Porthaethwy – Mynedfa Ynys Môn
Menai Bridge – Gateway to Anglesey

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 Richard Johnson.

Richard Johnson, now aged 88 yrs first visited Menai Bridge in the 1930s. He still visits the area .

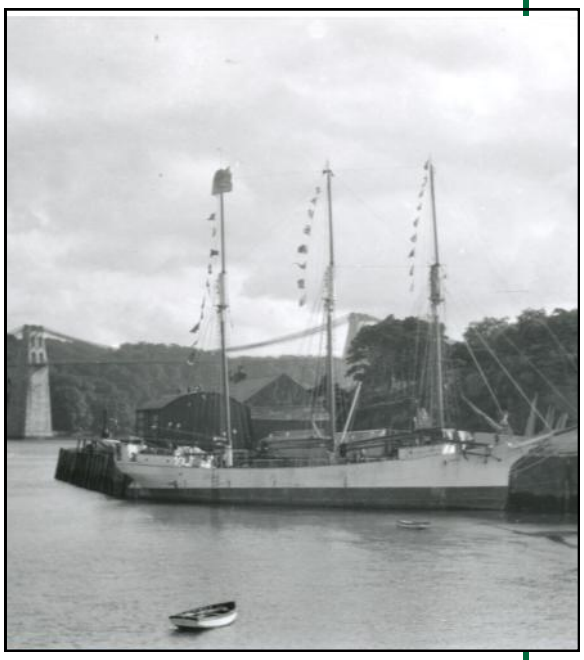
This is an extract from his recollections of his happy childhood spent in Menai Bridge, 'very reminiscent of Arthur Ransome's ' Swallows and Amazons'. Full notes are given in our Website.

See our Website at www.menaibridge civicsociety.org.uk

.....There used to be many very beautiful yachts with permanent moorings on the sTrait. Many of the most expensive ones could be seen lying at moorings in that part of the Strait close to the Anglesey shore between Cadnant and the Gazelle Inn. Two come readily to mind. One was a large sloop named 'Sheevra' and, in contrast, a large and very sleek motor launch named 'Kootenay' which could often be seen gliding through the water at speed making scarcely a sound in passing.

There was an occasion when a surprise visitor to the Strait was the large steam-yacht 'Sans Peur', owned by the Duke of Sutherland. When I first saw her she was at anchor off the Cadnant estuary. Apparently it was their intention to sail the vessel through the swellies and the story at the time (possibly apocryphal) had it that they were reluctant to call on the services of the Swellies pilot, Mr. London, who lived in Menai Bridge. The story put about was that they had sent out a tender to explore the reaches of the Swellies for themselves where the problems lay but unfortunately for them they ran the tender aground on the Platters, the rocks close to the Suspension Bridge. (Those same rocks were to wreck H.M.S. 'Conway' soon after the war). I assume Mr. London was sent for!

There was more excitement at Regatta times when racing-yacht-owning visitors used to arrive for the racing. One incident which has stuck in my mind involved a 'half-rater' yacht which was taking part in one of the races. The wind was very light and one of those yachts became becalmed beam on to what we then called the Half Tide Rock approaching the Suspension Bridge. An ebb tide was running and this yacht drifted on to the guys which supported the navigation post. The current caused the boat to capsize but the crew were soon rescued and as the tide ebbed the top of the mast grounded and left the hull of the boat incongruously supported high up partly by its mast and partly by the navigation post structure! Mention of shipping in the Strait leads me on to recall being present on some of the occasions when the Swedish



schooner 'Isolda', registered at the port of Goteborg (Gothenburg), used to dock at the stone jetty bringing large deck cargoes of timber to be unloaded at Gresty's yard. They also brought with them small boats of clinker construction, looking very much like miniature Viking longboats with extended stems rising vertically fore and aft. I have memories of playing in one of them with George Gresty who was about my age. It used to be exciting for us children to be present on the Pier when the holiday steamers were coming and going and I remember eating ice-cream on sale at either of two stalls set up on the promenade area near to the Mostyn Arms. One was run by the Williams family and the other by the Evanses who also had a greengrocery shop on the High Street. Henry Evans had a fresh complexion and his beaming smile was like the rising sun! A small charge was made for admission to the pier and the kiosk was always very capably run by Mrs. Gardener. .....

..... Byddai yna lawer o gychod hwylio prydferth iawn gydag angorfeydd parhaol ar y Fenai. Roedd nifer o'r rhai mwyaf drud i'w gweld yn gorwedd mewn angorfeydd yn y rhan honno o'r Fenai sy'n agos at lan Ynys Môn rhwng Cadnant a Gwesty'r Gazelle. Daw dau gwch i'r cof yn syth. Slwp mawr oedd un o'r enw 'Sheevra' ac, yn hollol wahanol, cwch modur mawr a smart iawn oedd y llall o'r enw 'Kootenay' oedd yn aml i'w weld yn llithro drwy'r dwr ar gyflymder mawr ond heb wneud nemor ddim swn.

Dwi'n cofio un achlysur pan ddaeth ymwelydd annisgwyl i'r Fenai, sef y cwch stêm 'Sans Peur', oedd yn eiddo i Ddug Sutherland. Pan welais i hwn gyntaf, roedd wedi'i angori oddi ar aber Cadnant. Mae'n debyg mai eu bwriad oedd hwylio'r cwch drwy Bwll Ceris (y *Swellies*) a'r hanes ar y pryd (o bosibl ddim yn hollol wir) oedd eu bod yn gyndyn o ofyn am gymorth peilot y Pwll, Mr London, oedd yn byw ym Mhorthaethwy. Y stori oedd eu bod wedi anfon cwch tendro i archwilio dyfroedd isaf y Pwll drostynt eu hunain i weld lle'r oedd y problemau, ond yn anffodus iddyn nhw, hwyliodd y tender ar y graig ar y *Platters*, y creigiau ger Pont y Borth. (Yr un creigiau a ddrylliodd yr H.M.S. Conwy yn fuan wedi'r rhyfel). Dwi'n cymryd eu bod wedi galw am Mr London!

Roedd mwy byth o gyffro adeg y Regata pan fyddai ymwelwyr â'u cychod hwylio'n cyrraedd ar gyfer y rasio. Cofiaf am un digwyddiad gyda chwch hwylio 'half-rater' a oedd yn cymryd rhan yn un o'r rasys. Roedd y gwynt yn ysgafn iawn a methodd un o'r cychod hynny â symud a daeth i aros ar yr hyn roeddem yn ei alw'r Graig Hanner Teid tuag at y Bont. Roedd hi'n drai ar y pryd a drifftiodd y cwch hwn ar y rhaffau a oedd yn cynnal y postyn mordwyo. Achosodd y cerrynt i'r cwch droi drosodd ond buan yr achubwyd y criw ac wrth i'r llanw fynd ar drai, cyffyrddodd pen y mast â'r gwaelod gan adael cragen y cwch yn hongian yn rhyfedd yn cael ei dal yn rhannol gan ei mast ac yn rhannol gan y postyn mordwyo! Mae sôn am fordwyo ar y Fenai yn f'atgoffa am fod yn bresennol ar rai o'r adegau pan oedd y sgwner 'Isolda' o Sweden, a gofrestrwyd ym mhorthladd Goteborg (Gothenburg), yn arfer docio wrth y lanfa garreg a dod â llwythi dec mawr o goed i'w dadlwytho yn iard Gresty. Roedden nhw'n dod â chychod bach estyllog gyda nhw hefyd, oedd yn edrych yn debyg iawn i gychod hir y Llychlynwyr ar ffurf fechan, gyda'r blaenau llong estynedig yn codi am i fyny o'r naill ben i'r llall. Mae gen i atgofion am chwarae yn un ohonyn nhw gyda George Gresty a oedd tua'r un oed â mi. Peth cyffrous i ni blant oedd bod yn bresennol ar y Pier pan oedd y stemars gwyliau'n mynd a dod a dwi'n cofio bwyta hufen ia oedd yn cael ei werthu mewn dwy stondin a osodwyd ar y promenâd gerllaw'r Mostyn Arms. Roedd y naill yn cael ei rhedeg gan deulu'r Williams a'r llall gan yr Evansiaid a oedd hefyd yn cadw siop lysiau ar y Stryd Fawr. Roedd gan Henry Evans wyneb glandeg ac roedd ei wên siriol fel yr haul yn codi!

'Kootenay'

Roedd tâl bach am gael mynd ar y pier ac roedd y ciosg ei hun yn nwylo medrus Mrs Gardener.

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Richard Johnson — recent visit to Anglesey by plane!

Mae Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy yn diweddaru 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 bob amser i gyfraniadau newydd, yn ogystal â help i adnabod pobl yn y lluniau.

Atgofion am Borthaethwy gan Richard Johnson.

Daeth Richard Johnson, sydd bellach yn 88 oed, i Borthaethwy am y tro cyntaf yn yr 1930au. Mae'n dal i ymweld â'r ardal.

Darn yw hwn o'i atgofion am ei blentyndod hapus a dreuliodd ym Mhorthaethwy, 'yn debyg iawn i Swallows and Amazons Arthur Ransome'. Ceir nodiadau llawn yn ein Gwefan.

Ewch i'n Gwefan yn www.menaibridgecivicsociety.org.uk