

# NEWSLETTER

## Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

## Menai Bridge and District Civic Society

# CYL CHLYTHYR

### Dates for your diary:

**Friday 21st May AGM**  
and Speaker from the Joint Service Mountain Training Centre Indefatigable

**Sunday 20th June**  
Visit Garth Celyn (Pen y Bryn) at Abergwyngregyn

**Wednesday 30th June**  
Day visit to Gwydyr and Llanrwst. Guided tours.

**Sunday 25th July**  
Plas Cadnant Garden. Herbaceous borders, tea and cakes

**Wed 8th September.**  
Evening visit to RAF Valley for Civic Society members only.

More details on page 3

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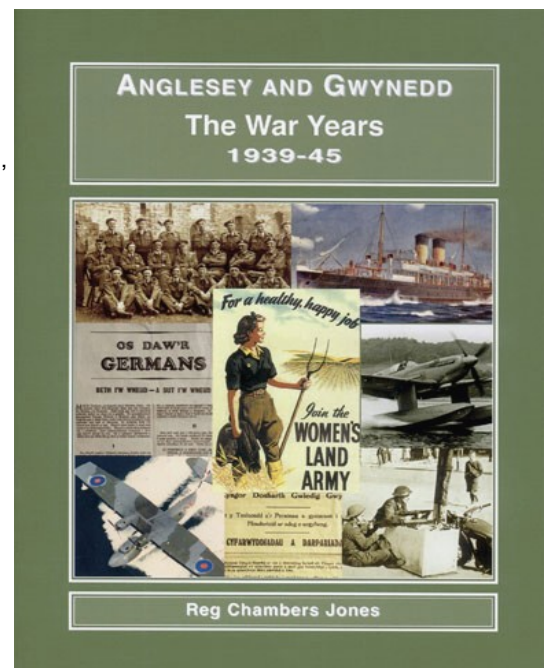
Summer/Haf 2010

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### Anglesey and Gwynedd—The War Years

Interest in the Second World War has undergone a great revival in the past few years, particularly with regard to the effect of the war upon the lives of ordinary people. This book examines in some detail how north-west Wales, the present-day counties of Anglesey and Gwynedd, were affected by the tumultuous years between 1939 and 1945. Almost overnight, every corner of Britain came under a command economy with all sections of the population organised into various forms of National Service – compulsory military service in the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force; munitions workers; ship builders; the Home Guard; Women's Land Army; Air Training Corps ... Even farmers, traditionally independent and only affected by the economic changes brought about by previous wars, became highly regulated under the Ministry of War Agriculture. North-west Wales proved a relatively safe haven, not only for evacuees from the large conurbations of England, but also for the BBC, the Inland Revenue and the paintings of the National Gallery. When peace was restored in 1945, the affect-effects of the war were felt in the region until the 1970s. All of these aspects are examined in Anglesey and Gwynedd, *The War Years*. Case bound, 248pp, illustrated, 245 x 190mm. ISBN 978-1-84494-051-6 .

The Author, Reg Chambers Jones, was born in Y Felinheli (Port Dinorwic) and was educated at Caernarfon County School. He worked with Lloyds Bank for forty-two years, becoming a Fellow and Past President of the Chartered Institute of Bankers for Gwynedd. He is now the Honorary Company Secretary of the Gwynedd Hospice at Home. Since the 1970s, he has been carrying out research into local history and has published a number of books on various subjects, including the best selling *Dinorwic – the Llanberis Slate Quarry, 1780–1969*. Thanks to Alister Williams of Bridge Books 01978 358661 for the information and permission to copy the front cover.



(Note the picture on the bottom right of the cover shows the Home Guard in Mostyn Street, Llandudno. Above that is a Catalina flying boat, produced and flown from Fryers Bay, Beaumaris).

It's unusual to feature a book review on the front page of a Newsletter but the book really does have some fascinating recent local history. Did you know a Spitfire crashed on a house in New Street, Beaumaris, that Bangor became a centre for the diamond cutting industry or that some of the 6000 paintings from the National Gallery, mentioned previously, were stored in the P.J. Hall, Bangor before being moved to Manod Quarry, Ffestiniog?

Do you have any recollections of those years; perhaps not as dramatic but still vivid local history. Remember we are still collecting articles for our own 'Memories of Menai Bridge' and our Secretary would be delighted to hear from you.

## CIVIC TRUST NEWS

“**Urban characterisation** looks like the next big thing. Pioneered in Wales by Judith Alfrey, who is responsible for three pilot studies, the aim is “to describe and explain the historic character of towns, to give a focus to local distinctiveness, and to serve as a tool for sustainable management of the historic environment, help improve the quality of planning advice, and contribute to local interpretation and education strategies.”

Circulating in bound form these studies have won plaudits from those in the know, who have been keen for studies of urban character to be developed that look beyond conservation area boundaries to explore a town as a whole, and its evolution through time. Ensuring that they are accessible online means that a much wider audience has access to these models and can start thinking about the application of the methodology in other Welsh contexts. Each study begins with an essay on the town’s historical development, analysed in detail and taking into account up-to-date archaeological evidence. Understanding settlement history acts as a precursor to a discussion of historical topography, and a discussion of the town’s layout and its evolution. This is followed by studies of building history, analysing its chronology and patterns of development, with attention to types and styles and the use of materials.

We need studies of this kind for if we are to ensure planning and urban design decisions that respond to local distinctiveness.

In our next edition Judith Alfrey will be explaining characterisation in detail, and she will look at ways in which community (and school?) groups might be empowered to contribute to the process. This is an especially exciting prospect, bringing to local people opportunities to share and apply their knowledge, learn new skills, and contribute to the management of change in their communities in a way that reflects their sense of pride in place.”

**Aberdare: understanding urban character; Dolgellau: understanding urban character; Flint: understanding urban character.**  
Online publications from Cadw: [www.cadw.gov.uk](http://www.cadw.gov.uk)

This extract is from the Civic Trust in Wales’ Newsletter, - About Wales. If you are interested in becoming involved in a project locally please contact our Secretary. **Liz Moyle**

**ANNUAL DINNER** - Mr Medwyn Williams and Mrs Williams were our guests on this occasion and I’m sure helped to make this the best attended Dinner for many years. Medwyn’s talk on his progress from a small holding at Paradwys, where his boyhood interest in growing vegetables began, to his unique achievement of being awarded 10 Gold Medals at Chelsea was told with great humour and style.

**THE HISTORY OF MARINE SCIENCE IN MENAI BRIDGE** - Professor Naylor’s talk was fascinating, tracing the development of the laboratories from their first beginnings on Puffin Island to the latest plans for development.

## HAFOD ERYRI - an illustrated talk by Meirion Evans



At the March meeting, Jane Cherrett introduced Mr. Meirion Evans, formerly of Chapel Street, Menai Bridge who spoke about his work with Carillion plc to construct Hafod Eryri on the summit of Snowdon. Members were told about the demolition of the old summit building, the removal of waste material, and the construction of the new rail terminal and restaurant. Weather conditions were often appalling, and the constraints of the railway – (only able to make two return journeys each day) together with weight restrictions and length of any material required at the summit were graphically illustrated in Meirion’s slides. **Jane Cherrett**

Photo — Norman Neale

## FUTURE EVENTS

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** Our Annual General Meeting will be held in the Menai Bridge War Memorial Community Centre on Friday 21st May 2010 starting at 7.30 p.m. In the usual way nominations to the Committee are most welcome. Minutes, agenda, accounts etc. will be available on the evening. With this Newsletter you should receive a subscription reminder form, Events Booking Form and also a short **QUESTIONNAIRE** about what concerns you most about the development (or lack of it), and conservation of Menai Bridge and District. Please take a minute to fill this in, especially if you are unable to attend in person. Your active involvement in the Society and concern for our community adds greatly to our effectiveness, influence and credibility. Recently the Electoral Commission for Wales issued a Draft Report seeking to reduce the number of County Councillors on Anglesey and for those representing Menai Bridge from two to one and a half— we would share one with Llanfair PG. Did you know about this? Do you agree? Also see Planning notes on page 4.

## FUTURE EVENTS (CONTINUED)

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

**Sunday, June 20th, 2.30 p.m. Visit to Garth Celyn (Pen y Bryn)** at Abergwynnregyn by kind invitation of Kathryn Pritchard Gibson. Parking (20 cars) up at the house. Turn off the A55 at Aber, do not drive into the village but take the old road past the old hotel and continue to the house. Cost £2 for members, £3 for guests including tea. Contributions (e.g. cakes from members) would be appreciated

**Wednesday June 30<sup>th</sup> Day visit to Llanrwst.** Meet at Gwydyr (on A5106, West of Llanrwst, map ref SH 795 610) at 10.30am for a guided tour of Sir John Wynn's (1553-1626) home, with time to take in the restored gardens. The house was stripped and sold at auction in 1921. The present owners traced the carved & gilded panelling in the States and returned it to Gwydyr to its original setting in the dining room. This is a Tudor, courtyard house with a terraced garden and 19<sup>th</sup> Century parterre. 12.45pm Lunch at Blas ar Fwyd in the town. 2.30 pm tour of the renovated 1610 almshouses formerly the Jesus Hospital, then

Abbey and the tomb of Prince Llewellyn ap Iorwerth, onto St. Grwst church (1470) for a further conducted tour. The church has a fine rood screen removed from Aberconwy. Cost £19 covers 2 course lunch, entry to Gwydyr and tour guide costs at the three venues. Own transport required.

**Sunday July 25<sup>th</sup> 2.30pm Plas Cadnant garden.** (SH 556 733) This is another treat for Civic Society members and friends to join Anthony Tavernor on a guided tour of his wonderful garden in Menai Bridge. 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.

**Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> Evening visit to RAF Valley.** Following Wing Commander Sophy Gardner's talk to the Society in January, we are invited to see round the Station. The visit will last about 2 hours and we are asked to be at the main gates at RAF Valley at 5.30pm for the start of a conducted tour. The tour is open to Civic Society members only. There is no charge.  
**Jane Cherrett**

## NEWS FROM OUR COUNCILLORS

**News from Councillor Keith Evans, Local Member for the Cadnant Ward.** (April 2010) **Cadnant Ward's** very existence is threatened, as reported previously, by Draft Proposals from the Boundary Commission for Wales to restructure the Isle of Anglesey County Council, and to reduce the membership to 35 from 40. The ridiculous suggestion here is that Cadnant with supposedly 819 electors (more, I think), should be merged with the two Llanfairpwll wards of Braint and Gwyngyll (2394), to create what is termed a multi-member division of 3213 electors to return two Councillors.

On behalf of the Cadnant electors, who would be disenfranchised by this arrangement, I continue to protest vigorously with the Commission and through the County Council. The supportive Town Council and individuals have written to the Commission, and it is anticipated Llanfairpwll Council will also come on board. More agitation would be welcome.

**Several households** have been thrown into chaos -- hopefully in a worthy cause -- by fitters, electricians, plumbers and other tradesmen, who have been commissioned by the Housing Department to provide new kitchens, bathrooms and other improvements in Council houses. The tenants who have been 'invaded' are at Maes-y-Coed flats and houses, Llys Tegla, Rhyd Menai, Bro Hyfryd and New Street. Most are smiling about it all. **The removal of Tarmac** from the approach to a public access to the foreshore at Beach Road, close to the Suspension Bridge, caused a furore locally and I can report that the Property and Legal Departments are on the case. Contact has been made with the perpetrator and the fact established that the land is County Council-owned and should be restored to its former state. **Porth-y-Wrach's** widened slipway, new trailer park and upgraded seating area are nearing completion and will be appreciated no doubt by residents and visitors alike, when the warm, sunny days are with us. The Property Section, with Economic guidance and Assembly funding, are behind the project. **Water Street's** new pavements look good and the change-over work was achieved with minimal disruption. The Highways Department get the credit.

**Planning Applications** have been more numerous lately, maybe because hope exists out there that the national economic upturn is about to happen or, in some cases, there have been renewals, merely to keep permissions live. Waitrose's arrival at Mona Road provided a fair quota of the planning work. **Town Council** has occupied a lot of my time, guiding the settling in of our confirmed Town Clerk, Linda Fraser Williams, who joins the team of Isobel Watson (Finance Officer), Will Roberts (Workman) and Sioned Jones (Translator). A quiet revolution has taken place at the Town Council over the past year or so, with new letterheads, a refurbished Council Chamber plus kitchen and toilet, an office created, IT introduced, a revamped filing system, years of unwanted paper work and other clutter removed, new front door and signage in place -- and the office is open to the public on three mornings a week (Mon, Tues, Thurs) from 10 -- 12. Feel free to visit or call on 716959. There is even a Telephone Directory entry now and a web-site. Also the Town Council now has its own van for the Workman -- another first.

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

For more than 100 years the people of Menai Bridge have had a **Steam Fire Engine**. Once owned by the Fire Authority and in recent times, in Trust, managed by Menai Bridge Town Council. It was kept at the Fire Station and latterly at Wern Farm. Although safe at the Farm it was felt that the engine was deteriorating.

**Lady Anglesey**  
**Lywydd/ President**

**Liz Moyle**  
**Cadeirydd/Chair**

**Maureen Parry-Williams**  
**Ysgrifennydd/Secretary**

**Jane Cherrett**  
**Ysgifennydd 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

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Tel. 01248 440668

**Jane Cherrett -  
Booking activities for events  
and outings**

**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](http://www.menaibridgecivicsociety.org.uk)**

Cllr Selwyn Williams, with the support of the Council, has arranged for it to be moved to the Apprentices School at Wylfa Power Station and refurbished by them under the direction of the Maintenance Manager, Colin Smith. The horse drawn engine has a proud history and was even loaned to the City of London Fire Authority during the Blitz.

**Menai Bridge Merryweather Victorian Steam Fire Engine**  
**Photo—Selwyn Williams**



**PLANNING AND LOCAL NEWS** Many planning applications do not come to our attention unless they are published in the Public Notices at the back of the local papers. Most planning applications are dealt with on a delegated basis and these are only published when they are reported in the **Monthly Agenda of the Anglesey County Council**. By then it is too late to object, so we are dependent on up-to-date information by those of you who receive notification of planning applications local to you. If it is a large application or one that has caused concern to a number of you, then your local County Councillor has the authority to request that it is 'called in' to be decided by the Planning and Orders Committee of the ACC who meet on the first Wednesday of each month.

Since parts of Menai Bridge were designated as a **Conservation Area**, they should have extra protection from planning applications but this often appears to be ineffective. There are a number of applications which were granted 'outline planning permission', prior to the Conservation status being confirmed. In some instances, the developer applies for amendments to the original detailed plans, usually to increase the size. There have been several instances of this along **St. George's Road**. It is almost unbelievable that the ACC will grant permission to add traffic to this narrow road which is only one-way for part of its route. There is also the threat of disruption when the Ocean Sciences' building is re-built in the near future. We have objected to the garages which are being built at the top of the green space, leading down to the causeway. Their access is onto the loop of St. George's Road. The two new houses here will also have their own garages and the same access onto the narrow road. In addition, this is a tourist route and part of the **Anglesey Coastal Path**. This lack of consideration was also evident for the section of Beach Road at the other end of the village where a large house is being built in the garden of 'Noddfa'. **Llys Marquis, Llanfair P.G.** is another example of the developers attempting to manipulate the Planning Council. This was built as a residential development of 15 units, in the centre of Llanfair P.G, whose occupancy is age-restricted. (one member of the household must be over 55.) Permission was being sought to delete this restriction. This was a very important debate and a trail-blazer as it was the first time that a member of the public was allowed to speak (3 minutes only) on the application being considered. It was refused, in no small part as a result of the evidence of the older resident. Permission is being sought for a similar scheme in **Baumaris**. This time it is the demolition of the **old Casita carehome** site on the road leading up to the cemetery / golf course. The application is for the erection of 35 residential apartments for persons aged 55 and over. Baumaris Town Council and local residents fought strongly against this and presented very relevant and convincing arguments for its refusal, but, while it was rejected at the first meeting of the Planning Committee, a change of mind by one County Councillor, enabled it to be passed at the subsequent meeting. One of the deciding factors was the offer, from the developer, to spend three-quarters of a million pounds stabilising the land prior to developing the site - an offer which the ACC Highways Department found very attractive but it did not satisfy the opponents. **Maureen Parry-Williams**

**ELECTION LATEST** Megan Lloyd George celebrating her election win over the then Cledwyn Hughes. (Well it was the latest news if you were in Llangefni in 1950!) Thanks to the Western Mail and Echo for the photograph. Inclusion of this photo does not infer any political preference on the part of the Society! We hope however that you do vote and we give whoever is elected on May 8th 2010 our congratulations and wish them well for the future.

