

Capel



CYMRITHAS TREFTADAETH Y CAPEL
THE CHAPELS HERITAGE SOCIETY

Newsletter 65 Spring 2015

Cylchlythyr 65 Gwanwyn 2015

Capel in Caernarfon.

Caernarfon Capel Day, 11th October 2015

We met at Noddfa Community church, Cil Peblig. Noddfa is a deceptive building, being larger inside than it appears from the outside with a series of rooms one after the other.

Meredid Mair Williams, the Church Community Worker, gave a most lively and stimulating talk about the history of the Church and its work today. The first building was a small zinc chapel which came from Porthmadog. The first worker in this church was Sister Emily and people today still remember her dedication and hard work. By the 1980's the church was experiencing financial problems and the building was sold for a nominal £1 to Gwynedd County Council. It is known as Noddfa Community Church, although it belongs to the Presbyterian Church of Wales.

Being part of the community is core to the work of the church. Peblig Ward is steeped in history with Segontium Roman Fort nearby. On the whole it is not a transient area and the population is stable.

There are five parts to the work of the Church in Noddfa: Proclaiming the Gospel, Teaching the Christian message, Doing - the performance of Christian service, Responding to injustice, Safeguarding the integrity of Creation.

Touching briefly on some of these aspects, she spoke on the role of Noddfa as a community with roots and wings. It has to be an active part of the community, to be outward looking, to expand, to encourage, to shelter those in need and to lead others. What goes on?

1. Worship every Sunday. The first part is some 30 minutes worship, and then the Sunday School comes in for a further worship time of a further 30 minutes.
2. Special services are held for families and Christian Aid week.
3. Practical help. This is provided for a variety of areas such as benefit claims and forms, Credit Union, and advocacy work. The Bara project provides support to families with persons in prison and also supports individuals on their return home from prison. Re-offending rates are high and can help can be given. She emphasised that all of these services are given unconditionally.
4. Weekly activities. Dorcas Group brings women together every fortnight. One session is bible study, then the other is reading together group. Perthyn is a new group, a type of confirmation class which could lead to a person becoming a member. Te Bach meets monthly. Trips are organised - this summer the visit was to Hedd Wyn's home in Trawsfynydd. Youth Work includes the Sunday School, Clwb Tlws for girls 11+, Children's Club also meets. Dreamscheme project runs with the NW Police for children 13+. Play scheme Mwy na Wy is held over Easter. The church is also involved in running a food bank.

In conclusion, although the church has only 11 members, the congregation numbers 25 to 30 with children. The Sul stomp (Messy Church) attracts about 50.

We then moved to the centre of town for lunch at the Wal restaurant in Palace Street. From there our first stop of the afternoon was Seilo Presbyterian Church where we were met by Dr Gwyn Lewis one of the elders. Dr Lewis spoke of his family's long connection with Seilo, starting with his great Grandfather when the church opened in the nineteenth century, through his grandfather and father who were both elders. The first Seilo, Seilo Bach, was built in 1856 at a cost of £300. The revival three years later brought considerable growth and Seilo as a church was formed, with some members moving from Moreia and Engedi. The first chapel was built at a cost of £1,800. That building was demolished in 1897 and a new chapel built at a cost of £5000. By 1959 Seilo was the largest church in the Presbyterian Church of Wales with 763 members, but the next decade saw a period of decline. The



chapel was demolished in 1976 on the building of the inner relief road and a new church completed at a cost of £320,000. In July 1976 Moreia chapel was destroyed by fire and the members moved to Seilo. In 2000 the long serving minister Rev Harri Parri retired and the current minister, the Rev Gwenda Richards

replaced him. The membership currently stands at 512 with 51 children.

Near Seilo we saw the former Pendref Congregational chapel, with the date 1791 on the small pediment above the windows.

At Salem Congregational Church we were met by Mrs Nerys Jackson, the church secretary who kindly answered a few questions. The church has 330 members with two services on a Sunday with a Sunday school during the morning service. The church has a fine 3 manual pipe organ.

We then saw the outside of Caersalem Baptist chapel, which is currently having major renovation carried out, and Engedi, the former Calvinistic Methodist chapel. This chapel played a part in Welsh History in 1856, when the founding of a Welsh colony in Patagonia was discussed here for the first time in Wales. The Calvinistic Methodists established a chapel here in 1842, but the building we see today, with its grand Classical entrance, was erected in 1867 by the architect was Richard Owen, Liverpool. The literary Society of Caernarfon met at the original chapel. One of the society's leading lights was local printer Lewis Jones, born in nearby Pool Lane in 1837. In 1856 the society discussed the possibility of setting up a colony across the Atlantic where the Welsh language and culture would thrive; this idea had first been mooted in the USA, where there was disappointment that the offspring of Welsh people who had settled in North America tended to ignore their Welsh heritage. Lewis Jones went on to rally support for a colony in Patagonia, a sparsely populated region of South America, and in 1862 he sailed to Buenos Aires to open discussions with the government of Argentina. After Mr Jones

wrote a glowing (perhaps over-optimistic) report on the Chubut area, the first settlers arrived from Wales in June 1865. They named Trelew (Tref = town) in Mr Jones' honour. The early decades of Y Wladfa (The Colony) were difficult, and it took all of his powers of persuasion to prevent the settlers leaving. He died in Chubut in 1904, a few years after a flood wrecked the settlers work to improve the land. The colony survived, and Welsh is still spoken in Patagonia today.

The English Presbyterian church is the only English speaking Nonconformist church in the town. Mr Alun Jones outlined some of its history. The cause started in Turf Square in 1873 by a group from Moreia chapel. The present chapel, costing £4,359 and designed by Richard Owen, was opened on the 8th July 1883. The church was fortunate in that it enjoyed the support of some of the more prosperous inhabitants of Caernarfon, and the church subsequently has some fine woodwork and an imposing timber ceiling. The organ was installed in 1887 by William Rushworth. At present the church is without a minister, but a small congregation still works hard with a monthly coffee morning and a ramblers group. During the summer the church is open every Wednesday.

Our final port of call was Ebeneser Methodist (Wesleyan) church. Miss Branwen Lloyd Edward told us that the building is Grade I listed and that the church has seen eight of its young men becoming ministers in the denomination. At present Ebeneser has 120 members and a Sunday school is held during the morning service. Considerable sums have been spent on repairs to the fabric of the building, including the provision of the community centre in the basement vestry where we adjourned for a very welcome tea. Our chairman Mr Meirick Lloyd Davies expressed sincere thanks to all who had made the day so enjoyable, and to the church ladies for the most welcome refreshments.



Chapels reported to Capel

Applications;

Staylitttle Baptist Chapel, Staylitttle, Trefeglwys, Montgomeryshire (SN88889207) NPRN 11490: Application for conversion to house (amended scheme) – No objection.

Maescanner Welsh Baptist Chapel, Maescanner Road, Dafen, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire (SN52940108) NPRN 6462, Grade II Listed: Application for toilet extension – supported as scale and detail is sympathetic to the listed chapel.

Salem Welsh Baptist Chapel, Campbell Road, Llandybie, Carmarthenshire (SN61931539) NPRN 6378: Application for conversion to a dwelling – supported as the proposal retains the exterior character of the simple 1905 chapel as intact and is preferable to demolition and replacement. The interior has previously been removed.

Stow Hill Baptist Chapel, Stow Hill, Newport, Monmouthshire (ST31018801) NPRN 10541, Grade II Listed: Application for the construction of 23 apartments with the façade of the chapel retained – Supported as the revised scheme is much improved. Encouraged the removal of modern paintwork from the façade if feasible.

Bethel Church (previously Ebenezer Calvinistic Methodist Chapel), Mount Street, Welshpool, Montgomeryshire (SJ12215064) NPRN 11482: Application for conversion of rear premises to dwelling- Supported as character of chapel not affected.

Closures:

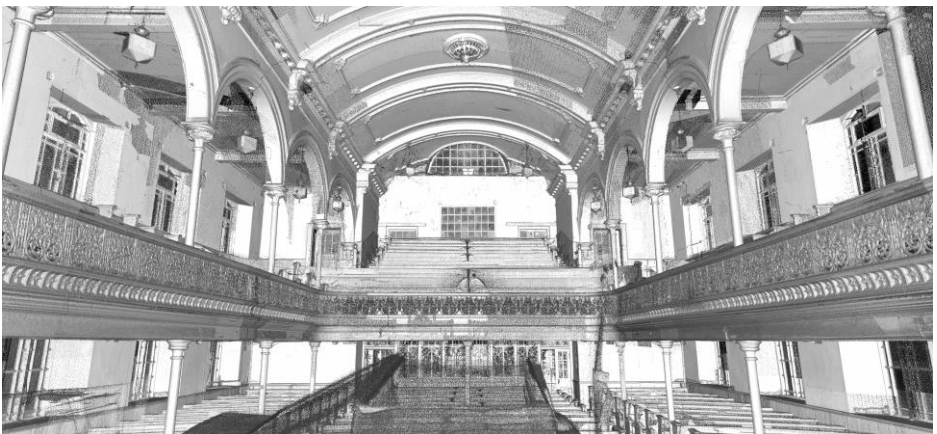
Gerazim Welsh Baptist Chapel, Cippin, Pembrokeshire (SN13974784) NPRN 11061

Digital Dissent: The Story of Welsh Chapels

Welsh Chapels: The Story of Nonconformity in Wales is a new website that has been launched jointly by Addoldai Cymru: The Welsh Religious Buildings Trust and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. The website, funded by a grant from Visit Wales as reported in Capel Newsletter 63, provides a virtual museum telling the story of Welsh chapels in terms of religion, architecture, culture and society.

The website provides a range of practical information on behalf of Addoldai Cymru. This includes an invaluable advice area for congregations and chapel owners, providing information on conservation, planning guidance, grants and funding and useful contacts and links, as well as information about supporting the Trust with relation to volunteering and their Friends scheme.

There are pages dedicated to each of the six chapels in the care of the Trust: Bethania (Maesteg), Hen dŷ Cwrdd (Trecynon), Hen Gapel (Rhydowen), Peniel (Tremadog), Beilu Du (Pentrebach) and Libanus (Wauunclyndaf). Each chapel has details of its history, architecture, progress on its restoration and photographs, as well as a user forum which allows people to add images, comments and information about the chapel. In this way the Trust are hoping to build up an archive of photographs, memories and discussions about each building.



Laser scanned interior of Bethania Baptist Chapel, Maesteg © Crown Copyright 2014

Four of the six chapels can be toured online thanks to a series of digital resources produced by the Royal Commission. Bethania, Hen dŷ Cwrdd, Hen Gapel and Peniel were all laser scanned in conjunction with Aberystwyth University, allowing complete, detailed and 3D records to be made for conservation purposes, but also allowing 'fly-throughs' of each chapel to be put online. Photographic tours of these chapels using gigapixel imagery allow viewers to explore the interiors and exteriors in high resolution detail, as well as offering archive images of some elements.



The stories of Bethania and Peniel are told in two 10 minute films which include archive material, community material and computer reconstruction. Also available is an interactive model of Hen dŷ Cwrdd, allowing users to navigate around the chapel in real time, selecting iconic objects around the chapel interior and grounds to read text, view images and hear audio relating to history of the building and its community.



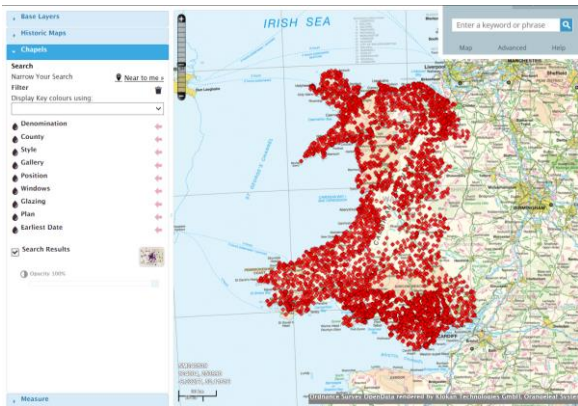
Reconstructed interior of the 1858 Bethania



Hen dŷ Cwrdd object prompt for Coelbren y Beirdd footstone

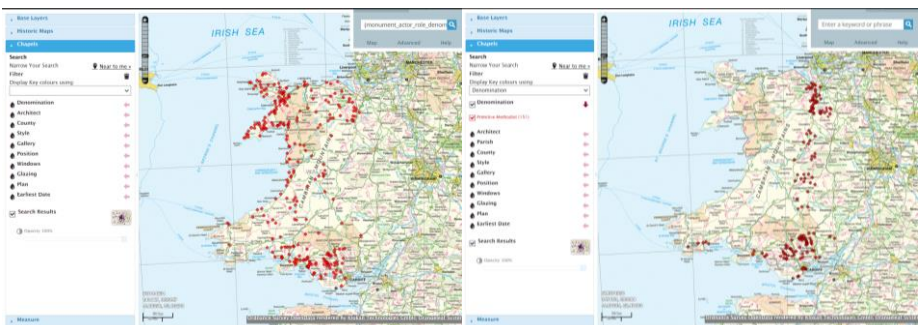
A further interactive animation of Hen Gapel will be available on the website soon.

An important aspect of the website is the ability, for the first time, to search the Royal Commissions Chapel Database in its entirety. This can be done in two ways: either by a 'key word or phrase' search or a mapping search. The key word search will bring up a list of all the records containing the key word, which can then be filtered down using fields within the database. Individual records containing information on history, architecture, dates, people, cost and the chapels' current status can then be viewed alongside any digital images available. In addition to searching the database, there is also the ability for users to upload information, including extra details, corrections and photographs in the form of Community comments. These will then be used to update and expand the Commissions database, and subsequently the information on the website.



Map showing the location of all chapels in Wales

Searches can also be made on a mapping interface. A simple dropdown list at the side of the page allows you to filter the chapels by region, architectural style, denomination etc... while a specialist search allows for more complex queries to be carried out and a distribution map produced.



Distribution of Calvinistic Methodist chapels that are Classical or sub Classical in style

Distribution map of Primitive Methodist chapels

The site also has pages devoted to short articles on Welsh chapels and Nonconformity. Written by trustees of Addoldai Cymru and staff of the Royal commission, subjects so far include the typology of chapel buildings, prominent architects, the social and cultural uses of chapels and a short guide to, and history of, the main denominations. These articles will be added to over time, and anyone who would like to contribute an article, be it on an individual chapel or a wide area of research is encouraged to do so.

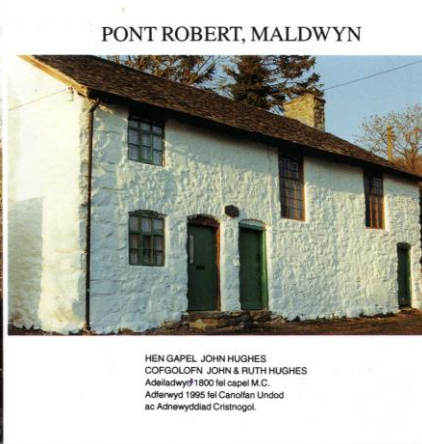
The website will continue to grow and develop, and it is hoped that in doing so it will become a place where everyone can learn about, and engage with, these iconic buildings and their stories and, just as importantly, can be a portal for capturing the present and future stories of these important buildings.

Hen Gapel John Hughes Pontrobert

This year, the National Eisteddfod of Wales returns to Mathrafal near Pontrobert, where a very memorable Eisteddfod was held in 2003, and it would seem appropriate to give readers an update on 'Hen Gapel John Hughes Pontrobert'. Built in 1800, it was used by the Calvinistic Methodists until closing in 1865, just 11 years after the death of the Revd John Hughes, who had lived with his wife, Ruth, and six daughters in the attached cottage since 1814. Wales's greatest female hymnist, Ann Griffiths, worshipped there from 1800 until her untimely death in 1805.

After its closure, the chapel was used as a wheelwrights workshop, but was not sold to the wheelwrights descendent until 1927. The building fell into disrepair and in spite of the fact that John Hughes' pulpit was still in its original place, nothing was done to preserve either pulpit or chapel until the Welsh Folk Museum at St Fagans suggested the pulpit, being an important archive, should go to the museum if the people of Montgomeryshire were not prepared to restore the building so that the building could stay in its 'cynefin'. This proved to be the impetus need for local Presbyterians and others to launch a national appeal for restoration funds, and the asking price by the wheelwrights descendant of £10,00 was soon found. The estimated cost of restoration in 1987 was £150,000 and the work was completed in April 1995. The building opened as an ecumenical Centre for Christian Unity & Renewal with John

Hughes' pulpit still as the centrepiece, reminding all of the connection with the past.



Thousands of pilgrims and visitors have come there over the last twenty years, and almost without exception, have appreciated its history and especially its use today as a place where Christians can come together irrespective of denomination in

obedience to Christ's exhortation that we be ONE in him. There is a welcome also for people of other faiths and none, and a close bond has grown with the local primary school and the general community.

Sadly, due to an independent survey which found 'poor workmanship and lack of quality control' to be the cause of the leaking roof which now needs to be replaced at a cost of £23,000, the Trustees and steering committee are having to seek grant aid. All hope of getting a new roof before the winter of 2014 was lost due to delays in getting a response from Cadw, but by the time of this report seeing the light of day, one hopes the work will have started. The Trust welcomes contributions to the roof fund and general maintenance costs. The Hon. Treasurer is Mrs Beryl Vaughn, Ty Mawr, Llanerfyl, Welshpool, SY21 0JD.

News and Events

Capel Spring meeting: 9th May 2015 Bridgend / Pen-y-Bont ar Ogwr,

Capel Eisteddfod Lecture: Capel Eisteddfod Lecture will be delivered by Nia Rhosier on Friday, 7 August at 12.00 on the National Eisteddfod site, Meifod at Pabell y Cymdeithasau 1. The lecture will be *Adfer Hen Gapel John*

Hughes, Pontrobert (The Restoration of Hen Gapel John Hughes, Pontrobert).
A warm welcome is extended to all.

Capel Autumn meeting: 10th October, Old Colwyn

Welsh Quilt Centre Exhibition: An exhibition of the artworks of Cefyn Burgess in stitch and drawn images which illustrate and interpret chapels and their place in Wales. Cefyn Burgess describes his work:

“Chapels have been part of my life since childhood. These buildings that knitted together or divided communities are unfortunately slowly disappearing and I wanted to record them before it’s too late.”

In a recent interview, he also described how they were being knocked down and replaced by car parks and anonymous spaces. “When you start to lose things, you start to miss them.” he says. Viewers to his exhibitions in Bangor and the Millennium Centre in Cardiff have gone on to describe the iconic nature of the Welsh chapel in their own backgrounds and gone on to talk about how they bring to life the people behind the collections. “I hear, I see, I taste these people..... their hopes and aspirations.” as Cefyn said about his own collection of Welsh crockery which he rescued from chapels that no longer exist.

The exhibition runs from 7th March to 31st October in Gallery 2

Mission Shaped Heritage: The Methodist Heritage Conference 2015 will be held on the 16th to the 18th July at Cliff College, Bristol. Methodist Heritage is committed to enabling Methodism to use its heritage for mission.

With keynote speakers and academic papers, site visits and workshop/seminar streams, this conference will reflect on themes relating to heritage and mission, and consider innovative ways of being missional in the context of historic religious buildings, museums and archive collections. This promises to be an engaging and packed programme for anyone interested in the theory and practice of preserving and extending the use of our Church's heritage.

To go on the mailing list for a draft programme and booking details, please contact Diane Foster, Heritage Administrator, on 020 7467 5117 or email fosterd@methodistchurch.org.uk

Siloh Newydd Chapel, Llandore, Swansea: Campaigners fighting to save Siloh Newydd Chapel are hoping to establish a Friends of Siloh Trust. The chapel, like many others, has seen a rapidly declining congregation and an action committee has been formed to look at ways of expanding the use of the building to provide community facilities.

Meanwhile **Trinity Chapel, Tonypany**, has had a planning application submitted for conversion to a funeral home and residential property, while controversy has been caused by the demolition of the Grade II Listed **Bethania Chapel, Griffith Street, Aberdare** without Listed Building Consent.

Capel y Nant vestry, Clydach has reopened following a £100,000 refurbishment. The hall will be shared by Capel y Nant and Clydach Wesleyan Methodist Church, as well as being available for community groups in the area.

The **Listed Places of Worship: Roof Repair Fund** is for urgent repairs to public places of worship across the UK. It is intended to ensure historic places of worship can remain open for commemoration, services and other community functions and events.

In his 2015 Budget speech to the House of Commons on 18 March, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a further £40million to the Listed Places of Worship: Roof Repair Fund. This new money brings the total funding package made available to £55million.

The initial scheme is now closed but has been extended by a further £15m, bringing the total funding package to £30million, and allowing us to give awards to more applicants than originally anticipated. All these awards will be announced before the end of March 2015.

The Fund will then reopen to new applications later this year, making awards from the additional £25m allocation during 2016. Any applicants who were unsuccessful during the first round of awards will be required to reapply.

This is a government-sponsored fund set up to help make the UK's listed places of worship weather tight, safe and open for use. It is administered by the National Heritage Memorial Fund on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.



Cronfa Dreftadaeth y Loteri - Gweithdy Grantiau ar gyfer Mannau Addoli Dydd Mawrth 28ain Ebrill 2015

10.30am - 1.30pm

Egwlys Crist, Y Bala LL23 7RU

Cyfle arbennig i ddysgu mwy am ein cyllid ar gyfer Mannau Addoli Rhestredig sydd angen atgyweiriadau strwythyrol ar frys.

Bydd gwybodaeth am sut i ysgrifennu cais da, sut i gyflawni canlyniadau CDL a sut yr ydym eisiau i'n cyllid annog mwy o bobl i ddefnyddio eu man addoli.



Cynnwys y gweithdy:

- Amlinelliad o'r rhglen grant a'r proses gwneud cais
- Gwybodaeth ymarferol am redeg eich prosiect a gwneud cyllideb
- Cyfle i siarad gyda aelodau staff CDL am eich syniadau prosiect
- Sesiwn cwestiwn ac ateb

Cwblhawyd prosiect adfer mawr gan Eglwys Crist (wedi rhestri gradd II) rhwng 2006-08, gyda gwaith adfer ar frys rhwng 2013-14 gyda cymorth Cronfa Dreftadaeth y Loteri.

Mae llefydd yn gyfyngedig ac mae **bwcio yn hanfodol**. I fwcio lle, anfonwch e-bost at cymru@hlf.org.uk neu ffoniwch 02920 343413

Bydd cinio yn dilyn y gweithdy

Sut i ddod o hyd i Eglwys Crist, Bala

Y cyfeiriad yw Eglwys Crist, Heol Ffrydan, Y Bala, Gwynedd, LL23 7RU sydd ar y ffordd A4212, y drws nesaf i ysgol uwchradd Ysgol y Berwyn. Mae lle parcio talu wrth y B4391, tu ol i'r Co-op neu ar y Stryd Fawr.

Dewch o hyd i ni:

www.cymraeg.hlf.org.uk



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Yn dyfarnu arian

Y Loteri Genedlaethol



Heritage Lottery Fund Grants for Places of Worship Funding Support Workshop

Tuesday 28th April 2015

10.30am - 1.30pm

Christ Church, Bala LL23 7RU

A great opportunity to find out about HLF's funding for Listed Places of Worship that require urgent structural repairs.

Get tips on how to make a good application, how to achieve HLF's outcomes and how the funding can be used to encourage more people to use your place of worship.



Included in the Workshop:

- An outline of the grant programme & application process
- Practical tips on running your project and making a budget
- Opportunity to speak to HLF staff about your project ideas
 - Q&A session

The grade II listed Christ Church was the subject to external repair and restoration work between 2006-08, along with urgent repairs between 2013-14 partly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Places are limited and **booking is essential**.

To book a place please email wales@hlf.org.uk
or call 02920 343413

Buffet lunch will be provided

How to find Christ Church, Bala

The address is Christ Church, Ffrydan Road, Bala, Gwynedd, LL23 7RU which is on the A4212 road, next door to Ysgol y Berwyn secondary school. Pay-and-display parking can be found on the Green (beside the B4391) or behind the Co-op on the High Street.

Find us



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Y Loteri Genedlaethol

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Yr Hen Gapel, Llwynrhydownen, Ceredigion.

Mae angen eu hailosod i'w warchod i'r dyfodol.

Llefydd byw sy'n anadlu yw capeli, gyda straeon i'w dweud.

Stori Hen Gapel Llwynrhydownen yw un o'r hynotaf o'r cyfan.

Noddwch lechen a helpu i'w achub ...
... a chadw'r cof am eich enw chi, new enw un o'ch anwyliaid.

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Please send material for the autumn newsletter by **1st August 2015**