

Capel



CYMDEITHAS TREFTADAETH Y CAPELI
THE CHAPELS' HERITAGE SOCIETY

Cylchlythyr / Newsletter 46 Hydref / Autumn 2005

Cyfarfod y Gwanwyn, Llanidloes



Trinity Church, Llanidloes

Cynhaliwyd Cyfarfod y Gwanwyn eleni ar 14 Mai yn Eglwys y Drindod, Shortbridge Street, Llanidloes. Wedi'r coffi arferol am 10.30, cafwyd sgwrs fer am yr eglwys gan Marjorie James. Ffurfïwyd yr eglwys yn 2004 trwy uniad rhwng Eglwys Ddiwygiedig Unedig Zion ac Eglwys Bresbyteriaidd Saesneg Bethel Street. Adeiladwyd capel gan yr Annibynwyr yn y man yma yn y flwyddyn 1824 ond ym 1878 y codwyd yr adeilad presennol, un o gapeli olaf John Humphrey, Mynyddbach, Abertawe, pensaer adnabyddus y Tabernacl, Treforus.

Yna cafwyd darlith hynod ddiddorol gan Cynthia Mills ar deuluoedd Millsiaid Llanidloes, a gyfrannodd gymaint i ganu cynulleidfaol Llanidloes, yn arbennig eglwys Bethel, ond hefyd i gerddoriaeth Cymru'n gyffredinol. (Gweler crynodeb o'r ddarlith isod. Yr oedd y ddarlithwraig hefyd wedi trefnu arddangosfa o gyhoeddiadau a chofnodion yn gysylltiedig â'r teuluoedd)

Wedyn ymwelwyd ag eglwys y Bedyddwyr ar draws y ffordd, lle cafwyd sgwrs fer gan y gweinidog, y Parch Meredith Powell, cyn mynd ymlaen i ginio yng ngwesty'r Angel.

Yn y prynhawn gwelsom yr eglwys Bresbyteraidd yn China Street lle y clywsom sgwrs gan Mr Gareth Morgan, Eglwys Plwyf Llanidloes, a'r Eglwys Fethodistaidd yn Longbridge Street. Cynlluniwyd y ddau gapel yma a hefyd capel y Bedyddwyr yn Shortbridge Street yn y 1870au gan y pensaer o Lerpwl, Richard Owen. Yn yr eglwys Bresbyteraidd mae cofeb i un o fugeiliaid cynnar yr achos, y Parch. Humphrey Gwalchmai (1788-1847), a fu'n gysylltiedig â llunio Cyffes Ffydd yr enwad ym 1823. Gorffennodd y cyfarfod yn ôl ein harfer, gyda the yn y capel olaf a welwyd, yr Eglwys Fethodistaidd.

Spring Meeting, Llanidloes

For the Spring Meeting this year the members assembled at Trinity Church, Shortbridge Street, Llanidloes on 14 May. After the usual coffee at 10.30, we heard a brief talk about the church by Marjorie James. The church was established in its present form by the union of Zion United Reformed Church and Bethel Street English Presbyterian Church. A chapel had been built by the Congregationalists on the same site in 1824 but the present building was erected in 1878. It was one of the last chapels designed by John Humphrey, Mynydd-bach, Swansea, in the style characteristic of the work of the architect of the well-known Tabernacle chapel, Morriston.

We then enjoyed a most interesting lecture by Cynthia Mills on the Mills families of Llanidloes, who contributed so much in the nineteenth century to congregational singing in the town and especially Bethel chapel but also to religious music throughout Wales. (See a shortened version of the lecture below. The lecturer had also arranged an interesting exhibition of publications

and records relating to the families)

After briefly viewing the chapel, we crossed the road to see the Baptist chapel and enjoy a brief talk by the minister Mr Meredith Powell before going on to lunch at the Angel Hotel.

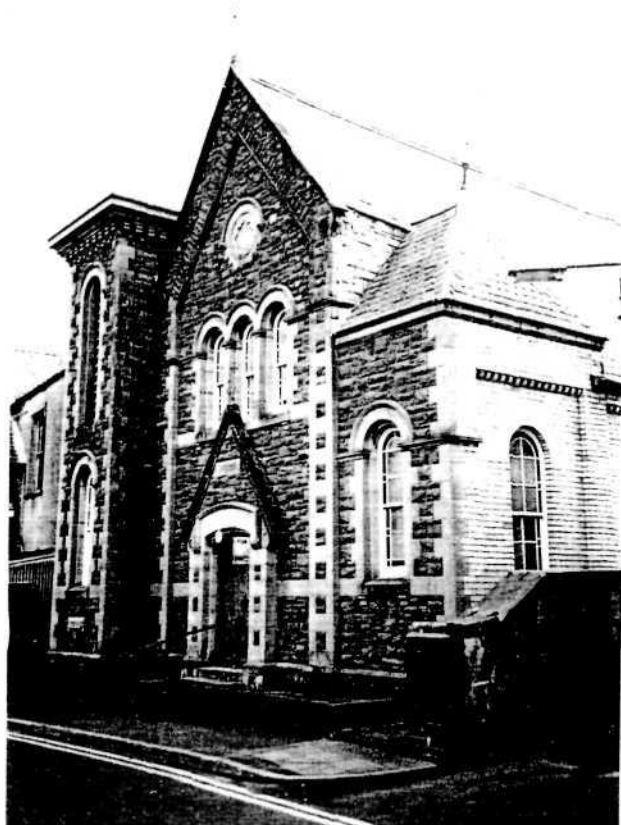
In the afternoon we visited the Presbyterian Church in China Street where we were addressed by Mr Gareth Morgan, the Anglican parish church and the Methodist Church in Longbridge Street where we were welcomed by th Rev. Peter Jennings and heard a talk on the church by our member, Mr Andrew Mathieson. Both these chapels and also the Baptist chapel in Shortbridge Street were designed in the 1870s by the well known Liverpool architect Richard Owen. In the Presbyterian Church, there is a tablet commemorating one of its first pastors, the Rev. Humphrey Gwalchmai (1783-1847), who had a major part in the preparation of the Calvinistic Methodists' Confession of Faith in 1823. The meeting concluded as usual with tea at the last chapel visited, the Methodist church.

The Mills Family of Llanidloes

Those who know Llanidloes will be aware that there are two well-recognised Mills families associated with the town, the 'Foundry Millses' and 'Mills the Musicians', both notable achievers in their respective fields. The Musicians era dated from the 1780s, that of the Foundry some 80 years later, each lasting about 120 years.

We do not have proof that the two families are of shared ancestry but the unique concentration of the Mills surname in Mid-Wales suggests that it is so, their advent possibly linked with late 16th century Elizabethan plantations when in 1571 the ancient lordship of Arwystl was bestowed on Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who then sought to increase its population by introducing experienced hill farmers from beyond the Welsh border. Early Montgomery parish records show three Mills (otherwise Milles, Mylles or Mills) marriages in Llandinam during the

1590s, with baptisms ensuing. The fact that the family name was registered at that time suggests that these entries represent a second or third generation of incomers. Maybe continuing research into Court of Great Sessions or other



Bethel Street, English Presbyterian Chapel

reliable records will reveal place or places of origin, possibly Gloucester, Somerset or Flanders - all compatible with the wool industry. However, we can establish from their early wills that they were capable, independent stock farmers of the yeoman class who extended their interests up to twenty miles north, south and west of Llandinam and noticeably multiplied.

The 1600s and early 1700s present us with Mills legends as yet unsubstantiated such as connections with Cromwell's Ironsides and the Quaker movement but there is one clearly recorded fact: in 1683 a John Mills served time in Montgomery gaol for refusing to pay his tithes or attend church; the Millses were revealing confidence in expressing their convictions.

So we pass to the mid 18th century, a period when three generations of Millses showed great dedication and energy in assisting the development of Welsh choral tradition and literacy. My object however is not so much to examine the family's unique academic and musical status as to present personalities in the variety of their contribution to the culture of Mid-Wales and beyond.

1757 marked the birth, at Tanyrallt farm just outside the town, of Henry (or Harry) regarded as the father of the 'dynasty' and likened by the Rev. T. Mordaf Pierce (in his article in *Y Traethodydd* 1901) to a Melchizedek on account of the remarkable dynamic quality so characteristic of Harry and his sons. The enthusiasm he displayed for the Methodist revival of his time may well suggest that as a young lad he had heard John Wesley preach during his last visit to Llanidloes in 1769. A modest tenant-farmer-weaver in his late 20s, married with young children, and described by his grandson as on the tall side, handsome, kindly and cheerful, he was an active member of Bethel Chapel, following its establishment in 1779 as one of the first Calvinistic Methodist places of worship in Montgomeryshire. His exceptional voice, rich, melodious and powerful, was 'discovered' by Thomas Charles of Bala in his search for suitable local instructors to raise the standard of congregational singing to be worthy of the legacy left by Pantycelyn. The Bethel elders resisted: Harry played musical instruments not then acceptable in places of worship, and his family had been entertainers of a distinctly secular kind. Thomas Charles' persuading succeeded and the recruit was invited north to receive his training. Harry's musical gifts, together with his personal tact, energy and devotion to the task saw him achieve success in both teaching and conducting, and he was much in demand at festivals throughout Wales. After a lifetime of dedicated work, he died in 1819 at the age of 63, having fathered 11 children and helped place Llanidloes on the map as a principal or even the leading centre of Welsh choral and congregational singing for over half a century - until changes in the local industrial scene caused large population shifts to the quarries and mining areas.

In Harry's last year the family had moved into town, where the weaving industry was fast developing and where there was also a degree of social unrest, precursor to the Chartist outbreak in 1839. The Millses, however, are not known to have been active in the radical movement, concentrating on developing their business interests and supporting the local Calvinistic Methodist cause, which had

progressed considerably, following the arrival of the charismatic Humphrey Gwalchmai. Already rebuilt in 1804, Bethel was enlarged in 1821 and Gwalchmai's emphasis on education undoubtedly encouraged the emerging literary scene, greatly aided by the transfer to Llanidloes in 1827 of the Wesleyan Press, which then flourished in the town for over 30 years. Llanidloes became noted as a town of young writers.

Of the second generation of the Millses, I shall refer to three of Harry's sons, Edward (b.1780), James (b.1790) and Richard (the only son of Harry's second marriage, b.1809).

Edward worked as a weaver and small flannel manufacturer and also had a sound local reputation as a *llawfeddyg* (auxiliary doctor). Strictly religious, he had a splendid voice and much love of singing. He loved reading and played his part in founding the town's first Literary Society. He left a daughter and four sons.

James owned a handloom operation at Maesyllan at the top of town. A deacon in Bethel, he was described as very upright, modest and sensitive and showed his musical talent as singing tutor to an evening class of some 70 young working men and in organising a Music Society "to improve congregational singing and instruct youth in elementary music". He extended the family's activities into both publishing (*Y Cerddor Eglwysig*, a collection of church music in three volumes) and composing (though his works mostly remained unpublished). He died relatively young, of typhoid fever, aged 54. His youngest son, David Henry, was also an accomplished singer, moving to the Liverpool area where he sang and conducted at local concerts.

Richard, 19 years James's junior, is however regarded as the most gifted member of the family and referred to as 'The Composer'. He was delicate in health but showed great intellectual drive in pursuing his object of raising the quality of sacred music in Wales. From the age of 11, he worked as a weaver but in his mid teens was composing psalm tunes with such skill that some were acclaimed by Joseph Parry and published in *Seren Gomer*. He too was a peripatetic tutor, John Roberts (Ieuan Gwyllt) being one of his pupils. He also set himself the task of examining several thousand scores for selection for publication. His compilation *Caniadau Seion* ('Songs of Zion') was published in 1840 and printed locally to

a very high standard. A supplement followed in 1842 and later two American editions. There followed the three volumes of his *Yr Arweinydd Cerddorol* (a lesson book on singing and a guide to music, with tunes and anthems). He was also instrumental in organising the first competitive singing festivals in Wales and was involved in the beginning of the Gymanfa Ganu tradition. He also gained some reputation as a poet, with the bardic name 'Rhydderch Hael' but died at the age of 34, leaving two sons and three daughters. His wife later married John Pryse, a local printer.

In the next generation, the family versatility increases in Edward's four sons.

Edward (b.1802) developed a great interest in natural science. He constructed an orrery to illustrate his lectures on planetary movement and published *Y Darluniadur Anianyddol* (The Science Illustrator) containing no fewer than 80 woodcuts carved by himself and his son,

Henry (b.1805) sought better opportunities across the Atlantic. He settled in Columbus, Ohio and died in 1865 in Chicago. His son John, returned to South Wales and became involved in the production of the radical newspaper *Tarian y Gweithiwr*.

Richard (b.1809) has often been confused with his uncle Richard born in the same year. He spent his whole life in Llanidloes. He worked as a weaver, shawl maker and bookbinder, was an accomplished writer on local history and religious and cultural matters and continued the family's association with Bethel and the Literary Society. Having in 1847 published his uncle's *Cerddor Eglwysig*, he purchased the local Albion Press in 1853 and in 1881 acted as co-editor of his brother John's biography. He had several children but only one daughter survived.

John (b.1812) was a delicate but active child with an inquiring mind. On leaving school at 13 he continued his education by reading as he worked his loom and studying music and classical languages to further his biblical knowledge. As a young man he became known as a poet ('Ieuan Glan Alarch') but later concentrated more on musical theory and took his turn as a circulating singing master. In 1838 he produced the first music text book in Welsh, *Gramadeg*

Cerddoriaeth, a small volume using skilfully invented terminology to both expound the rudiments of music and urge that music for worship should be of the highest order. The first printing of the work (2,000 copies) sold out within the year and several further editions appeared over the next twenty years. As an ordained CM minister, he went in 1841 to Ruthin and worked to improve the quality of the singing there and thence in 1845 moved to London to join the Jewin Chapel team of missionaries to the capital's Jews. He visited Palestine and in 1852 published *Iddewon Prydain* followed by the English translation, *British Jews*, in 1853, an acknowledged contribution towards Jewish emancipation. He had a great interest in biblical geography and was a Fellow of both the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Asiatic Society. He died in 1861 shortly after completing 15 years ministry at Nassau St. Welsh Church in central London.

I must also mention two of John's cousins. Richard (b.1840) trained as a printer, working in Newtown and Llanidloes before moving to Wrexham as a specialist notation compositor for Hughes & Son. He was a founder conductor of Rhos choir and a song writer of merit. John Henry (b.1845) was also a printer, founding and editing *The Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire Echo*. He was also precentor of China Street CM Chapel and conductor of Llanidloes Choral Union..

Cynthia Mills

Making Chapels Accessible: A CAPEL Response

In the last *Newsletter* Charles Kightly considered the accessibility of chapels from his personal experiences in 'church tourism' and allows us the opportunity to reassess the situation from a CAPEL perspective. Accessibility, in the sense of getting to see the inside of a chapel, is a requirement of bodies who fund tourist schemes, and, though desirable, is not a prerequisite of the casual tourist. Chapels, unlike any other buildings, have been converted to take on almost any function imaginable - pubs, theatres, showrooms, gyms, doctors' surgeries, housing and even barns, to mention just a few. Regrettable

though some of these conversions may be, the buildings are still part of the Nonconformist heritage and represent part of the 'national architecture of Wales' (Anthony Jones). Indeed, some of the converted chapels represent the best of their type and should be included in any tourist itinerary - for example, Glendower Street Chapel, Monmouth (now a private residence) Pembroke Terrace CM chapel Cardiff (architect's office) and the Wesleyan Chapel, Haverfordwest (workshop/store, but once described as the 'neatest chapel in Wales'). If these buildings are now in private hands, it is not possible to demand that they should be open to the public. CAPEL for its part, has no authority to request public access to any of the chapels, but while Charles Kightly may not have been able to find chapel-goers ready to commit themselves to regular opening times, we have personally found that people are delighted to open their chapels to interested casual visitors, and even on one occasion contacted the organist to come and give us an impromptu recital on their excellent organ. The chapel key-holder is not always advertised, and such visits may be rather time-consuming. However, many of the livelier chapels have weekday activities and even coffee mornings and these are actually more likely to be in the chapel building or immediately adjoining it than is the case with many parish churches; someone might then be generally available to allow access. The wider the age range of the congregation, the more likely the chapel is to be open during the week, but where the membership consists of a few elderly people, Sunday may be the only day when anyone is present.

Different denominations have different views about the function and importance of their chapel buildings, and usually the architectural merit of the building is not their first concern. The chapel is often a hangover from a past era, when attendance on Sunday was assumed, whereas nowadays the building may actually be a handicap which has to be considerably altered if it is to function at all. It may well be that a listed chapel of architectural merit becomes defunct partly because it cannot be altered, so that the very chapels that a visitor might wish to see are those which are not open.

Another difficulty is that chapels were often built for a specific (often industrial) population which has since moved away, leaving just a few local worshippers or members who have to travel a considerable distance to attend.

A large number of chapels are historically quite recent structures and do not exhibit the long development which makes so many ancient parish churches tourist attractions. It is not really normal for more recently built Anglican churches, apart from cathedrals, to be open for tourists, and by historical standards many chapels rank alongside these. The earlier chapels - Pales, Maesyronnen, Soar y Mynydd - are in fact open as are some of particular interest - Hen Gapel John Hughes, Ann Griffiths Memorial Chapel and, of course, the Hen Gapel at St.Fagan's.

Mr Kightly suggests that locked chapels are a poor advertisement for Christian mission. This has to be true also for locked parish churches, and in some senses for those cathedrals which charge entrance fees. We are here considering two very different matters. Religious buildings are not like castles, stately homes and museums, making a living from visiting tourists. If a church or chapel is active, it will be open at certain times during the week. If it is dormant, it will almost certainly close down, because denominations, in pursuing their Christian mission, cannot afford to preserve non-functioning buildings and are not in any sense tour operators.

The problem of security cannot be easily dismissed and minimising the risks involved may not be just a question of locking away vulnerable items. The most valuable objects in many chapels are the carved wooden pews, wrought iron features and furnishings around the *sêf fawr*. With their limited history, many chapels do not have many items on display, but if those they have were locked away the chapel would appear rather bare and uninteresting. It is worth pointing out that a unique tapestry has just been stolen from Chester Cathedral while the building was apparently buzzing with custodians and visitors. Opportunist thieves operate everywhere. One possible solution in some chapels might be to have the doors open but with a metal grill fixed across the entrance, allowing at least a glimpse of the inside.

Mr Kightly is correct in pointing out the lack of any substantial tourist information on chapels. The Tourist Information Centres have glossy brochures on almost everything except chapels, and CAPEL, attempting to address this omission and convey something of this 'architecture of enthusiasm' (as John Betjeman called it) to the wider public, has produced a

leaflet *Discovering Chapels in Llandudno* which is available in the T.I.C. and the Public Library in Llandudno. It is possible that visitors looking at the outside of selected chapels and occasionally gaining access to the inside may lead to the regular opening of some chapels in the tourist sense. Clearly, Llandudno is a reasonable town in which to start, simply because it is full of tourists anyway and the chapels are exceptionally good. It is intended to produce similar leaflets for other places. Interest in chapels may also be increased by opening chapels on the Architectural Heritage Open Days each year, as happens already in some areas. Eventually a nationwide tourist booklet might be produced, illustrating some of the most important chapels in Wales.

We think the question of the publicity given to the chapels is more urgent initially than trying to get the chapels opened. If interest is roused by leaflets, cards and brochures, public pressure for the chapels to be opened may follow. CAPEL's aim to promote interest in the 'national architecture of Wales' is still hindered by those who scorn this part of the built heritage and there is a very steep hill to climb to overcome this prejudice. In the circumstances, it seems inappropriate for funding bodies, especially Welsh ones, to handicap initiatives designed to encourage 'chapel tourism' by insisting that chapels should be open. CAPEL appreciates Mr Kightly's interest in this matter and would be happy if he could support the case presented for 'chapel tourism', initially without the general access requirement.

(This response on behalf of CAPEL was written by the Secretary, with the approval of CAPEL officers)

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 details were not available: a written submission to

the relevant Planning Authority was therefore not possible. Both lists relate to the period from February 2005 to the end of August 2005.

Capel Egryn, Tal-y-Bont, Gwynedd: Chapel and schoolroom - change of use to dwelling.

Saron Chapel, Conwy, Llanwddyn, Oswestry: Conversion to dwelling.

Dock Chapel, Morfa, Llanelli: Conversion of chapel to 8 No. flats with addition of glazed entrance area.

Memorial Chapel, George Hill, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire: Conversion of chapel to 4 No. offices.

Pentwyn Chapel, Upper Tumble, Llanelli: Conversion of former chapel to residential use.

Pen Nebo Chapel, Penybontfawr, Oswestry: Chapel under threat - no information available.

Bethania URC, Upper Chapel, Breconshire: Decision taken to close the chapel. Advice Leaflet sent to Mr Vivian Parry.

Ebenezer CM Chapel, Llwynbrwydrau, Llansamlet, Swansea: Council application to demolish the chapel for residential development. Information from Mr W J Meredith.

Former St David's Church, Stanley Road, Llanelli: Planning application for conversion to 5 No. link dwellings.

Capel Coffa, Llandudno Junction, Conwy: Provision of disabled access ramp and toilet facilities.

Capel Bethel, Llanfachreth, Gwynedd (Listed): Change of use of chapel to form part of adjacent dwelling (Ty Capel Bethel).

Capel Moriah, Dolrhedyn, Tanygrisiau, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd: Glazed pitched roof at rear to create new toilet and kitchen facilities.

Beulah Chapel, Beulah, Newcastle Emlyn, Ceredigion: Improved access for disabled via the vestry.

Park United Reformed Church, Murray Street, Llanelli: Change of use from church to a furniture shop (in the interest of long term preservation).

Greenfield Baptist Church, Murray Street, Llanelli: Replacement of 2 No. side windows with doors to install disabled ramp entrance.

Brynhufred Sunday School, Golden Grove, Carmarthen : Conversion to dwelling with an extension and separate garage.

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. The preservation work and alterations proposed for the Grade I Listed Maesyronnen URC, Glasbury-on-Wye, were assessed by Mr Norman Chang.

Tynycwm Chapel, Pontrhydfendigaid, Ystrad Meurig, Ceredigion: Unsympathetic conversion to dwelling involving new entrance, dormer windows and Upvc. Plans approved.

Greek Orthodox Church, Bute Town, Cardiff: Revised plans for open narthex extension, memorial archway and elevated brick belltower. Proposals are in keeping with the existing building.

Capel Peniel, Llanegryn, Gwynedd: Conversion into single dwelling with office. Too many roof lights due to low building height, otherwise a good conversion.

Capel Arenig, Bala: Sympathetic conversion of former Tin Tabernacle into holiday accommodation. Outcome better than further neglect and eventual demolition.

Capel Saron, Tyn y Maes, Bethesda: Conversion of disused chapel into dwelling with extension. Unsympathetic conversion proposed with poor features.

Capel Antioch (Congregational), Crymych, Pembrokeshire: Conversion of chapel into dwelling. Good conversion except for external decking feature.

Baptist Church, Abersychan, Pontypool, Torfaen CB: Provision of disabled access with ramps, reusing walling materials. No objections raised.

Llannefydd CM Chapel, Llannefydd, Denbigh: Provision of extension for Committee Room, toilets etc and internal rearrangements. No objections raised.

Gleiniant CM Chapel, Trefeglwys, Caersws: Conversion of chapel and schoolroom into two separate dwellings with vehicular access. Not a wholly sympathetic proposal.

Peniel Chapel (Listed), Carno, Caersws: Conversion of chapel and schoolroom into dwelling and workshop/studio. Very good conversion proposed by the Presbyterian Church authority.

Maesyronnen URC, Glasbury-on-Wye, Powys (Grade I Listed): Internal

and external preservation work including roofing and drainage. Reinstatement of original door opening on north wall and toilet extension. Procedures under the Ecclesiastical Exemption. CAPEL made no objection to the proposal but suggested that some information about the chapel prior to its Grade I Listing would have been helpful.

Capel Saeson, New Row, Pontrhydygroes, Ceredigion: Proposal to rebuild the derelict Lisburne Mines Chapel, possibly as part of the Ceredigion 'Spirit of the Miners' Project. CAPEL supported the proposal made by Mr E W Hughes.

Libanus Chapel, Bute Street, Treherbert, Rhondda Cynon Taff (Listed Grade II): Structural engineers report site defects and previous attempts to reconstruct the frontage have failed. Disused for 12 years. Interior of interest. Demolition is the likely outcome.

Capel Bethel, Llanfair, Harlech: Conversion of chapel to dwelling with other alterations. A good conversion - Neuadd Goffa is opposite and no alternative use was proposed.

Carmel Baptist Chapel, Pontrhydfendigaid, Ystrad Meurig, Ceredigion: Replacement of 5 existing windows with fixed UPVC double glazed windows with Georgian glazing bars to match existing style.

Bethel Christian Centre, Old Colwyn, Gwynedd: Demolition of existing building and erection of 10 No. residential units. No information about the old building was available.

Capel Rhyd y Meirch, Cwm Penmachno, Gwynedd: Conversion into residence with visitor accommodation, café/dining and gallery/studio. A good conversion which will preserve the chapel.

Sion Baptist Chapel, Brook Street, Llanfyllin: Change of use to dwelling with new entrance and additional roof lights. A sympathetic conversion.

News of Chapels.

Llanuwchllyn, Hen Gapel, Nr. Bala: The derelict chapel house adjoining the chapel has been restored and extended and is now inhabited. A plaque has been placed on the wall recording that this is the birthplace of Michael D. Jones, who organised the Welsh settlement in Patagonia, and returned to succeed his father as the Principal of the Independent College in Bala.

Black Park Methodist Chapel, Chirk: Since the last Newsletter a decision has been made to close this colliery chapel in spite of local efforts to save it.

Hebron Chapel, Cymmer, Neath: Following information that there was some concern about the interior furnishings of this Grade 11 Listed chapel, currently on the market, CADW was contacted.

Baptist Chapel, Newbridge Rd., Cefn Bychan, Wrexham: Listed Building Consent for the conversion of this chapel as a dwelling has now been granted. The illegally removed gravestones have been returned to the site and are required to be positioned around the edge of the site according to an approved plan.

Capel Saeson, New Row, Pontrhydygroes, Ceredigion: Plans to rebuild the derelict Lisburne Mines Chapel have been refused because it would be regarded as a new building in a countryside location.

Knolton Mission Church (Listed Grade II), Bryn, Overton, Wrexham: Revised plans with new details have been approved for this fire damaged Tin Tabernacle once destined for St Fagans.

Gleiniant CM Chapel, Trefeglwys, Caersws: Revised application to provide improved access and parking was required by Powys CC. Conversion of chapel and schoolroom as detailed in List 2 above.

Capel Hermon, Rhos on Sea, Colwyn Bay: Plans have been approved for a new chapel and 8 No. 2-bedroom flats to replace the existing chapel.

We have to apologise for an error in the List of Building Applications in the last Newsletter (No.45). The entry '**Bethel Church site, Beaufort, Ebbw Vale**' should have read '**Bethesda Chapel site (former U.R.C.) , Beaufort, Ebbw Vale**'. Bethel Methodist chapel is still active.

Darlith CAPEL yn yr Eisteddfod

Cynhaliwyd darlith CAPEL yn yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol yn y Felinheli brynhawn Mercher 3 Awst. Yr oedd Pabell y Cymdeithasau yn llawn i glywed y Parch. Harri Parri yn siarad am 'Gapel Newydd Nanhoron'.

Dechreuodd y ddarlith drwy gyfeirio at gerdd Cynan 'I Gapel Nanhoron':

'Y mae capel bach gwyngalchog

Ym mhellafoedd hen wlad Llŷn'

a dangosodd fod y bardd wedi defnyddio'r un llinellau mewn cerddi am Gapel Carmel ger Aberdaron a chapel bach arall yng ngogledd Môn!

Saif Capel Nanhoron ryw ddwy filltir o Fynytho. Adeilad hirgul, o garreg ydyw, â dau ddrws ar yr ochr ogleddol a lle i gynulleidfa o ryw gant a deugain - seddau fel blychau, dwy ohonynt yn grandiach na'r gweddill - ar gyfer y teuluoedd cefnog. Magwyd y darlithydd mewn tŷ ffarm o'r enw Y Lôn Dywyll ryw hanner milltir o'r Capel, ffarm a ddefnyddid wedi 1689 fel tŷ cwrdd gan yr Anghydfurfwyr. Ac o'r Lôn Dywyll y tarddodd y Capel Newydd. Prynwyd y tir ar gyfer y capel ym 1769 ac ymhlith arwyddwyr y weithred a sefydlodd y capel ym 1772 mae Rice Harris, gweinidog Penlan, Pwllheli, Griffith Griffiths, Blawty (un o gyndeidiau Harri Parry), a John Williams, Saethon. Calfinaidd oedd diwinyddiaeth Capel Newydd yn y dyddiau cynnar ond tua deng mlynedd wedyn roedd y Methodistiaid Calfinaidd yn codi capel arall ryw filltir i ffwrdd. Yn rhyfedd iawn, roedd y ddau gapel yn cydweithio i raddau ac ym 1788-9 roedd John Williams yn casglu £40-£50 tuag at gost y capel Methodist.

Aeth y darlithydd ymlaen yn ei ddull hyfryd, cellweirus, i roi peth o hanes rhai o'r prif deuluoedd a fu'n arwain cynulleidfa'r Capel Newydd - Richard, David a Timothy Griffiths o deulu Blawty ger Aberdaron, a John, David, Edward ac Abraham o deulu Saethon, ychydig i'r gogledd ddwyrain o Nanhoron.

Yna cawson hanes Catherine Edwards, o deulu Browning o swydd Bedford a Chelsea, a briododd y Capten Timothy Edwards o Blas Nanhoron ac a gafodd ym 1780 y profiad arswydus o deithio i Portsmouth i groesawu'i gŵr 'nôl o ryfel yn India'r Gorllewin ond i gael gwybod iddo farw ar y llong o ryw dwymyn. Pan ddaeth hi'n ôl i Nanhoron, ymunodd hi â chapel Penlan, Pwllheli ac wedyn â'r Capel Newydd. Credir bod yn ei theulu yn Bedford ychydig o draddodiad



Capel Newydd Nanhoron

Anghydfurfiol Bunyan. Adroddir amryw hanesion amdani ond chwedlau yw llawer ohonynt. Ond, cyflwynodd nifer o roddion i'r Capel Newydd a hi a sicraodd dir i godi capel Pendref, achos yr Annibynwyr yng Nghaernarfon. Byddai'n teithio milltiroedd i wrando a chofnodi pregethau, ond yn anffodus collwyd y llyfryn lle y cofnodai'r pregethau. Bu farw ym 1811 a'i chladdu ym mynwent eglwys Llangian.

Tua chanol y bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg yr oedd y capel ar ei gryfaf. Wedyn dirywiodd, yn rhannol o achos cau tir comin Mynytho ac yna chwalu Gwerthyr gan ysweiniaid Nanhoron. Ym 1872 agorodd yr Annibynwyr gapel Horeb ym Mynytho a dyna ble'r oedd y boblogaeth. O hynny ymlaen roedd hi wedi canu ar y Capel Newydd. Erbyn diwedd y 30au roedd dau ddiakon o Bwllheli wedi 'darganfod ieir yn trigo yn ei gynteddau'. Ac felly y bu nes i Gwilym T Jones yn y 50au arwain crwsâd a chasglu £2500 i ddiddosi'r adeilad. Ailagorwyd y capel yn swyddogol ar 26 Gorffennaf 1958.

CAPEL Lecture at the Eisteddfod

This year, CAPEL's National Eisteddfod Lecture took place on Wednesday afternoon 3 August. The Societies' Pavilion was full to hear the Rev. Harri Parri talk about Capel Newydd, Nanhoron (Nanhoron New Chapel).

He began his talk with a reference to the former Archdruid Cynan's poem 'To the Chapel at Nanhoron' with its well known lines 'There's a little white-washed chapel in a distant part of Lley'n' and then showed how the poet had later used the same lines in poems referring to Carmel chapel near Aberdaron and another little chapel in the North of Anglesey!

Nanhoron chapel is situated some two miles from Mynytho. It is a long narrow stone building with two doors on the northern side and room for a congregation of about 140 - box seats, two of which are grander than the remainder, presumably for the use of the most well-off families of the district. The lecturer was brought up on a farm called The Dark Lane half a mile or so from the Nanhoron chapel. The farmhouse itself had been used as a Dissenters' meeting house after the 1689 Toleration Act. So the New Chapel was a development from the Dark Lane. The land for the chapel was bought

in 1769 and among the signatories of the deed establishing the chapel in 1772 are Rice Harris, minister of Penlan, Pwllheli, Griffith Griffiths of Blawty (one of Harri Parry's ancestors) and John Williams of Saethon. The chapel's theology in those early days was Calvinistic, but about ten years later the Calvinistic Methodists erected another chapel about a mile away. They were of course, rivals, but strangely the two chapel did cooperate to some degree and in 1788-9 John Williams collected £40-£50 towards the cost of the Methodist chapel.

The lecturer went on, in his delightfully gentle, jesting manner, to give us some of the stories told of members of the principal families who led the congregation in Capel Newydd - Richard, David and Timothy Griffiths of the Blawty family near Aberdaron and John, David, Edward and Abraham Williams of the Saethon family, from just North-East of Nanhoron.

Then we had the story of Catherine Edwards, originally from the Browning family from Bedfordshire and Chelsea, who had married Captain Timothy Edwards of Plas Nanhoron and who in 1780 suffered a terrible shock when she travelled to Portsmouth to welcome her husband home from the war in the West Indies only to learn that he had died of fever during the voyage. When she came back to Nanhoron, she joined the Penlan chapel at Pwllheli and then Capel Newydd at Nanhoron. It is believed that her family in Bedfordshire must have inherited some of the Dissenting beliefs and traditions of Bunyan. She gave a number of gifts to Capel Newydd and it was she who obtained the land on which Pendref Independent chapel in Caernarfon was built. She would travel great distances to hear and record sermons, but unfortunately the notebook in which she recorded the sermons and her opinions of them has been lost. She died in 1811 and is buried in the Llangian churchyard.

The chapel was at its strongest in the middle of the nineteenth century but then began the decay, partly caused by the closing of the common land of Mynytho and then the destruction of Gwerthyr by the Nanhoron squires. In 1872 the Congregationalists opened the Horeb chapel at Mynytho and that in effect marked the end for Capel Newydd. At the end of the 1930s two deacons from Pwllheli saw that chickens were living on the premises. And thus it remained until Gwilym T. Jones launched a crusade in the 1950s, raising £2500 to restore the building. The chapel was reopened officially on 26 July 1958.

Y Cyfarfod Nesaf / Next Meeting

Cynhelir ein cyfarfod nesaf yn Y Fenni ddydd Sadwrn, 13 Mai 2006.
Gwnewch nodyn yn eich dyddiadur!

Our Spring Meeting in 2006 will be held in Abergavenny, on Saturday 13 May. Make a note in your diary!

Mygiau CAPEL / CAPEL Mugs

Cofiwch fod CAPEL wedi cynhyrchu mwg gyda llun o gapel ac enw'r gymdeithas arno. Mae'r llun a'r llythreniad mewn lliw. Cost y mygiau yw £4.75 yr un, neu £8.50 am ddau ac mae'r gost yn cynnwys cludiant. Byddant ar werth yn ein cyfarfodydd neu gellir eu harchebu oddi wrth yr Ysgrifennydd.

Perhaps we should remind you that CAPEL has produced its own mug with a picture of a chapel and the name of the society. The picture and the lettering are in colour. Mugs cost £4.75 each or £8.50 for two, and the cost includes postage and packing. They will be on sale at our meetings or can be ordered from our Secretary.

SWYDDOGION / OFFICERS

Cadeirydd / Chairman

Dr Lionel Madden, Hafren, Cae'r Gôg, Aberystwyth SY23 1ET

☎ 01970 617771 madden.aber@btinternet.com

Ysgrifennydd / Secretary

Dr Peter Mason, 61 Brookhurst Avenue Bromborough, Wirral CH63 0HS

☎ 0151 3343635 peter.mason18@btopenworld.com

Trysorydd / Treasurer

Mr Geoffrey Veysey, 2 Sandy Way, Wood Land, Hawarden CH5 3JJ

☎ 01244 531 255

Golygydd / Editor

Mr P.A.L.Jones, Bro Dawel, Coedlan Iorwerth, Aberystwyth SY23 1EW

☎ 01970 623 058 paljones@aol.com