

Capel

CYMBDITHAS TREFTADAETH Y CAPEL
THE CHAPELS HERITAGE SOCIETY



Newsletter 59 Spring 2012

Cylchlythyr 59 Gwanwyn 2012

The Chapels of Bangor



New Berea Crown copyright © RCAHMW

The day began at New Berea Chapel built in 2002 at 10am with the usual tea and biscuits in the vestry and by 10.30 nearly thirty people had arrived. Moving into the main chapel we were treated to a talk by Rev. Eric Jones explaining the problems caused by old buildings to ministers; the issues around the maintenance of older buildings, the decision to repair or sell the problems of moving and merging congregations and the legal problems that can arise. His discussion of his experiences in the Llansannan area over many years and details of how refurbishment projects were carried out and their eventual outcome provided a differing, yet complimentary, viewpoint to the more historical and heritage based

Walking back down the hill we diverted to the left to visit Capel Y Ffynnon with its yellow brick façade dating from 1875. The minister Dafydd Job gave us a talk on the history of the chapel and its previous owners. The current congregation bought the chapel in 1985 and renamed it Capel y Ffynnon, its earlier name was Penrallt English Baptist Chapel. The baptism pool was uncovered for us to view, an element of chapel architecture that people outside of the congregation rarely get to see.

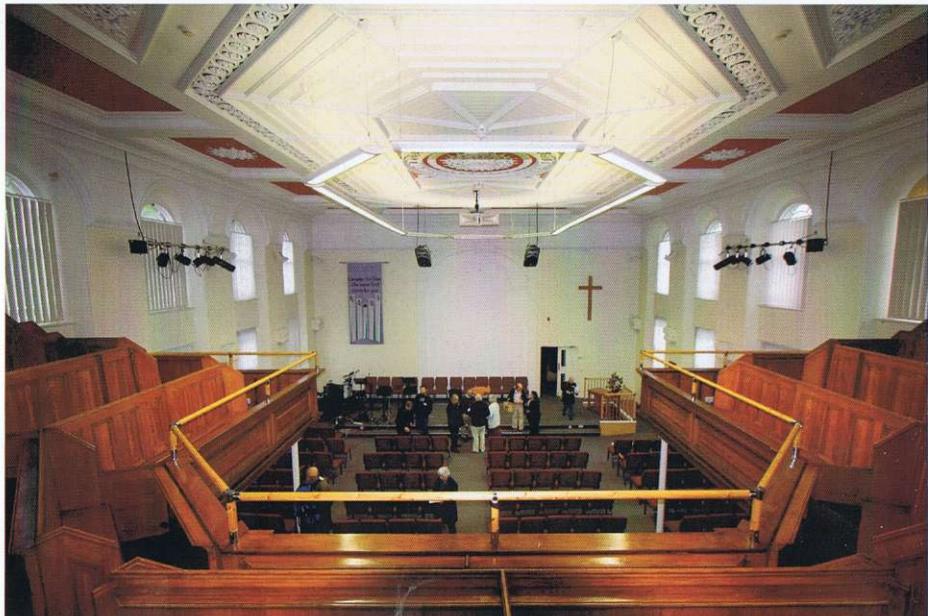
The next stop on our tour was the impressive brick built Penuel Welsh Baptist chapel. The original chapel was built across the road on the site of Aldi in 1810 and then rebuilt in 1865. The current site was purchased in 1949 and the chapel was complete in 1952. The timbers and slates come from the original 1865 chapel and the bricks from Penmaenmawr. This large chapel can seat over 800 and the baptism pool situated beneath the Sedd Fawr was uncovered for the group to admire. The history of the chapel and the congregation was then delivered by Olaf Davies.



Penuel Crown copyright © RCAHMW

The next port of call was Ebenezer, situated in the schoolroom of the now demolished St Pauls Wesleyan chapel, the only evidence for which is the original gateway. This modern evangelical bilingual cause was founded in 1969 and in 1970 bought a nearby building which is now flats. It moved into the old St Paul's schoolroom in 1985 and added the annex in 1990. The distinctive windows are repeated on the annex as a frieze. Mr Gareth Thomas gave us a talk on the history of the cause and the current congregation of about 70.

approach. He went on to explain how the chapels of Capel y Graig, Lon Bopyt and Hirael were merged and the new capel Berea was built on its current site after negotiations with the developers of the nearby retail park. Rev. Jones was then joined on stage by the treasurer of the new Capel Berea and a healthy question and answer session followed. He then gave us a tour of the new chapel pointing out how much easier it was to maintain and more flexible it was than the older buildings.



Penrallt Crown copyright © RCAHMW

The tour was followed by an excellent lunch with Lemon Meringue pie for desert in the vestry and then the capel members all drove over to Penuel chapel and made use of their car park for the rest of the day. A walk up the hill led us past the memorial arch, now home to the original war memorial plaques from the closed Presbyterian chapels of Bangor. A short walk around the corner led us to Twrgwyn chapel, which since 2005 has been owned by the Penrallt Baptist church and been renamed accordingly. This large chapel, built in 1865, has been subject to £500,000 worth of alterations, which have included the removal of most of the gallery along both wales, but with the rear section retained. The impressive organ, weighing three tonnes was moved to Norway and modern facilities have been added. An art deco memorial window is still on display. We were given a brief introduction by Peter Cousins and then allowed to explore the chapel and ask questions.

The final chapel of the day was St John's English Wesleyan Church opened in 1876 and built in the Gothic style. A history of the chapel was delivered by Rev Alf Williams noting the renovations in the 1950s and explaining the large mural on the rear wall of the chapel, before we moved across into the Sunday school, dating from 1908. A hearty chapel tea was provided in the Sunday school and the day wound down with discussions over cups of tea and cakes after which people made their way home. We would like to thank Catherine and Rees Jones for organising the day and all of the speakers at each chapel for opening their doors and answering all of our questions.

Scott Lloyd
Royal Commission on the Ancient and
Historical Monuments of Wales

Chapels Reported to Capel

Building applications

- Pennal Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Snowdonia: conversion to holiday use. A well-considered scheme with minimal impact on the exterior, and retaining much of the interior detail intact. Support.
- Hall Street Methodist Chapel, Llanelli: extensions and demolition of chapel hall. Support: the hall is of little interest, the new one of a good contemporary design.
- Salem Independent Chapel, Salem, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire: statement sent to Inspectorate supporting the proposed repairs to the chapel, which were the subject of refusal by Carmarthenshire County Council.
- Saron Congregational Chapel, Tredegar: refurbishment and reuse. Supported.
- Capel-y-Bryniau, Cwrt Pennal, Snowdonia: conversion to holiday use. Sensitive scheme. Supported.
- Peniel Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Trefriw, Snowdonia: retention of works to listed building. Supported.

Closures

- Trinity URC, Pembroke Dock (October 2011). For sale.
- Tabernacle URC, Milford Haven (November 2011).

Professor Anthony Jones

Our best wishes to our member Professor Anthony Jones on his retirement as President of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Many members will remember his lecture at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth when his book *Welsh Chapels*, the standard history of the architecture of this nation's chapel buildings, was launched.

The institute have renamed what was called the Chicago Building, designed by the architects Holabird and Roche and built in 1904, The Jones Hall. It is located at the zero-zero point of Chicago, which is the geographical dead-centre of the city, and is home to many artists, designers and scholars.

Richard O Thomas

The Liverpool Welsh

Liverpool Welsh has borne in the last 50 years the agony of witnessing a serious decline in Welsh Nonconformity. The Welsh Independents, Baptists and Wesleyan Methodists have all disappeared and the only denomination left is the Presbyterian Church of Wales (although there is also a Welsh Presbyterian Chapel the other side of the Mersey at Salem , Laird Street, Birkenhead). They have a great record: since 1757 they have worshipped through the medium of the Welsh language every Sunday, and this will continue for the foreseeable future.

For on 23 October 2011 they officially opened their Bethel. The Liverpool firm of Noble have been working on the site since early March. They demolished the large Chapel (the largest Free Church Chapel left in the City of Liverpool), the chapel house and the large schoolroom. The builders then began the task of adapting the small schoolroom as well as building a new schoolroom to cope with the social and cultural needs of the Liverpool Welsh. This will be the only centre for the Welsh in the city.

Bethania Welsh Presbyterian Church in Waterloo, North Liverpool, vacated their building (which is being adapted for flats) 3 years ago and now worship in an Anglican Church across the busy Crosby South Road at Christ Church. The Welsh Independents had been hiring a room in the United Reformed Church in Wavertree until they disbanded on 1st August 2009.

The new sanctuary at Bethel will cater for only 100 worshippers and for the first official service they decided to make it a ticket only affair. In the past we had no problem for the Bethel building in Heathfield Road, Liverpool 15 (overlooking Penny Lane) could cater for 750 people, but I only saw it full in 40 years on three occasions: my Induction service, the visit of the North Wales Missionary Rally in 1988 and a concert by the Llanelli Male Voice Choir in 2001. Even the visit of the General Assembly could not fill it, but I am sure CAPEL, if they ever visit Liverpool, would be amply catered for in the new Bethel.

D. Ben Rees

Dates for your Diary Dyddiadau i'w Nodi

Bydd Cyfarfod Hydref Capel ar gyfer 2012 yn cael i'w chynnal yn Llanelwy ar Ddydd Sadwrn 13eg Hydref.

Bydd Cyfarfod Gwanwyn 2013 yn cael i'w chynnal yn Rhydaman ar Ddydd Sadwrn 11eg Mai.

Bydd darlith yr Eisteddfod eleni yn cael ei draddodi gan Dr E. Wyn James, Prifysgol Caerdydd, ar 'Llan-gan, Croes-y-parc a Bethesda'r Fro: cyffro a chynnwrf crefyddol ym Mro Morgannwg yn y 18fed ganrif', ar Ddydd Gwener 10fed Awst am 11yb.

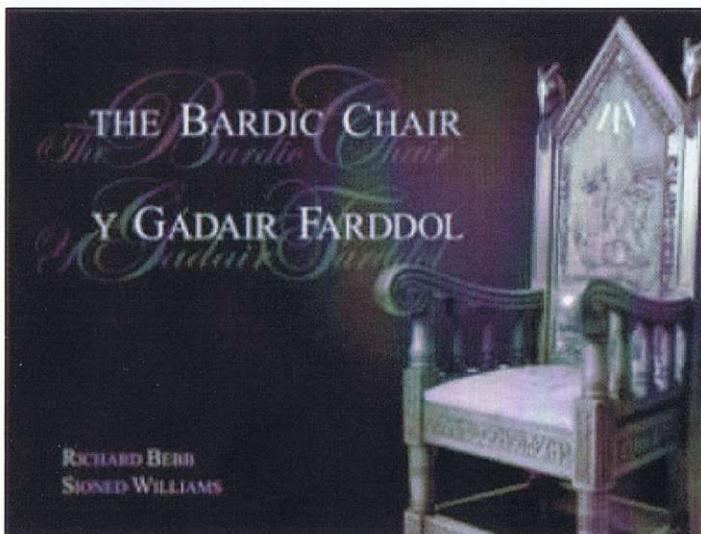
Capel's Autumn Meeting for 2012 will take place in St. Asaph on Saturday 13th October 2012.

The Spring Meeting for 2013 will be held in Ammanford on Saturday 11th May.

This year's Eisteddfod Lecture will be delivered by Dr E. Wyn James, Cardiff University, on 'Llan-gan, Croes-y-Parc and Bethesda'r Fro: Religious Excitement and Fervour in the Vale of Glamorgan during the 18th century', on Friday August 10th at 11am.

Llyfrau Newydd

Richard Bebb a Dr Sioned Williams, *Y Gadair Farddol* (Cydweli: Saer Books, 2009) ISBN: 978-0-9553773-3-4 Pris: £25



Dyma lyfr a'i ddiwyg yn hardd a deiniadol. O faint A4 yn lyfr i'w ddarllen ar astell neu fwrrd, gyda lluniau hynod ddeiniadol a chlir yn dangos cywrain waith y Saer Coed.

Ceir Rhagair gan y diweddar, erbyn hyn, Hywel Teifi Edwards, gan ddefnyddio yr ansoddair "unigryw" i ddisgrifio'r gamp a gyflawnwyd gan Richard Bebb, Dr Sioned Williams a Llyfrau Saer wrth lunio'r llyfr goludog hwn: canmoliaeth teilwng iawn.

Gyda'r Gymraeg ar y chwith a'r Saesneg ar y dde mae'n darllen yn rhwydd a hwyliog iawn. Nid yw'r gofod ar y dudalen yn cael ei wastraffu. Ceir lluniau gwahannol ar dudalen dde y Rhagymadrodd i'r rhai a ddangosir ar y dalen ochr chwith sydd yn arbed yr arferiad o ail adrodd o'r Gymraeg i'r Saesneg, ac fellu yn cael rhagor o luniau yn y llyfr. Yn y rhan hon nid yw y lluniau yn cyfateb i'r gair ysgrifennedig ond mae'n hynod ddiddorol.

Da yw gweld bod y Beirdd ar dro yn eistedd yn eu cadair, neu gerllaw. Gwelir eraill yn y lluniau hefyd yn rhan o'r dathliadau. Ceir hefyd luniau o fedalau a phlatiau gwybodaeth cysylltiol a'r gadair.

Ceir i ddilyn chwech pennod yn cychwyn o 1176 i 2008. Daw ysgolheictod Dr Sioned Williams i'r brig trwy ei hymchwil trywadl o gefndir Y Gadair Farddol ers cenedlaethau, a lluniau Richard Bebb yn gywrain a dadlennol o waith y crefftwr. Ceir hefyd dyluniad hardd gan Allison Hurren yn y llyfr.

Daw'r hanesion yn grynnol a thwt ar pob tudalen, a hanes yr Eisteddfod yng nghysegod hanesion y cadeiriau. Dangosir yn glir grefftwaith y saer ar pob cadair a'r newid lluniad y gadair o'r cychwyn. Ar tudalen 211 dangosir cadair a cyfeirir at y gerdd gan Robert Jones sydd ar gefn y gadair unigryw hon o Eisteddfod Sir Benfro, 2002. Nid oes modd darllen y gerdd oddiar y llun; buasai argraffiad o honni wedi bod o gymorth. Mae'r hanesion yn hynod ddiddorol ar pob tudalen a'r cadeiriau yn ddiddorol ac unigryw eu lluniad.

Ceir Mynegair cynhwysfawr ac amrhisiadwy yn rhestry lleodd ac enwau ar ddiwedd y llyfr. Gellir ymchwylia'n mhellach yn y 'Ffynonellau' i gefndir y wybodaeth wreiddiol ar agwedd benodol or gwaith. Danghosir hefyd yn y gwaith y stôr o wybodaeth a gedwir gan ein Llyfrgell Genedlaethol yn Aberystwyth.

Llyfr hardd deiniadol a chymen yn werth ei ychwanegu i'r astell lyfrau, neu ar gornel y bwrdd yn y lolfa, ac i chwiliota a myfyrio trost ei gynwys ger y tân.

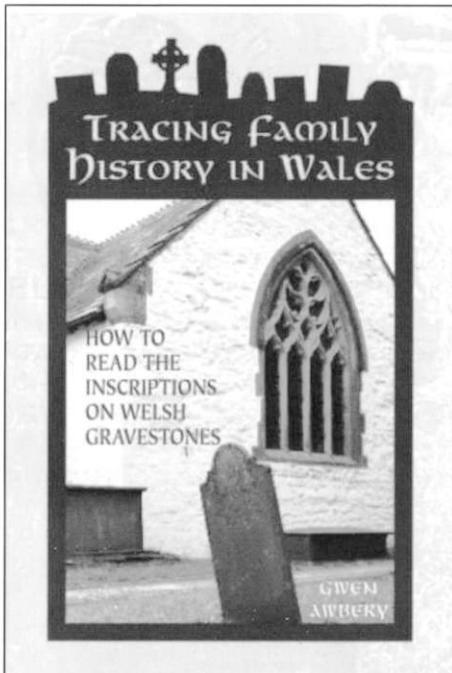
Meirick Lloyd Davies, Cadeirydd Capel

Gwen Awbery, *Tracing Family History in Wales: How to Read the Inscriptions on Welsh Gravestones* (Llygad Gwalch, 2010)
ISBN:978-1-84524 Pris £7.50

Amcan a phwrpas y llyfr yw cynorthwyo'r di-Gymraeg i allu darllen a deall arysgrifau ar gerrig beddau at bwrpas hel Hanes Teulu.

Ceir cychwyn graddol gan amlinellu gwahaniaethau'r wyddor a threigliadau, ynghyd a cyfarwyddiadau da iawn ar ymddygiad a iechyd a diogelwch.

Amlinellir gwahanol ffyrdd o gyfarchion a geir ar gerrig beddau gyda lluniau o'r arysgrif ar garreg bedd gwreiddiol. Ceir rhan yn disgrifio newid enwau sydd yn hynod ddiddorol. Mae'r penodau wedi eu gosod allan yn ddealladwy a'r cynnwys ddim yn rhy hir. Mae'n llyfr yn hwylus o ran ei faint a gellir ei roi yn eich poced wrth ymhweld â Mynwent: hanfodol i'r rhai sydd eisiau deall beth a thorri'r ar garreg bedd.



Ar ddiwedd pob pennod ceir arholiad bach syml i weld a yw'r canllawiau wedi eu deall. Ceir cymorth ieithyddol gan ddangos bod modd i'r arysgrif ar y garreg bedd fod mewn iaith arall heblaw Cymraeg / Saesneg, megis Lladin a Gwyddeleg, a bod hynny yn gallu agor y drws i gangen wahanol o'r teulu.

Ystyron disgrifiadau crefft, proffesiwn ac yn y blaen. Mae'r Awdur yn dda wedi ceisio cyflwyno gwybodaeth ar wahanol ffyrdd eang o ddisgrifiadau. Mae hyn yn gymorth dihysbydd i haneswyr teuluol nad ydynt yn hyddysg yn y Gymraeg i olrhain hanes y teulu.

Ar ddiwedd y penodau ceir ymarferiadau i gyfieithu'r Gymraeg sydd yn gymorth mawr. Ceir geiriadur yn rhan o'r llyfr ym mhennod 15 ac ym mhennod 16 ceir cyfeiriadau at ffynonellau eraill.

Buasai'n hefyd werth ei gael ym mhoced Cymro Cymraeg gan ei fod y cymorth mawr yn ei ddehongliadau o'r iaith.

Meirick Ll. Davies, Cadeirydd Capel

Canolfan Soar Centre Merthyr Tydfil

Capel members may be interested to learn about Canolfan Soar in Merthyr Tydfil. Capel Soar, Merthyr Tydfil, was one of the biggest chapels in Wales (where Joseph Parry led the Cymanfa for years) and one of the main buildings in Merthyr; not only a place for worship but also a venue for social gatherings and for educating the masses.

Capel Soar has recently been renovated after closing as a place of worship in 2005. The chapel building is now used by the local community as a theatre, with the vestry used as a centre for Welsh culture and heritage.

The centre's Heritage Officer is currently working on recording and documenting people's memories of the chapel, whilst also holding related events; a recent cymanfa, for example, drew a congregation of 200. A drop-in morning to collect people's recollections was held recently and it is hoped that the information collected will be available soon on the Centre's website <http://theatrsoar.com> so that people can listen and see the memories that the people of Merthyr Tydfil have of the chapel.



Canolfan Soar also have a Chapel Heritage Day planned for 21st July with lectures on religious life in Merthyr and a book launch by Steve Brewer on chapels in the Merthyr Borough.

Sion ap Glyn
Heritage Officer / Swyddog Treftadaeth
Canolfan Soar

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