ddyddiol i gapeli pob enwad. Mae un llithriad cysodi ar dudalen 8, fodd bynnag, sef 'Thomas Charles o'r Bala', ac nid 'John Charles'.

Cyfeirir at ysgoldai ychwanegol a berthynai i lawer o gapeli. Mae sôn am Ysgoldy Llanfihangel sy'n eiddo i Dŷ Rhys, Llangoed, yn hanes Llangoed, ond ni chynhwysir ef yn y mynegai, na nodi mai dyma'r unig ysgoldy sydd yn cael ei

ddefnyddio bellach ar yr ynys i gynnal gwasanaethau bob prawn Sul o'r Pasg i'r wyl ddiolchgarwch.

Mae'r gyfrol yn batrwm y gellir ei ddefnyddio i gofnodi ffeithiau hanesyddol pwysig a diddorol, ac mae'n gymar cymwys i gyfrol Saesneg gan yr un awdur ar eglwysi'r ynys. Mae Gwasg Carreg Gwalch wedi cynhyrchu cyfrol ddeniadol gyda digon o ddarluniau clir a defnyddiol.

Harri Owain Jones
Adolygiad oddi ar www.gwales.com,
trwy ganiatâd Cyngor Llyfrau Cymru.

This is a review of a very useful book in Welsh on the chapels of Anglesey. The main part of the book is an alphabetical

listing by place of all the chapels that have existed on the island. Each entry gives information about the name, denomination and location of the chapel together with a brief historical note tracing its fortunes. Small street maps are provided for the larger places.

This main section is preceded by a short background history and chapters on the leaders of Nonconformity, Nonconformist life, chapel names, architects, and benefactors. There is a good collection of photographs of chapels in the middle of the book.

T. W. Pritchard, *The Making of Buckley and District*, (Wrexham: Bridge Books, 2006).

Since his retirement as Archdeacon of Montgomery T.W. (Bill) Pritchard has published a series of books on the local history of north-east Wales, including volumes on Ruabon (2000), Nercwys (2000), and the old parish of Hawarden (2002). All have been published by Bridge Books. This latest volume is his largest and most ambitious work yet. This and the previous books by the author are worth drawing to the attention of any Capel members who are not familiar with them because, among much else, they contain a wealth of printed and visual information about chapels. We

understand that T.W.Pritchard is now working on a future volume on Holywell.

The present volume covers not only Buckley but also Bistre, Argoed, Ewloe Wood, Ewloe Town, Pentrobin and Bannel. It includes a long chapter of almost 40 pages on Nonconformist causes throughout the district. The readable and informative text is well illustrated with many excellent pictures of chapels. There is also a historical checklist of religious buildings. As in all the chapters, sources are fully documented. A very welcome feature of this volume (unfortunately not present in his earlier books) is the inclusion of a full index which greatly adds to the reference value of the work.

LM

Groeswen Chapel: Update

Groeswen was established in 1742 and is the one of the oldest surviving Chapels still active in South Wales. Some members will recall it was visited as part of the Autumn meeting in Caerphilly in 2003.

General Information:

The chapel at Groeswen was one of the first Methodist places of worship in Wales; the 'New House' built in 1742 under the inspiration of Howel Harris of Trefecca. The present vestry, which runs along the road and has a mounting block and stairs to an upper floor, is eighteenth century, but the chapel was rebuilt in a classical style in about 1870. The new Chapel is generally attributed to the minister/architect Thomas Thomas, Landore.

The graveyard is full of elaborate monuments. Inside, a plaque by the sculptor Goscombe John commemorating the Rev. William Edwards, designer of the famous bridge at Pontypridd and for forty years minister of the chapel, notes he was 'a bridge-builder between two worlds'.

A contract for repair of the Vestry and the external fabric of the Chapel was completed in June this year by Tract Construction of Cardiff. The works have included the replacement of both roofs with Penrhyn Welsh slate. Failed plastic rainwater gutters have been replaced with cast iron replica fittings.



Groeswen Chapel, Caerphilly

The Chapel North frontage has been repaired and the copings replaced with new stonework where necessary. Windows to the East and South sides have been replaced. The South windows required new carved glass red and blue panes costing in excess of £15,000.

The Vestry has been completely overhauled, with lime rendered walls and new sash windows and secondary glazing. Internally the lower ground floor has been waterproofed and made available for use as an archive/interpretation centre for the Chapel, and the upper floor is available for community use as well as for smaller Chapel gatherings.

The boundary walls to the road have been taken down and rebuilt and the opportunity taken to partly re-align the graveyard walls to provide additional car parking.

Over £300,000 have been raised by the Chair of the Trustees, Peter Jones, and further fundraising is taking place to allow the repair and preservation of the interior of the Chapel, now that water ingress has been stopped. If you would like further

information (or to make a donation) on the Chapel please contact Peter Jones on 029 2088 2245.

Jonathan Jones, Architect
HLM Architects, Cardiff

Christmas cards

Pendref, Llanfyllin © Xia Lu



The festive season is almost upon us once again, and Capel has recently launched a new range of Christmas cards. There are ten very attractive designs for sale, four of various Welsh chapels by Xia Lu and six of chapels in the Swansea area by Catherine Masterman. The designs can be seen in full on the Capel website.

All cards are bilingual with the message 'Gyda chyfarhion y Nadolig a'r Flwyddyn Newydd / With Christmas and New Year Greetings'.

The cards cost 25p each. Capel members pay only a fixed charge of 40p

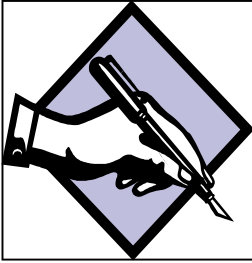
for postage irrespective of the size of the order. Non-members are asked to pay the full cost of postage on receipt of the cards.

Please send your order to: Mrs Mary Madden, Hafren, Cae'r Gog, Aberystwyth SY231ET. Tel.: 01970 617771. Email: madden.aber@btinternet.com.

A note on the Spring Newsletter...

If you would like to publish an item in the next issue of the newsletter, it will need to reach the editor by Friday 14 March 2008.

Os hoffech gyhoeddi rhywbeth yn y rhifyn nesaf o'r cylchlythyr, bydd rhaid i'r eitem cyraedd y Golygydd erbyn Dydd Gwener 14 Mawrth 2008.



Your letters

If you have a question or comment for the Editor, the Capel officers or the membership in general, please write to Rhian Phillips, 11 Asgog Street, Cardiff CF24 2AR, e-mail rhianphil@hotmail.com

Howmore Church

Dear Editor,

On a recent visit to South Uist in the Outer Hebrides we visited the religious site of Howmore, where the remains of several ancient churches and chapels stand alongside the 1858 Church of Scotland Parish Church.

Although most visitors go to see the ancient remains, Howmore Church itself is quite spectacular. The large white building stands on slightly higher ground and is visible from afar, being traditionally used as a landmark by fishermen off the west coast.

It is the interior, however, which marks it out as unique in this area and quite rare in Scotland. It contains a long central communion table divided off from the rest of the church by panelled seating along each side with entrance doors at intervals. We understand that

Special Offer on Capel mugs

We have decided to sell off our remaining Capel mugs at the special reduced price of £1.50. They will be available to members at our meetings.

there are other versions of this in Scotland, but this is one of the finest.

We would be interested to know how this was used during the Communion Service. Did the congregation take their seats there at the beginning of the Service? Was the Bread and Wine passed from person to person or delivered by the Minister? Has anyone come across examples of this feature in any other churches or chapels in Britain?

Yours sincerely
Sheila Mason

To see more about Howmore visit <http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/southuist/howmorechurch>

Editor – Thank you very much Sheila for bringing this interesting and unusual feature to the attention of the membership. If anyone can shed further light on the use of this particular



Diolch / Thank you

Bydd pob aelod o Gapel yn awyddus i ddweud gair cywir iawn o ddiolch i'r Ysgrifennydd, Peter Mason, a'r Golygydd, Alun Jones, sydd wedi ymddeol yn ddiweddar. Mae'r ddau wedi rhoi gwasanaeth amhrisiadwy i'n cymdeithas. Rydym yn ddiolchgar dros ben iddynt am y gwaith enfawr a wnaethpwyd mor effeithiol ganddynt.

Mae'n dda iawn gennym adrodd fod y Parch. Peter Jennings wedi cytuno i fod yn Ysgrifennydd a Miss Rhian Phillips yn Olygydd. Hefyd rydym yn falch i groesawu Mr David P. Williams fel ein Swyddog Cyhoeddusrwydd.

All members of Capel will wish to say a very sincere thank you to our Secretary, Peter Mason, and our Editor, Alun Jones, who have retired recently. Both of them have given invaluable service to our society. We are immensely grateful to both of them for the amount of work they have undertaken so efficiently.

We are pleased to report that the Rev. Peter Jennings has agreed to be our new Secretary and Miss Rhian Phillips is our new Editor. We are also pleased to welcome Mr David P. Williams as our Publicity Officer.

Swyddogion / Officers

Sylwch fod gennym Ysgrifennydd a Golygydd newydd . Nodwch eu cyfeiriadau. You will note that we have a new Secretary and a new Editor for the Newsletter. Please note their addresses.

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