

Capel

CYMDEITHAS TREFTADAETH Y CAPEL
THE CHAPELS HERITAGE SOCIETY



| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------|-------------|
| CYLCHLYTHYR | 38 | HYDREF | 2001 |
| NEWSLETTER | | AUTUMN | 2001 |

News from the Royal Commission

Last year CAPEL and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales signed a Heads of Agreement for cooperation in the study of chapels and chapel history. One of the points was that a report on chapels related work undertaken by the Royal Commission would appear regularly in the Capel Newsletter.

The Chapels Recording Project

Members will be aware of this project and indeed many will have contributed to it by photographing and recording information about chapels throughout Wales. We are most grateful to all those who gave such unstinting and generous support.

The first stage of the project was to identify and create basic records for as many Nonconformist chapels and Sunday schools as possible and this has largely been achieved. The database now contains over 8000 records of buildings, more than 2000 more than previous estimates of this stock of building. The results may be viewed on the Royal Commission's web-site at www.rcahmw.org.uk where they are incorporated in CARN, the database for archaeology and historical buildings in Wales. A more detailed listing is being prepared for the web. This will tabulate chapels and Sunday schools by pre-1974 county, giving details of dates, architects etc. Other data will be added later. At present Ceredigion / Cardiganshire is available although as yet no details of architects are provided. It is our intention to add further counties in the near future. Many of the dates and details of architect or builder will be drawn from the companion database compiled by the Board of Celtic Studies with their kind permission.

The photographic coverage of extant chapel and Sunday school buildings was an important aim of the project and much ground has been covered, mainly by CAPEL members. We are now carrying out an assessment of coverage to identify gaps and formulate a plan to complete the exercise.

Chapel Architects

Detailed recording and analysis of selected chapels was always a further aim of the project. The Royal Commission is concentrating particularly on seven key chapel architects: Richard Owen, Rev. Thomas Thomas, John Humphrey, George Morgan, Richard Davies, Owen Morris Roberts and Sir William Beddoes-Rees. Elsewhere in this issue Eryl Wyn Rowlands gives a tentative list of the chapels designed or renovated by Richard Owen. It is our intention to make available to members, similar lists for the other six architects, both for information and to provide a basis for a more complete picture.

Rev. Thomas Thomas

Building on his research into the work of Thomas Thomas and John Humphrey in the Swansea area which has been incorporated in *Copperopolis. Landscapes of the Early Industrial Period in Swansea* (Aberystwyth: RCAHMW, 2000), Stephen Hughes has positively identified 125 of the 900 chapels that Thomas designed or modified. Thomas worked between ca. 1843 and 1886, designing chapels mostly for his own Welsh Independent and English Congregational denominations but also for other denominations, including Welsh Calvinistic Methodist, Baptist and English Primitive Methodist and Bible Christian chapels. He practised particularly widely in Glamorgan, Caernarfonshire and Carmarthenshire but his work is densely represented all over Wales and in Welsh congregations across England.

CAPEL members who may be aware of chapels attributed to Thomas Thomas are asked to contact

Stephen Hughes (Tel. 01970 621215; E-mail: stephen.hughes@rcahmw.org.uk)
or

David Percival (Tel. 01970 621217; E-mail: david.percival@rcahmw.org.uk)

Capel y Doc, Llanelli Members who attended the Spring 1999 meeting at Llanelli may have looked at a chapel that was not on the formal itinerary of the day, Capel y Doc.



Capel y Doc

© RCAHMW

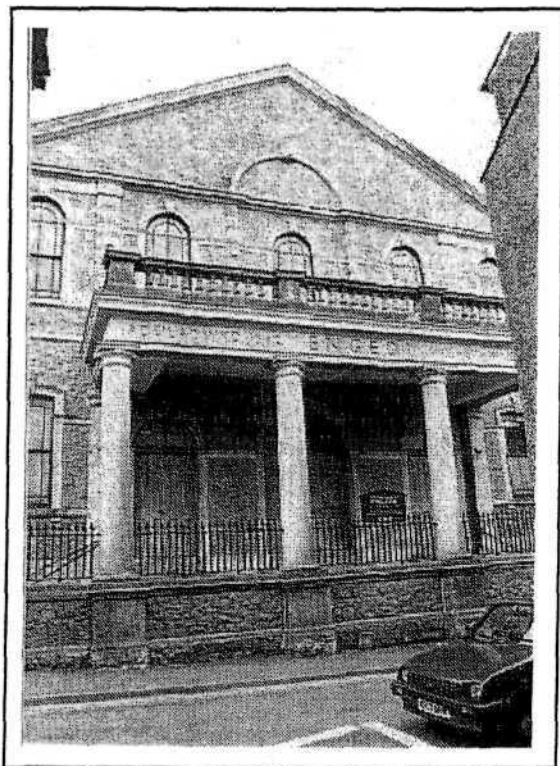
This Welsh Independent chapel was built in 1857 close to the New Dock of 1832. In 1868 it was rebuilt to the designs of John Humphrey. The façade of Capel y Doc contrasts with Humphrey's later and better known Llanelli chapel Tabernacl. No great triple arches here; a double doorway with double window above, framed in a shallow great arch. The interior however shows a number of Humphrey touches, some of which are copied from Thomas's earlier work for the same denomination:- the forward projecting pulpit accessed by a sweeping stair on either side, curved side pews graduated so that the congregation face the pulpit wherever they are seated, a pierced cast-iron balcony front on three sides, with a plain panelled front above the *sêt fawr*, two windows in the lobby screen.

The chapel was visited by RCAHMW in response to a proposal to demolish it. A measured plan was made and also additions to the existing photographic coverage.

D J Percival

Richard Owen 1831 - 1891, Architect

It is surprising how little is known about the architects of our chapels. Even in chapel and other local histories one very often draws a blank. However, the one name that stands out is that of Richard Owen. The little we know about his life is found in that remarkable volume by J R Jones, *The Welsh Builder on Merseyside* (Liverpool, 1946). Born in 1831 at Plas Bel, Y Ffôr, (Four Crosses), Gwynedd, Richard Owen was apprenticed to his father as a joiner. Twenty years later he moved to Liverpool, where he married and settled down. He was employed



Engedi, Caernarfon

by John Jones, a builder, of Spencer Street, Everton, and then, after Jones emigrated to the United States, by Williams and Jones, Castle Street. This was when he started attending night school drawing classes at the Mechanics' Institute and started studying to be an architect. He married circa 1859 and in 1862 set up in business on his own in Crosshall Street. Over the years he worked closely as a surveyor with the firm of Messrs David Roberts & Co., one of the largest Welsh building firms (founded in Liverpool as early as 1828). Owen planned their offices in Dale Street and Roberts' Welsh Mansion at Bryngwenallt, Abergele.

Like hundreds of other Welsh people in Liverpool, he joined a Welsh chapel, in Mulberry Street. He later moved to the Welsh C.M. chapel at Rose Place, where he was given his first chapel contract, building Fitzclarence Street Welsh C.M. Chapel in 1864. In a nutshell there is no doubt that Owen benefited greatly from the close connections that existed between the Welsh, and their chapels. But he was also a most prolific architect when it came to planning within Liverpool itself. Another interesting fact is that he designed the stage for the first Eryri Temperance Festival, held in Caernarfon Castle in 1866. I have been unable to discover whether or not he was given the contract for the 1867 festival, but in that year the stage collapsed, slightly injuring 150 of the choristers.

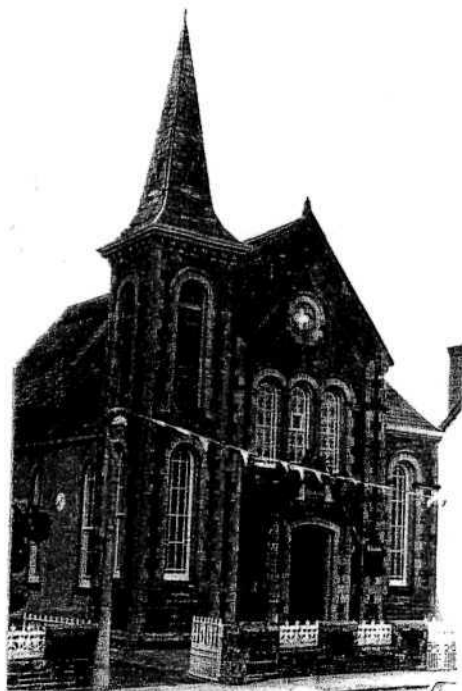
By his death in 1891, (when over 600 mourners attended his funeral), he is alleged to have planned over 250 chapels in Wales and England. In an effort to substantiate this claim I have trawled *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* for 1863-91 and *Y Genedl Gymreig* for the period 1877-91 searching for tendering advertisements, and have so far discovered 85 chapels designed by him.

Here is my incomplete list of chapels built or renovated by Richard Owen (or Richard Owen & Son), gathered in the main from *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*. (Where known I have included the denomination.)

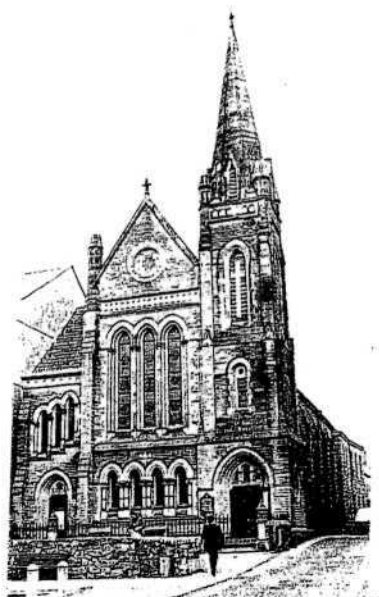
- 1865 Liverpool, Fitzclarence St. Welsh C.M.
Tal-y-sarn, Gwynedd, Capel Mawr, C.M.
- 1866 Caernarfon, Engedi (extension)
- 1867 Dwyran, Anglesey, C.M.
- 1868 Bethesda, Gerlan C.M. Schoolroom
Bethesda, Carneddi C.M.
Sarnau, Gwynedd, C.M.
Dinmael, Gwynedd, C.M.
Rhuddlan, C.M.
Llanrhaeadr, Pentre C.M.
Rhuthun, Wesleyan
Cefn Mawr, Ruabon, Wesleyan
- 1869 Rock Ferry, Merseyside, C.M.
Blaenau Ffestiniog, Bethesda. Independent

- Machynlleth, Penuel C.M.
 Tal-y-bont, Bala
 Shrewsbury, Mills Lane C.M.
- 1870 Amlwch, Capel Mawr C.M.
 Llandrindod Wells, C.M.
- 1871 Towyn, Gwynedd, Bethel C.M.
 Southport, Peniel C.M.
 Llangollen, Baptist
 Mold, Y Ffridd C.M.
- 1872 Llanrhystud, Rhiwbwys C.M.
 Llanuwchllyn, Glanaber C.M.
 Corwen, C.M.
 Llandeilo, C.M.
 Ffynngroyw, C.M.
 Lampeter, Shiloh C.M.
 Penmachno, C.M.
 Rhyl, Wesleyan
 Flint, C.M.
- 1873 Mostyn, Wesleyan
 Llangollen, C.M.
 Conwy, Carmel C.M.
 Llandoverly, Williams Pantycelyn Memorial Church C.M.
 Llanfaircaereinion, C.M.
- 1874 Llanidloes, Wesleyan
 Llanidloes, China St. C.M.
 Rhuthun, Pentrecelyn C.M.
 Cemaes, Montgomeryshire, C.M.
 Nercwys, Flints. Soar C.M. (renovation)
 Nefyn, C.M.
 Rhyl, Bethel C.M. schoolroom
 Llanidloes, Parc C.M.
 Brymbo, Bwlchgwyn Wesleyan
 Flint, Wesleyan
- 1875 Penmaenmawr, English C.M.
 Mold, Bethesda CM (addition of gallery)
 Caernarfon, Wesleyan (renovation)

- Llansadwrn, Carm., Seion C.M.
 Abererch, C.M.
 Edeyrn, C.M.
- 1876 Aberystwyth, Baker St., Independent
 Mold, Wesleyan (interior only)
 Llanllechid, Jerusalem C.M. and minister's house
 Flint, C.M.
 Felinheli, Wesleyan
 Rhosllanerchrugog, Capel Mawr C.M. extension and renovation
 Blaenau Ffestiniog, Diffwys C.M.
- 1877 Tregarth, Independent
 Oswestry, Wesleyan
 Trawsfynydd, Wesleyan
 Llanfairmathafarneithaf, Tabernacl C.M.
 Llanuwchllyn, Glanaber C.M. (schoolroom & minister's house)
 Colwyn Bay, Independent
 Liverpool, Anfield Rd. C.M.
 St. David's C.M.
- 1878 Coedpoeth C.M.
 Bwlchgwyn C.M. (extension and renovation)
 Corwen, Wesleyan
 Dolgellau, Wesleyan
 Clwt-y-bont, Deiniolen, Independent
 Dolwyddelen. C.M.
 Liverpool, David St. C.M.
- 1879 Aberystwyth, Tabernacl C.M.
 Denbigh, Capel Mawr C.M. (extension and renovation)
 Llandrillo, C.M.
 Liverpool, Waterloo C.M.
- 1880 Henllan, Denbigh, C.M.
 Trefriw, Llanrwst, Independent
 Llanrwst, Baptist
- 1882 Caernarfon, Castle Square English C.M.
 1883 Caerwys, Capel y Ddôl C.M.
 1885 Adwy'r Clawdd, C.M.
- No advertisements have been noted from the period 1886-91.



*Shiloh, Lampeter
(before demolition of its spire)*



Castle Street, Caernarfon

The growth and decline of the work carried out by Owen during his career can be tabulated:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|---|------|----|------|---|------|---|
| 1863 | 0 | 1871 | 4 | 1879 | 4 | 1887 | 0 |
| 1864 | 0 | 1872 | 9 | 1880 | 3 | 1888 | 0 |
| 1865 | 2 | 1873 | 5 | 1881 | 0 | 1887 | 0 |
| 1866 | 1 | 1874 | 10 | 1882 | 1 | 1888 | 0 |
| 1867 | 1 | 1875 | 6 | 1883 | 1 | 1889 | 0 |
| 1868 | 8 | 1876 | 7 | 1884 | 0 | 1890 | 0 |
| 1869 | 5 | 1877 | 8 | 1885 | 1 | 1891 | 0 |
| 1870 | 2 | 1878 | 7 | 1886 | 0 | | |

This table does not pretend to be exhaustive, but one interesting fact is borne out, in that the agricultural depression that followed the boom of the 1870s and lasted into the twentieth century did have a severe effect upon chapel

building in rural Wales. This fact is also borne out when we study the chapels planned by another, less important, architect, Richard Davies of Bangor and Llanfairfechan. After 1878, apart from two chapels in 1881, he does not appear to have planned other chapels until 1904. Of course, tenders for building English language chapels or chapels in England would not appear in *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* or other Welsh papers. Hugh Owen joined his father's firm in 1882, when it became known as Richard Owen & Son. Under that name they built at least two chapels, Edge Lane C.M., Liverpool, 1899, and Heathfield Road C.M., Liverpool, 1924.



Capel y Ddól, Caerwys, after conversion into a residence

Hugh Owen died in 1942 but the firm continued in business and, interestingly, it is quite probable that the last chapel planned by them was the new Stanley Road C.M. Chapel built in 1956 in place of the building destroyed by enemy action in 1941. Ironically enough, the first chapel planned by Richard Owen at Fitzclareance Street, was also destroyed by enemy action!

Of interest also is the appearance from this incomplete list that most of Richard Owen's work was for his own denomination. It is also apparent from the above evidence that most of the work was done in rural Wales, apart from Flintshire and Liverpool, with the occasional large chapel at a seaside resort.

It is interesting that only one or two examples of his work may be found in Anglesey and none in the industrial south of the country.

His secular work is of course even more of a challenge to discover, but he was responsible in 1867 for a shop called London House in High Street, Bangor, for house building at Dyserth in 1868, for building a Board School at Tŷ'n-y-gongl in 1875, the Bala Building Co. (Barclays Bank today) at Bala in 1876, the New Inn Public House, Vale St., Rhyl and other offices in 1878, houses in Bala in 1882 and the Caernarfon Free Library in 1888. The tantalising bit of evidence is that his firm was still in being as recently as 1956. Were there archives in being then? If so, where are they now? Could they be in existence somewhere in Liverpool or Blundellsands? My hope is that this incomplete furrow which I have attempted will be a stimulus for other members of CAPEL to do further researches in newspapers for their own areas and also to start recording these chapels before even more of the work of Richard Owen is lost to us for ever.

Eryl Wyn Rowlands
Llangefni

Building Applications and Threatened Sites April-Sept. 2001

Capel Saron, M.C., Penrhynside, Llandudno. Closed.

Capel Moriah, W.M., Penrhynside, Llandudno. Closed.

Capel Aion, B. Glanwydden, Llandudno. Temporarily closed, since Nov.2000 because of flood damage.

Synagogue, Brandreth Road, Penylan, Cardiff. Application for demolition has been rejected (Article in Western Mail 17.4.2001)

Tabernacle Baptist Chapel, Yew Street, Troedyrhiw. Application to demolish, 11.6.2001

Nazareth, Yew Street, Troedyrhiw. For sale, 26.4.2001

Pantybuarth, Nr Pantymwyn. Converted chapel for sale, 18.6.2001

Salem Baptist Chapel, Llanfair Talhaearn. Closed November, 2000.

Bryn Seion Baptist Chapel, Eglwysbach, sold and converted to dwelling in 2000

Soar y Codau Baptist Chapel. Closed, Sept. 1982 and converted to dwelling.

Baptist Chapel Henllan Place, Denbigh, Application to convert to single dwelling 18.6.2001

Skinner Street Chapel, Aberystwyth. Application to demolish, 25.7.2001.
Presbyterian Church of Wales, Princes St. Montgomery, Application for internal alterations to be made, 20.8.2001

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Rehoboth Chapel, High Street, Coedpoeth, Nr Wrexham | For Sale |
| Elim Pentecostal Church, Woodland Road West, Colwyn Bay | For Sale - under threat of demolition if not sold within 6 months |
| Cyssegr Independent Chapel, Rhewl, Mostyn, Flintshire | Derelict |
| Chapel at Pant y Buarth, Nr Pantymwyn (converted) | For Sale |
| Jezreel Baptist Chapel, Goginan (Important War Memorial) | Derelict |
| Chapel at Ffynnongroew Flintshire | For Sale |
| Leeswood Chapel, Nr Mold | For Sale |
| Emaus Methodist Chapel, Flint | Vandalism |
| Maeshafn Chapel, Nr Mold | For Sale |
| Wepre Presbyterian Chapel, Connah's Quay | Demolished |
| Zion Presbyterian Chapel, Penmynydd | Closed 1994 |
| Mount Tabor Chapel, Penmynydd | Closed 1994 |
| Chapel at Mancot Lane, Pentre, Nr Queensferry | Converted 1994 |
| Tabernacle Chapel, Flint | Derelict |
| Saron Chapel, Brynford Road, Lixwm(converted) | For Sale |
| Peniel Chapel (now Peniel Villas), Bagillt Road, Greenfield | For Sale |
| Chapel, Glynne Street/Dundas Street, Queensferry | For Sale |
| Disgwylfa Chapel, Trelogan, Nr Holywell | For Sale |
| Zion Methodist Chapel, Poolmouth, Daisy Road, Brynteg | For Sale |
| Chapel, Clayton Road, Pentre Broughton, Nr Wrexham | For Sale |
| Soar Chapel, Aberderfyn, Ponciau, Nr Wrexham | For Sale |
| Lavister United Reformed Chapel, Wrexham Road, Rossett | For Sale |
| Gorwel Chapel, Pencaerau, Rhiw, Pwllheli | For Sale |
| Seilo Chapel, Johnstown, Wrexham | For Sale |

With special thanks to Mrs Dilys Glover and Mr Matthew Lovelock for informing CAPEL of so many chapels under threat.

In his note regarding Tabernacle, Flint, Mr Lovelock gives details of commemorative stones laid by the Rev. John Williams, Birkenhead, Miss Hughes, Rhyl, James Taylor and the donor of the land, I.P Davies at the building of the chapel in March 1880.

Penny Icke

Chapels Now Closed or Demolished Breconshire

Mr Freer's list published in *Newsletter 37* was most useful but the following details should perhaps be amended:

Corrections to the list

| | | |
|--------------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Builth | Ebenezer | Built 1796, closed 1899. The site is now a veterinary surgery. Replaced by Memorial Baptist Chapel, a short distance away |
| Darren Felen | Nazareth | This chapel should be listed under Clydach, not Darren Felen |
| Halfway | Horeb | Baptist, not Cong./URC Built 1820, abandoned ca 1960. Graveyard a ruin. |
| Pwllgloyw | Bethel | Still in use. |

Note, too, that the Glamorgan St. chapel in Brecon (not Baptist) is now a Museum store, not part of an hotel.

Additions to the list:

| | | |
|-------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Abercrâf | Noddfa | Built 1900, closed 1991. Now a dwelling. |
| Llangamarch | Salem | Built 1645, closed ca 1950 chapel ruins, graveyard. |
| Llan-gors | Penuel | Built 1823, closed 1996. Empty. |
| Sennybridge | Sion | Built 1859, closed ca 1990. Empty; for sale. |
| Ynysyfelin | Bethel | Built 1799, submerged by Llwyn-Onn reservoir ca 1920. Replaced by new chapel in Llwyn-Onn village. |

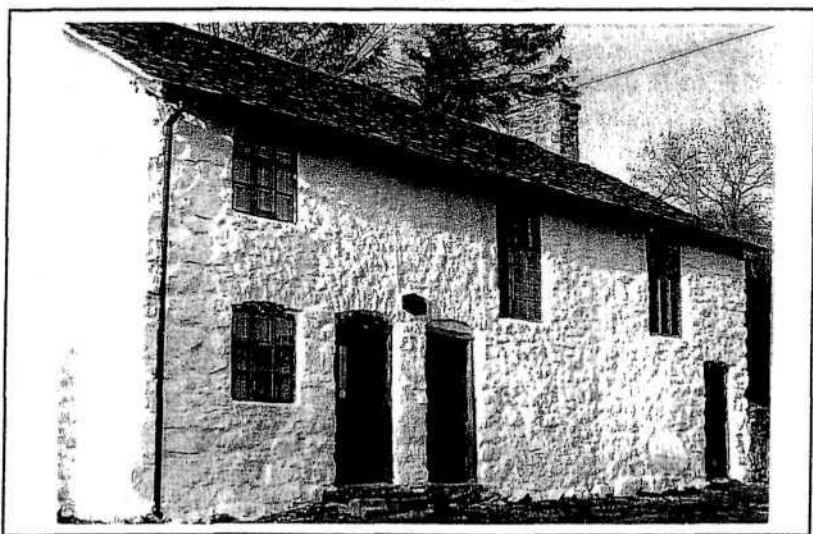
| | | |
|---------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ystradgynlais | Bethany | Built ca 1900 as Welsh Congregational. Purchased by Baptists 1946. Closed ca 1990. Demolished and replaced by a dwelling. |
|---------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The following were situated in Breconshire until 1889. The area in question then became part of Monmouthshire and later Gwent.

| | | |
|------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Beaufort | Siloam | Built ca 1926. Demolished |
| Beaufort | Soar | Built 1851. Empty and semi-ruinous |
| Dukestown (Sirhowy) | Tabernacle | Built 1833, closed ca 1990. A ruin, graveyard. |

Peter Powell

Hen Gapel John Hughes, Pontrobert



Hen gapel John Hughes ar ei newydd wedd

Bu'r flwyddyn 2000, ar drothwy mileniwm newydd, hefyd yn flwyddyn arwyddocaol i'r adeilad hanesyddol hwn, wrth gofio bod dau can mlynedd wedi mynd heibio ers ei godi a'i ddefnyddio fel lle o addoliad gan y

Methodistiaid Calfinaidd. Fe gynhyrchodd Methodistiaid Sir Drefaldwyn lawer o arweinwyr nodedig yn y cyfnod hwn. Ymysg cyfoedion John Hughes yr oedd Abraham Jones, Llanfyllin, William Jones, Dolyfoddu, ac Evan Griffiths, Meifod, ond y ddau hynotaf, yn ddiamau, oedd John Davies, Pendugwn, a fu'n genhadwr am bum deg pump o flynyddoedd yn Tahiti, ac Ann Thomas, Dolwar Fach, a ddaeth yn adnabyddus fel Ann Griffiths, emynyddes fwyaf Cymru. Bu John Hughes yn gyfaill ac yn lladmerydd i bob un o'r rhain ac ef, wrth gwrs, gyda'i wraig Ruth, a ddiogelodd emynau Ann Griffiths i'r genedl.

Wrth annerch pererinion cyfoes yn yr hen gapel ar ei newydd wedd yn Ebrill 1995 dywedodd yr Athro R Geraint Gruffydd am John Hughes, 'Ei waith ef, i raddau pell, sy'n ei gwneud yn bosibl inni sylweddoli lle mor freintiedig oedd y parthau hyn ... yn ysbrydol yn hytrach nag yn faterol, ddwy ganrif yn ôl. Y mae ... yn enghraifft deg o'r grymusterau a drawsnewidiodd fywyd Cymru gyfan yn ystod hanner cyntaf y bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg. Yn ystod yr hanner canrif yna fe enillwyd Cymru, i raddau helaeth, i Grist'

Ym 1983, a'r adeilad a gaewyd ym 1865 (un mlynedd ar ddeg wedi marw John Hughes) yn prysur mynd â'i ben iddo, cynigiwyd ef am bris gostyngol i unrhyw rai a oedd yn barod i'w adfer, a dyna sut y bu i tua dwsin o garedigion ein treftadaeth Gristnogol fynd ati i godi arian trwy apêl genedlaethol. Pobl leol, yn cynrychioli croesdoriad o'r enwadau oedd wrth y llyw, a minnau (ar y pryd yn 'alltud' yng Nghaerdydd) wrth ddarllen am eu hymdrechion yn holi ynglŷn â'r defnydd y bwriedid ei wneud o'r adeilad unwaith y byddai wedi ei adfer, ac yn cael gwahoddiad i roi fy syniad am Ganolfan Undod ac Adnewyddiad Cristnogol ar waith wrth ddod i fyw yn y bwthyn a fu'n gartref i John a Ruth Hughes am ddegain mlynedd. Er gorfod aros am ddegawd, fy mraint oedd symud i fyw i'r bwthyn ym 1993 a llywio gweddill yr adfer, gan agor y Ganolfan ym 1995.

Erbyn heddiw croesawyd dros ddwy fil o bererinion ac ymwelwyr, gyda llawer ohonynt yn dod o du draw i ffiniau Cymru ar drywydd Ann

Griffiths a'i chyfoedion. Cynhaliwyd sawl encil, gweithdy ac oedfa dros y chwe blynedd, gyda Diwrnod Ann Griffiths, sef 12 Awst, yn gyfle arbennig i gofio. Eleni, syrthiodd y dyddiad ar y Sul a daeth dros chwe deg i'r gwasanaeth cydenwadol, dwyieithog yn y prynhawn. Cawsom ein hatgoffa o eiriau'r Canon A M Allchin yn ei anerchiad ym 1995: 'Rydym, trwy weddi ac addoliad, yn gweld gorchestion Duw yn y gorffennol nid yn unig fel digwyddiadau a fu, ond fel rhai sy'n fyw ac yn trigo gyda ni heddiw. Fe'n hamgylchynir gan gwmwl enfawr o dystion ac yn eu plith John a Ruth ac Ann a phawb a fu'n addoli yn y lle hwn i lawr y blynyddoedd. Y maent yn agos iawn atom'.

Nia Rhosier

This is an account of the restoration of the John Hughes Memorial Chapel in Pontrobert, Montgomeryshire, for use as a nondenominational Centre for Christian Unity and Renewal. Through a financial appeal by local people of all denominations launched in 1994, it became possible to restore the building, which dates from 1800. The adjoining cottage is now the home of the custodian, Nia Rhosier, who, as a spiritual guide welcomes pilgrims and visitors and arranges occasional services, retreats and workshops. Due to the many lectures and other writings on Ann Griffiths, Wales' greatest woman hymnist, by the Englishman, A M Allchin, there is now a growing interest in her spirituality, which draws people from all over the world to this special place.

The Restoration of Tabernacl, Llandudno

Tabernacl, a Welsh Baptist chapel, is a Grade 2 listed building. It is also a leasehold property and the trustees are legally liable for the repair of the building. For more than seven years prior to 1996, the trustees had been actively seeking ways and means of relieving the burden and responsibility for the upkeep of Tabernacl but the same time securing the ministry.

In February 1996 we became aware of a scheme run by Conwy County Council and Cadw to repair and restore historic buildings within a defined conservation area in Llandudno. Tabernacl came within the defined boundary and the scheme would provide 50% of restoration and repair costs up to a maximum of £25,000. The costs envisaged could not be met by this amount and we were encouraged by the Cadw official to apply for Heritage Lottery Funding. A surveyor was appointed and duly reported that both the inside and outside of Tabernacl needed repairing, identifying his main concerns as: 1) re-roofing 2) dampness 3) dry rot 4) external rendering 5) internal replastering 6) reinstatement of original castings of mouldings 7) treatment of timbers against decay and insect infestation 8) redecoration, internal and external. Overall costs would be £200,000. This sum was found by a successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for 75% of the overall costs, with the remaining 25% being funded by the Conwy Council / Cadw grant and chapel funds.

I believe that the key to a successful application where church or chapel buildings are concerned is to have Cadw involved with the application. Chapels and churches qualify for Lottery funding because they serve the Community and I trust that this brief account of our experience in Llandudno will be of some assistance to CAPEL members.

Gwilym Williams
(Chapel Secretary)

Methodist by Name, Methodical by Nature: the Calvinistic Methodist Archive at the National Library of Wales

The Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Archive at the National Library of Wales is the largest and most diverse Nonconformist archive held at the Library. The Archive reflects the complex organisational structure of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, which is the one denomination that developed and grew up

in Wales, becoming one of the most influential denominations in the country. The records, which were first deposited at the Library in 1934, include two major collections of records, which may be termed the 'Trefeca Group' and the 'Bala College Group'.

The Trefeca Group represents the independent eighteenth century development of Calvinistic Methodism in Wales, centred on the archives of the founding father, Howel Harris, and the community he was later to establish at Trefeca, often referred to as the Trefeca Family. The archive can be roughly divided into six groups. There are some 200 volumes of Harris' diaries from 1735 to 1773, which have been listed and have recently been microfilmed. In addition, there are over 3000 letters, which have been guarded and filed at the Library. An inventory of the correspondence is provided in M H Jones, *The Trevecka Letters* (Caernarfon, 1932) for which a typescript index was produced in 1970. Records of Associations and accounts of Societies sent to Associations are also included. A group of military manuscripts reflects the fact that Harris was a Captain in the local militia formed when fear of an invasion from France was at its height. Lastly there are the manuscripts of Evan Moses (1726-1805), at one time Harris's right-hand man, and Thomas Roberts (1735-1804), another eminent member of the 'Family'.

The second collection, the Bala College Group, represents the next stage of development of Methodism during the 19th century. Spreading in North Wales, the movement separated from the Established Church on 1811, agreed on the Confession of Faith in 1823, drew up the Constitutional Deed in 1826 and issued the Declaration of Trust in 1827. An initial schedule was prepared in 1936 and supplemented with additional schedules in 1938 and 1964. Other small supplementary groups are the 'Bala College Safe' records, (1934) and 'Trevecka College Records' (1964).

Further deposits have been listed as the Calvinistic Methodist Archive General Collection, which consists of 10 schedules, containing over 35,000 items, ranging in date from the eighteenth century to the present day. It contains a range of manuscripts and records which include official records

such as papers of the individual boards and departments of the General Assembly, reports of Associations, and accounts of chapels and Sunday schools. It also includes personal papers belonging to Thomas Charles (1755-1815), the champion of Welsh Sunday schools, and John Hughes, Pontrobert, whose papers include hymns composed by Ann Griffiths of Dolwar Fach.

The first five schedules, prepared 1941 to 1974, list in a single, unclassified series, the accessions that were made during that period - some 29,000 items, which were given a sequential number. These volumes were finally provided with a general index in 1992. Accessions from 1974 to 1983 are listed in a second series, differing from the first in that it is classified. In content, the accessions of these years are distinguished from those of the earlier period by the high proportion of records of individual churches, many of them deposited because of the closure of the church. A third series, following a similar classification, lists accessions from 1983 on.

Particular mention should be made of the archives of the Foreign Mission, which cover the missionary work of the Church in North East India from its beginning in the 1840s to the 1960s. Some material, notably the Howel Harris diaries and the Foreign Mission archive may only be consulted by prior permission from the Curator.

The Archive also includes photographic and pictorial records, and more eclectic material, often referred to as 'relics' by the Presbyterian Church, but consisting mainly of what may best be described as museum pieces or *objets d'art*, although certain items, such as a lock of William Williams, Pantycelyn's hair may well deserve the accolade relic.

The Department of Manuscripts and Records is now listing records and archives courtesy of CAIRS, an electronic information management system employing international standards for archival description. A new agreement is also being sought between the Library and the Presbyterian Church in order to encompass some of these recent developments. The present acquisition policy attempts to concentrate on building collections 'which relate to National issues and structures'. The archive of an individual minister is no

longer seen as an integral part of chapel records and, for this reason, is no longer included in the Calvinistic Methodist Archive. Guidelines relating to the keeping of records have been prepared for chapel and presbytery officials.

The complexity of the Church's organisation, however, has meant that a radical approach was needed before venturing forward with the present listing policy, in order to bring our procedures into line with new standards and guidelines. Firstly, an individual chapels will be considered as a collection in its own right. (The new archival term for this is the French word 'fonds'.) The 'fonds' could include records of administration, Sunday school records and records of cultural activities. The records of the General Assembly, those of its various boards and departments administered by the Church's Central Office in Cardiff, form another 'fonds' or collection. The Associations, Presbyteries and Districts (the hierarchical divisions between the Assembly and the individual chapels) form yet another 'fonds'. Finally, the records pertaining to various establishments such as colleges and the Book Agency have been grouped together to form another 'fonds'.

The main aim of migrating the management of the Archive to the electronic environment is to ensure greater efficiency and facilitate improved cooperation and communication both within the Library and with the Presbyterian Church of Wales. The benefits of electronic listing include the ability to present the Archive on the Internet. In future important items may be digitised. Links can also be forged with other relevant electronic sources such as the Chapels Database of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW), which records and pictures architectural features.

Merfyn Wyn Tomos

Family History Fairs

CAPEL committee members this year again attended the Welsh Family History Societies' Fairs in Llandrindod Wells, Cwmbrân, Llandudno and Carmarthen. Many other organisations were also present and we are grateful to the family history societies for giving us the opportunity of publicising the work of CAPEL.

There were many enquiries about the location of various chapels and their records and concern was expressed about those at risk. Interest was shown both in our leaflets and in the exhibition of pictures of chapel buildings. Some sets of cards and photographs of chapels were sold and we hope that some of the visitors may have been sufficiently interested to become members of our society. Some of the visitors to our stand at Llandudno offered photographs, including some of chapels which have been demolished. Our travelling exhibition of chapel pictures has now been shown in several locations and should perhaps be updated.

One book of particular interest to family historians with Nonconformist ancestors is *Cofrestrï Anghydfurfiol Cymru: Nonconformist Registers of Wales* published by the National Library of Wales in 1994 and described by its editor Mr Dafydd Ifans in issue 24 of this *Newsletter*. The book lists, with names, denominations and locations, those chapels which have deposited their registers and records in public repositories. It is valuable to family, local and chapel historians. (And if any members of CAPEL would like to have the address of the family history societies which cover their area of interest in Wales, the rest of the United Kingdom or overseas, I should be pleased to provide the relevant details.)

Dilys R Glover

[Swyddogion presennol CAPEL yw: /*The current officers of CAPEL are:*
Cadeirydd / *Chairman* : J Lionel Madden, Hafren, Caer-gog, Aberystwyth
Trysorydd / *Treasurer* : G. Veysey, 2 Sandy Way, Wood Lane, Hawarden
Ysgrifennydd / *Secretary*: Penny Icke, RCAHMW, Plascrug, Aberystwyth
Golygydd y Cylchlythyr / *Newsletter Editor*: Alun Jones, Bro Dawel
Coedlan Iorwerth, Aberystwyth SY23 1EW]