

NEWSLETTER

Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

Menai Bridge and District Civic Society

CYL CHLYTHYR

Dates for your diary:
More details on page 3

Friday 20th May
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. Speaker Adam Voelcker

Saturday June 18th
2pm Tour of The North Wales Traffic Management Centre, Conwy.

Thursday July 14th
5.30pm Behind the scenes at Rownd a Rownd, Menai Bridge.

Thursday July 28th.
6pm. Plas Cadnant Hidden Gardens

Sunday August 14th
3pm Talk, Tea and Tour of Fort Belan, Llanwnda, Caernarfon with Sue Lloyd Roberts, BBC Human Rights Correspondent.

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Summer/Haf 2011

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Memories of Menai Bridge?

The photograph on the right is of the Cross Keys Inn. This temperance inn and coal merchants, run by T. Owen, is the only one we've managed to find of what is now the NatWest Bank site in Uxbridge Square. Dale Street is on the left of the Inn and to the right in Hill Street was the old Chapel (now pulled down and replaced with retirement flats). Many thanks to Norman Kneale for providing it from his collection . One of the difficulties in including photographs in our Newsletter is that sometimes they don't come out too clearly! To improve them would push up the cost of printing far too much. You can view the Newsletter in more detail and in colour at our Website www.menaibridgecivicsociety.org.uk, If you attend one of the evening meetings a colour copy of the Newsletter is available for you to have a look at (the 'ordinary' newsletter costs about 20p and the colour version 120p to produce).



Our collection of 'Memories of Menai Bridge' has grown so much that we will now issue highlights of it in sections, the first to be this September. Extra photographs will be added to the Website too. Many thanks to our Maureen Parry-Williams and Marian Pritchard for leading this initiative. Apart from historical interest the vital importance of 'memories' was highlighted by the part they played in the Porth y Wrach Public Enquiry. Memories and records of who used the slipway between 1984 and 2004 were called into evidence to show continued free public access, together with details of the role the Ferries and the 'highways' to them played.



Aside— the photo shows the MV Tudno (?), bound for Llandudno, sometime in the 1960s? Crossing in front of it is one of the small oil tankers that used to supply the terminal in Caernarfon.

For details of the Porth y Wrach Public Enquiry - see page 4

CIVIC TRUST and NATIONAL NEWS Civic Trust Awards

"This prestigious award, which recognises the very best in architecture, design, planning, landscape and public art is awarded annually by the Civic Trust, an independent built environment awards scheme. 20 Jan 2011

Successful projects must also be culturally, socially or economically beneficial, and make an outstanding contribution to the quality and appearance of the built environment. For 2011 the Trust have selected to award 57 projects from 333 national and international entries. The Mostyn is the only winning entry from Wales this year.

The gallery reopened in May 2010 following an extensive re-modelling and building project, designed by Ellis Williams Architects, which combines the Mostyn's original Victorian façade and top-lit galleries with a stunning new extension. Integral to the design is a concrete element known as 'The Tube' that provides an active and unique focal point to draw visitors into the gallery spaces. The guiding principles to the project were encapsulated by Lois Williams, consultant artist to the project as 'simplicity, subtlety and sophistication - plus one or two surprises'.

The result is an outstanding space offering four main galleries and two smaller exhibition spaces along with excellent new educational facilities, shop and café named Café Lux, to reflect the quality of light that was always a feature of the old Mostyn and further enhanced in the new build.

Since reopening the Mostyn, which builds on a rich heritage of showing the best Welsh contemporary art and enabling visitors to explore a range of new work by international artists, has welcomed nearly 60,000 visitors and has quickly re-established itself as a leading tourist attraction for visitors to North Wales. Mostyn Director Martin Barlow said: "We are thrilled to have won a Civic trust Award, especially as Wales's only winners in 2011. Our building is both hugely enjoyed by our many thousands of visitors and is a pleasure to work in; it retains strong links with the past while making a confident and eye-catching statement for the future. We believe it is emblematic of Llanudno and its wonderful ensemble architecture and the Civic Trust Award is a recognition of this."

For more information about the gallery contact Nia Roberts, Marketing Officer on 01492789201 or nia@mostyn.org

These extracts are from the Civic Trust Awards website.

NOTES FROM OUR WINTER PROGRAMME

Friday, 28th January Ferry Crossing - David Longley. If you want to know about ferry crossings to Anglesey then David Longley is the person! He brought home the importance of the ferries to the economy and development of this part of North Wales—illustrated by some splendid maps

11th February Annual Dinner with Guest Speakers David and Hilary Crystal. Sixty members attended our Dinner at the Victoria Hotel and enjoyed both a good meal, efficiently served and an excellent after dinner speech. David Crystal highlighted details of his journeys around the globe with some of the perils he faced including samba dancers in Rio de Janeiro and revolution in Chile. The demonstration of Shakespeare as it is spoken now with the accents and pronunciation of his time was fascinating.

Friday 25th March Drovers - Donna Goodman. An excellent introduction to the drovers' roads of North Wales looking at the trials and tribulations they faced on the road. The scale of the herds being driven to market still surprises. The Welsh Black cattle truly were the 'black gold' from the Welsh hills.

Friday 15th April - Menai Bridge? Prof David Last

Professor David Last is a Consultant Engineer and Expert Witness specialising in Radio Navigation and Communications Systems. He is a Professor Emeritus at Bangor University, and Immediate Past-President of the Royal Institute of Navigation. Members enjoyed an entertaining and down to earth insight into the wonders of Global Positioning System (GPS), Loran-C and enhanced Loran (eLoran), Galileo and other Global Navigation Satellite Sys-

LOCAL CENTENARIES of interest ... the purchase in 1911 by the town of the Merryweather fire engine (presently being restored by apprentices in Wyffa) and the gift of the Dale Street site by the then Marquess of Anglesey to the inhabitants to accommodate the fire station and council offices. - thanks to Keith Evans for reminding us of these

Nominations invited for Menai Bridge and District Civic Society Award

At our last Annual General Meeting we agreed to consider making an Award to recognise good design and celebrate excellence in local endeavour that makes a contribution to the quality and appearance of the built environment in Menai Bridge and District.

A further prize will recognise the contribution by an individual or group towards improving community life.

The Competition rules are quite simple :

1. The building work or activity must have taken place in Menai Bridge and District within the last year i.e. April 2010 to April 2011
2. You cannot nominate yourself or a family member.
3. Send details to the Hon Secretary by 30th June 2011. There is no form to complete; just explain the reason for your choice in not more than 50 words and add details of the location/site and name(s) of those nominated.
4. Decision by the Committee is final and results will be announced in the Autumn Newsletter.

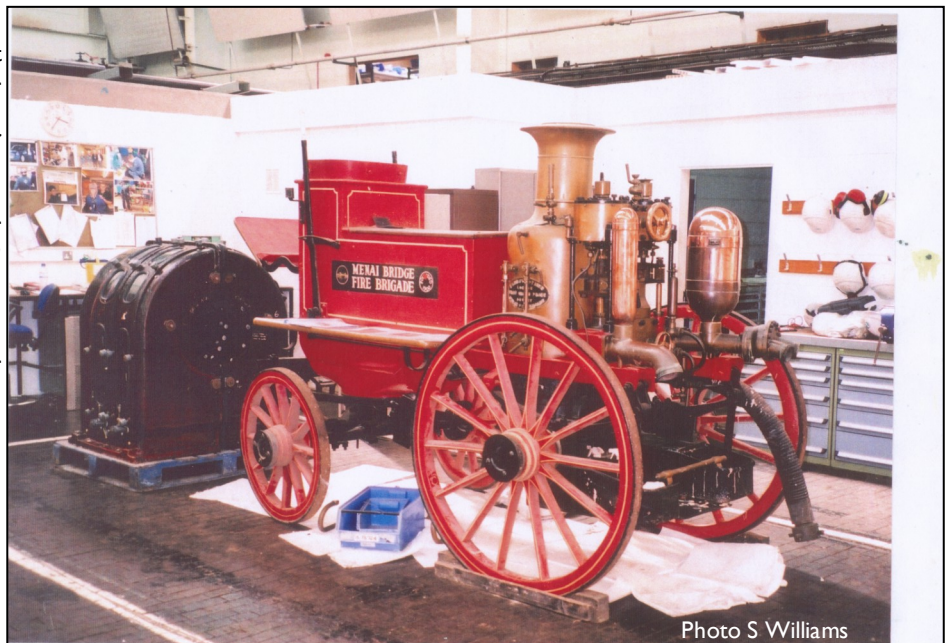


Photo S Williams

FUTURE EVENTS

Regular meetings are held in the Menai Bridge War Memorial Community Centre and start at 7.30 p.m.

Friday 20th May — ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, speaker Adam Voelcker. 'Herbert Luck North - a modern Goth

Summer Outings

Saturday June 18th 2pm Tour of The North Wales Traffic Management Centre, Conwy. The control room has access to all the CCTV images on the A55 which includes the Penmaenbach, Conwy and Penyclip tunnels. It controls the Variable Message Signs on the network and manages items such as tunnel closures, air quality and incident response actions. It was initially the Tunnel Maintenance and Management building run by Gwynedd Highways after the Penmaenbach tunnel was opened in 1989.

Take the A55 from Bangor, leave at junction 17 for Conwy, turn right, crossing over A55 and right again into the Industrial Estate into Ffordd Sam Parri. Numbers limited to 25. Members £2, guests £3.

Committee person organising this visit is Bob Daimond. Tel. 01248 712217. Names & payment to Bob please.

Thursday July 14th 5.30pm Behind the scenes at Rownd a Rownd, Menai Bridge. A chance to see the film studios, sets etc and hear more about this important industry in our town. Meet at the studios in Dale Street. Cost £2 members, non-members £3

Thursday July 28th. 6pm. Plas Cadnant Hidden Gardens. Another opportunity to stroll round this gem of a garden by kind permission of Anthony Tavernor. There is always something new to see, and the herbaceous borders should be at their best. Cost includes tea and cakes. £6 for Civic Soc. members, £8 for guests. All proceeds are for Society funds. Follow the drive off the old Cadnant Bridge. Cross two cattle grids to reach the field parking area. Short walk to the front of the house.

Sunday August 14th 3pm Talk, Tea and Tour of Fort Belan, Llanwnda, Caernarfon with Sue Lloyd Roberts, BBC Human Rights Correspondent. With the title 'Does anyone out there care? Sue will speak about her work as a foreign correspondent and show excerpts from recent reports/films. Cost £5 adults, children & students £2. Proceeds to the Friends of Fort Belan who are the organisers of this event.

Take A487 out of Caernarfon, continue over 3 small roundabouts, at a 4th roundabout take the A499 Pwllheli road. With Glynllifon high wall on your left, turn right at the sign to Caernarfon Air World. Go through Dinas Dinlle village going parallel to the sea until reaching a sharp right hand bend with chevrons. Turn left here and immediately right to a gate marked 'Belan Fort' and private. Continue for 2 miles (road rough in places). Ample parking at the Fort.

If you are willing to drive and have room for other members in your car, please inform Jane Cherrett. **Car sharing would be appreciated.**

Mynydd Parys Mines. Last year we had an excellent talk about the Mines by David Jenkins. As a follow-up members may wish to join an underground tour during September. Taking approx. 2 hours the tour is limited to 5 or 6 persons, led by 2 qualified guides. Tours only on Wednesdays, with 6.30pm start time. People will need old clothes and a boiler suit, wellingtons, rubber gloves and caving insurance. The latter costs £10 and includes the loan of helmets and cap lamps. **Not** for the faint-hearted, but please indicate serious interest by phoning Jane Cherrett on 01248 713440 who can give more details. Note this is not part of our regular programme of events and you would not be covered by the Society's insurance policy. **Jane Cherrett**

NEWS FROM OUR COUNCILLORS

News from Councillor Keith Evans, Local Member for the Cadnant Ward.

THE COMMISSIONERS' arrival and installation at the County Council is the most significant development, after their appointment by Carl Sargeant, the Minister for Local Government at the Welsh Assembly. The five have replaced the Council's Executive (or Cabinet) as the decision-makers and will remain in office up to the planned 2012 elections, at least. The Minister was prompted, as has been well publicised, by the long standing and ongoing behavioural problems involving a number of members of the Council. Meanwhile, for the rest of us, the back-benchers, it is business as usual, attending committees and panels, making office visits and calls, and responding to the concerns of our electors.

The Minister has also instructed the Boundary Commission to revisit their previously shelved proposals to revamp the Council's electoral arrangements, with a view to reducing the number of members from 40 and (worryingly) possibly introducing multi-member divisions. Watch this space on that.

COUNTY COUNCIL TAX for 2011-2012, as you will have realised by now, has risen by 3.7 per cent, while the Menai Bridge town precept is unchanged again at about £64,000, which in real terms is a reduction of about ten per cent over that period. PUBLIC FOOTPATH from Pentraeth Road towards the Cemetery is improved, now that the steps' section has been rebuilt, after wear-and-tear made it potentially dangerous. And another popular footpath, from alongside Rhyd Menai and around the rugby ground towards Church Island is now on the definitive map. WIND TURBINES, three huge ones, are the subject of a planning application on the outskirts of the town, alongside the A5025 Pentraeth road (near the Llansadwrn turn-off). Height: 80-100 metres or 325 feet (suspension bridge x 3). Love them or loathe them. A545 ROAD between Menai Bridge and Beaumaris, mainly the stretch of bends from Glyn Garth to Gallows Point, is the subject of detailed research by consultants Arup, on behalf of the County Council's highways department. The intention is to cater for walkers, cyclists and improve the traffic flow. In reality, it is a design exercise, without funding being available for the actual work.

News from Councillor Selwyn Williams, Local Member for the Tysilio Ward.

I am now coming to the end of my year as Chairman of Anglesey County Council, finishing with the AGM on the 12th of May. I have had tremendous support from the Island residents towards my Civic role. I have tried in many ways to provide a different approach for events, both military, and civic. ARMED FORCES DAY in Holyhead, in June last year, was for the first time an International event. Captain Dave Dittmer, USN, Chief Of Staff for the Atlantic Naval Theatre, was invited to lay wreaths on the remembrance plaque for US Naval Lieutenant Childs who died in the H5 submarine off Holyhead during the First World War, being the first US world military casualty. The event was broadcast through American radio coast to coast. Also in September last year, I arranged for the FREEDOM OF RAFFLE EVENT to be brought to Menai Bridge for the first time. As Chairman of the Council, I was its media face and dealt with many interviews and requests for information from the world's press and television. The importance to Anglesey of the Royal Couple, William and Catherine, is enormous, raising the profile of the Island tremendously. In my role I have been proud to meet members of the British Royal Family and also Queen Masenate Seeiso of Lesotho who was visiting Wales to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of Dolen Cymru.

There have been many civic invitations for me to attend on behalf of the Council and this together with chairing many Full Council meetings, where the Chamber has been full to capacity, and my responsibility for looking after the needs of all those 1465 people who live in the Tysilio Ward leave very little free time. Being a responsible and dedicated Councillor is a way of life!

Many of you will know that I have moved and at present live in Gaerwen. I have notified all my constituents individually but for those who do not live within Tysilio Ward my telephone numbers are 01248 422 202 and 07757011843, and my new address is 47, Gaerwen Uchaf Estate, Gaerwen, Ynys Mon. LL60 6HN. I thank you all for your support and encouragement in what has been a very challenging year. Diolch yn fawr / Thank you.

PLANNING AND LOCAL NEWS

Porth y Wrach Enquiry



Following an application in 2004, by local resident Rob Evans, for Porth y Wrach to be designated a 'Village Green' a 3 day Public Enquiry was held at the War Memorial Community Centre, finishing on 24th March 2011. The reason for the application, which the Society supported, was to preserve the area for the people of Menai Bridge to use as they always have. After a gap of seven years the Isle of Anglesey County Council objected to the application and employed a specialist barrister to put forward their case to the Planning Inspector. We look forward to the Inspector's decision with interest.

Rob presented a well reasoned argument showing that the area had indeed been used by residents. This was met however with analytical precision — shock and awe tactics come to mind. The nub of the barrister's objection seemed to come down to the fact that the area, or part of it anyway, is still a highway (i.e. going back to when coaches used it to get to the Ferry to Bangor before the Bridges were built) and as such cannot be designated a Village Green. The actual boundaries of Porth y Wrach too seem to have varied over the years as bits have been sold/bought and moved in and out of County and the old Urban District Councils' ownership (can you actually sell a public highway?). If the 'highway' ruling applies here in Menai Bridge does it also apply to other slipways on the Island where the County Council now say they control and are able to charge for access?

Uncontrolled access by boats being launched from Porth y Wrach did give rise to congestion problems in the summer months, as I'm sure that many of you will remember. What will the congestion be like on Beach Road and Water Street if the plan to develop flats in the old Min y Don site ever come to fruition?

Ynys Faelog Development

Following approval (with conditions) of the application to replace the existing Boat Shed with a new 'Boathouse' all seems to have gone quiet. Unless of course you know otherwise?

Subscriptions - please see the form enclosed.

Energy Island?

The Isle of Anglesey County Council's promotion of Anglesey as 'Energy Island' is an interesting concept! The Council website gives much information from which the following is drawn:

"Climate change and energy security present all areas with major challenges over the coming decades. On Anglesey significant job losses, deprivation and outward migration mean there is a pressing need to consider a different approach to economic, social and environmental development.

The Energy Island vision is to create a world-renowned centre of excellence for the production, demonstration and servicing of low carbon energy.

Energy Island: The Programme

In order to realise the Energy Island there is a need to focus on a limited number of opportunities that can deliver the right mix of ambition, impact and profile. These can play a significant role in a more resilient, diverse and prosperous economic future for Anglesey and North West Wales.

The key elements of the Energy Island Framework are:

Short term: Large and small scale biomass installations and supporting energy crops, energy efficiency measures, and micro generation. Initial discussion and negotiation to maximise opportunities from Offshore wind Irish Sea Round 3 Zone.

Medium to long term: New build at Wylfa up to 3.2 GW, implementation of tidal project at Skerries, offshore wind base at Holyhead Port and the replanting of existing onshore wind farms.

Long term: Tidal power expansion and development of the hydrogen economy.

Energy Island has major potential to realise economic, social and environmental gains for Anglesey and the North West Wales economy. There is the potential to create a peak of 4500 construction jobs (2017) in Anglesey and North West Wales including jobs in the supply chain. The Framework could also deliver a further 2500 operational and maintenance jobs on the Island and wider sub-region by 2025."

Under the Bridges...

Flt Lt Tom Hughes - "during his time with No 11 Service Flying Training School one of his more hair-raising feats was to lead a formation of three twin-engine Airspeed Oxford trainers under the two bridges across the Menai Strait. " Thanks to John Tripp who noted this extract from details about Tom Hughes (a WW2 Spitfire pilot who died in December 2010). Notes about 'events' are always welcome.

Lady Anglesey
Lywydd/ President

Liz Moyle
Cadeirydd/Chair

Maureen Parry-Williams
Ysgrifennydd/Secretary

Jane Cherrett
Ysgrifennydd Cymdeithasol/
Social Secretary

Renata Hufton
Trysorydd/Treasurer

Iola Prytherch
Deputy Treasurer/Trysorydd
Cynorthwyol

Liz Moyle
Newsletter Editor/Golygydd
Cylchlythyr

Norman Neale
Photos/Ffotograffau

CONTACT LIST

Newsletter contributions -
Maureen Parry Williams
Tel. 01248 440668

Jane Cherrett -
Booking activities for events and
outings Tel 01248 713440

County Councillors :

Keith Evans Selwyn Williams

Town Council :
Canolfan Tysilio, Menai Bridge

For all correspondence please
contact the Secretary,
Mrs Maureen Parry-Williams,
Tyn y Coed, Newborough,
LL61 6PY

See our Website at
www.menaibridgecivicsociety.org.uk