



ATGOFION O'R BORTH

Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

Menai Bridge and District Civic Society

MEMORIES OF MENAI BRIDGE

Menai Bridge Civic Society is updating its records, photographs and Website to make them more accessible to members . We will try to add to these regularly throughout the year and publish extracts with your Newsletter. New contributions are always welcome , as is help with identifying people in photographs.

Memories of Menai Bridge by Rita Smith

We are grateful to Rita's family for permission to publish her short account of her time in the Women's Land Army and for providing photos. Rita was a well known, active and popular member of the Community. Rita died in 2009 aged 86 years.

In 2008 service in and the contribution of the Womens' Land Army was recognised by the nation by the award of a special badge or medal and Rita was very proud to receive this.

**See our Website at
www.menaibridgecivicsociety.org.uk**

Memories of Menai Bridge

Volume 3

"...I was sent my uniform and instructions for travel. I was to travel to a station in Wales called Menai Bridge. I had no idea where this was but, along with 41 other girls, I travelled along the North Wales line, expecting every station that we stopped at to be our final destination. We did finally arrive at Menai Bridge station! This was on the Caernarfonshire side of the Menai Straits.

We descended from the train and were formed into a sort-of marching group. Our cases were loaded onto a van but we had to walk to our destination, across the Suspension Bridge, through lines of silent spectators. After a mile, we arrived at this wooden hut alongside the Llanfair Road. The hostel, run by Miss Ellis, consisted of two buildings, the one nearest the road was the living quarters—a kitchen, leading on to a "lounge". The heating was supplied by iron stoves with tall chimneys. The second building was the sleeping quarters. These were divided up by shelving/wardrobe units with a two bunk sleeping area. I slept in the bottom bunk. There were two bathrooms for us to share and, the warmest area of all, a large airing cupboard where we retired to smoke!

We were divided into teams of four. The duty team had to get up at 6 o'clock to make the daily sandwiches for all of us. The rest of us got up at 7 o'clock and had to be ready to leave by eight. We were taken by van to our work areas. I spent the first 6 weeks in the Amlwch area picking potatoes – back-breaking! The farmer's sister kept a strict eye on us as she walked up and down the aisles – all she needed was a stick!



We were not offered anything to drink and just had our sandwiches to keep us going. We also did some digging in Malltraeth and rat-catching in some pig styies. We were also chased by geese on one farm.

I also worked on Plas Newydd Farm. Across the road was an Italian Prisoner of War camp and we would sometimes go over to the fence to talk to them.

For all of this, we were paid £2. 9s per fortnight. (My father used to send me 14s a month to go home for one week-end.)

We were locked in at 10.30 every night There were occasional film shows at the hostel during the week and , once a week, a dance at the Church Hall. This cost us one shilling and there was a live band.

After almost 2 years on the island, I began to suffer from chest problems. I was transferred to private work, working for a while in the greenhouse at Holland Arms for Mr. Taylor. Then I went to work for the Vincents on the Bangor side. I was in "digs" in Penrhos and rented a bike for one shilling a week to get around. I also drove a pony and trap to Bangor, to deliver produce to Hogan's , on the corner of Dean Street.

Alan, my future husband, was in the R.A.F. over in America when I first saw his photograph and decided I would have to meet him. When he came back, I was introduced by a friend, outside the Bulkley Hotel in Menai Bridge and we quickly realized that we were a very good match. We were married in Liverpool in 1946 and had our reception at my parents' house. Alan was a very good dancer but I was never able to enjoy a complete dance with him because we were always being "excused"!.

Alan was working at Gresford's Colliery in Wrexham and seven weeks after we were married he was diagnosed with T.B. and went into a sanatorium. Tragically he died when he was only 36.

I have been very contented living in Menai Bridge It is my home and I never missed Liverpool. Having married for a second time, I now have 27 grandchildren and have lost count of how many great-grandchildren but I have their photographs all round my house.

Rita Smith -One of the First Landgirls in Menai Bridge.

Anfonwyd fy ngwisg a chyfarwyddiadau'r daith. Roeddwn i fod i deithio i orsaf yng Nghymru o'r enw Menai Bridge. Doedd gen i ddim syniad lle'r oedd hon, ond gyda 41 o ferched eraill, teithiais ar hyd lein Gogledd Cymru, yn meddwl ym mhob gorsaf ein bod wedi cyrraedd diwedd y daith. O'r diwedd fe gyrhaeddwn ni orsaf Porthaethwy! Roedd hon ar ochr Caernarfon o Afon Menai.

Daethom oddi ar y trê'n ac fe'n gosodwyd mewn rhyw fath o grŵp martsio. Llwythwyd ein cesys ar fan ond roedd yn rhaid i ni gerdded i'n cyrchfan, ar draws Pont y Borth, drwy linellau o wylwyr distaw. Ar ôl milltir, fe gyrhaeddwn ni gwt pren ar ochr Ffordd Llanfair. Roedd yr hostel, oedd yn cael ei rhedeg gan Miss Ellis, yn cynnwys dau adeilad, yr un agosaf at y ffordd oedd y lle byw - cegin, yn arwain i mewn i "lolfa". Roedd y lle'n cael ei wresogi gan stofau haearn gyda simneiau tal. Yr ail adeilad oedd yr ystafell gysgu. Rhannwyd hon gan unedau silffoedd/wardrob gyda lle cysgu dau fync. Roeddwn i'n cysgu yn y bync gwaelod. Roedd dwy ystafell ymolchi i ni eu rhannu ac, y lle cynhesaf o'r cyfan, cwpwrdd eirio mawr lle byddem yn mynd i gael smôc!

Cawsom ein rhannu'n dimau o bedair. Roedd yn rhaid i'r tîm ar ddyletswydd godi am 6 o'r gloch i wneud y brechdanau dyddiol i bawb. Roedd y gweddill ohonom yn codi am 7 o'r gloch ac yn gorfod bod yn barod i adael erbyn wyth. Byddai fan yn mynd â ni i'n llefydd gwaith. Treuliais i'r 6 wythnos gyntaf yn ardal Amlwch yn codi tatws – lladdfa! Roedd chwaer y ffermwr yn cadw llygad barcud arnom ni wrth iddi gerdded i fyny ac i lawr y rhesi – dim ond ffon oedd angen arni! Nid oeddem yn cael cynnig unrhyw beth i'w yfed a dim ond ein brechdanau oedd gennym i'n cadw i fynd.

Buom yn palu ym Malltraeth hefyd ac yn dal llygod mawr mewn rhai cytiau moch. Dwi'n cofio gwyddau yn dod ar ein hôl ar un fferm hefyd. Bûm i hefyd yn gweithio ar Fferm Plas Newydd. Ar draws y ffordd roedd gwersyll Carcharorion Rhyfel o'r Eidal a byddem weithiau'n mynd draw at y ffens i siarad â nhw. Am hyn i gyd, roeddem yn cael ein talu £2. 9s y pythefnos. (Byddai Nhad yn anfon 14s y mis i mi i fynd adre am un penwythnos.)

Roeddem yn cael ein cloi i mewn am 10.30 bob nos. Weithiau byddai ffilmiau'n cael eu dangos yn yr hostel yn ystod y penwythnos, ac, unwaith yr wythnos, byddai dawns yn Neuadd yr Eglwys. Roedd hon yn costio un swllt a byddai yno fand byw.

Ar ôl bron i 2 flynedd ar yr Ynys, dechreuais gael problemau ar fy mrest. Cefais fy nhrosglwyddo i waith preifat, yn gweithio am gyfnod yn y tŷ gwydr yn Holland Arms i Mr Taylor. Yna es i weithio i'r Vincents ar ochr Bangor. Roeddwn mewn llety ym Mhenrhos ac yn rhentu beic am swllt yr wythnos i fynd o gwmpas. Bûm yn gyrru merlen a thrap i Fangor, i fynd â chynnyrch i Hogan's, ar gornel Stryd y Deon.

Roedd Alan, a ddaeth yn ŵr i mi, yn yr R.A.F. draw yn America pan welais ei lun gyntaf a phenderfynu y byddai'n rhaid i mi gwrrd ag o. Pan ddaeth yn ôl, cefais fy nghyflwyno gan ffrind, y tu allan i westy'r Bulkley ym Mhorthaethwy a buan y sylweddoloni ni y byddem yn gwneud yn dda iawn gyda'n gilydd. Fe briodwn ni yn Lerpwl yn 1946 a chael y brecwast priodas yn nhŷ fy rhieni. Roedd Alan yn ddawnsiwr da iawn ond doeddwn i byth yn gallu mwynhau dawns gyfan gydag o achos roeddem bob amser yn cael ein "hesgusodi"...!

Roedd Alan yn gweithio ym Mhwl Glo Gresfordd ger Wrecsam a saith wythnos wedi i ni briodi, cafodd wybod bod y diciâu arno ac aeth i sanatoriwm. Yn drist iawn bu fawr pan oedd ddim ond yn 36 oed.

Rwyf wedi bod yn hapus iawn yn byw ym Mhorthaethwy. Dyma fy nghartref a wnes i fyth hiraethu am Lerpwl. Wedi priodi am yr eildro, mae gen i bellach 27 o wyrion a dwi wedi colli cyfrif ar faint o or-wyrion sydd gen i ond mae eu lluniau o gwmpas y tŷ i gyd.

Rita Smith – Un o'r genethod Byddin y Tir cyntaf ym Mhorthaethwy.

Mae Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy yn diweddar ei chofnodion, ffotograffau a'i Gwefan er mwyn ei gwneud yn haws i'r aelodau eu gweld. Byddwn yn ceisio ychwanegu at y rhain yn gyson drwy gydol y flwyddyn ac yn cyhoeddi pigion gyda'ch Cylchlythyr. Mae croeso mawr bob amser i gyfraniadau newydd, yn ogystal â help i adnabod pobl yn y lluniau.

Atgofion o'r Borth gan Rita Smith



Rydym yn ddiolchgar i deulu Rita am ganiatâd i gyhoeddi ei hanes am ei chyfnod fel un o Enethod Byddin y Tir ac am roi lluniau. Roedd Rita yn aelod adnabyddus, gweithgar a phoblogaidd o'r Gymuned. Bu farw Rita yn 2009 yn 86 oed. Yn 2008 cydnabuwyd gwasanaeth a chyfraniad Byddin y Tir gan y genedl drwy ddyfarnu bathodyn neu fedal arbennig iddynt, ac roedd Rita'n falch iawn pan dderbyniodd hwn.

**Ewch i'n Gwefan yn
www.menaibridge**