

Capel

CYMDEITHAS TREFTADAETH Y CAPELI
THE CHAPELS HERITAGE SOCIETY



TAFLEN WYBODAETH LEOL 20

CASTELL-NEDD

LOCAL INFORMATION SHEET 20

NEATH

Maesyrfhaf Independent Chapel, Green Street

This chapel is the successor to an earlier Independent chapel built at Cwarelau-bach near Melyn-cryddan in 1695. It was first built on this site in 1769, and rebuilt in 1864-66 by William Davies of Neath for the sum of £1430. In the early 20th century the schoolroom which stood to the rear of the chapel was demolished, and the



church was extended behind the pulpit, with an extension to the gallery and the addition of the vestry and the magnificent pipe organ. A division had occurred in the congregation in 1823 and those members who left Maesyrfhaf built Zoar chapel in 1828-29. The two congregations were re-united in 1966 and now worship at Maesyrfhaf under the name Zoar-Maesyrfhaf. Zoar chapel is currently used for commercial purposes.



United Methodist Church, Windsor Square

After the merging of the Bible Christians, the Methodist New Connexion and the United Methodist Free Churches to form the United Methodist Church in 1907, negotiations began to find a suitable site for a new church in Neath. This striking church was designed by architect John Wills & Sons of Derby and London and built in 1913-14 by Waring, Cole & Waring of Neath. It opened on 3rd September 1914. An organ by Wood, Wordsworth & Co. of Leeds was installed in 1923. It is affectionately known locally as 'Penny Brick Church' in reference to the appeal to raise funds by buying bricks for one penny each.



Neath Mission Hall, High Street



This Cause began as an independent mission during the week of the Neath Fair in 1882, led by Frank and Seth Joshua, two brothers from the Pontypool area. The mission meetings were at first in the open air, then in a tent, then in the disused Tabernacle Baptist Chapel on Water Street.

Although the brothers had not at first envisaged the establishment of a new church in Neath, such was the success of the mission over the first two years that in 1884 a building (now known as the Lesser Hall) was erected in High Street at a cost of £700, its foundation stone laid by the MP Sir Henry Hussey Vivian. Later Seth Joshua was ordained as a Calvinistic Methodist Minister and the church became affiliated to the Forward Movement. Such was the growth of the church that within a few years the premises in High Street became too small for the congregation, and in 1903 the foundation stone was laid for the present chapel, adjoining the Lesser Hall.

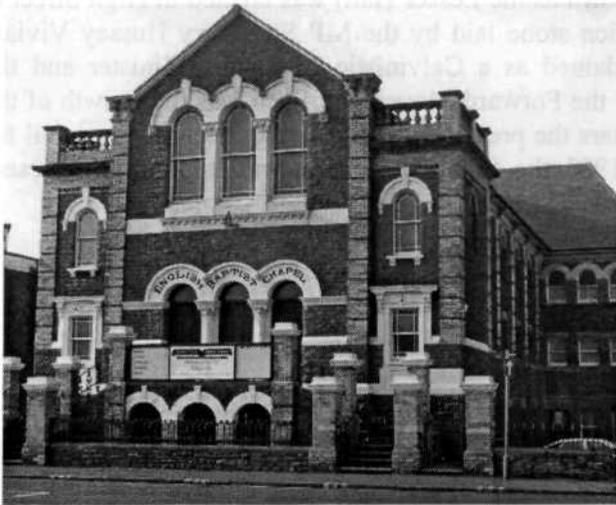
Friends' Meeting House, The Latt

The first reference to a Quaker meeting in Neath is in 1749, and a legacy of £40 was bequeathed to Quakers in Neath in 1774. There were strong links with the meeting in Swansea. The Cause in Neath was greatly augmented with the arrival of a



group of Quaker industrialists from Cornwall who established an iron-works at nearby Neath Abbey in 1792. Gravestones of the families of Fox, Tregelles, Price and Wood can be seen in the cemetery adjoining the meeting house. This late Georgian Meeting House was built *circa* 1792 on land given by Lady Mackworth (who was herself descended from a Quaker family) immediately adjoining the castle.

Orchard Place English Baptist Church



Baptist services in English began in the Neath area around 1839, when a chapel was built on a site between Neath and Neath Abbey. The congregation had a troubled early history, and their chapel was eventually bought by the vicar of Cadoxton for Anglican worship in 1855. Meanwhile the Baptists began to meet at Tabernacle, the

old Welsh Baptist chapel in Water Street, which once again became the 'halfway house' for a congregation. Within seventeen years the premises proved to be too small, and this striking chapel in Orchard Place was built in 1872.

Bethany Welsh Baptist Chapel, London Road

The Baptist cause in Neath began as an offshoot of the church at Ilston, meeting in a local inn in Water Street. The church was officially incorporated in 1789. A chapel was built on a nearby site in Water Street in 1804 and enlarged in 1828. After the revival of 1859 the congregation had become too large for the old chapel. A site was purchased for £250, and the present chapel was built there in 1862 by J. C. Rees, at a cost of £2000, and was opened in July 1863.

London Road Presbyterian Chapel

In 1880 a number of members of Bethlehem Green Calvinistic Methodist chapel left with a view to establishing an English Calvinistic Methodist church in the town. After a number of temporary homes, the present church building was opened in 1904.