

Porthaethwy – Mynedfa Ynys Môn
Menai Bridge – Gateway to Anglesey

NEWSLETTER

Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

Menai Bridge and District Civic Society

CYLCHLYTHYR

Haf/Summer 2021 Page/Tudalen 1

Dates for your diary: More details on page 3.

20th April Saving the **Anglesey Column** - Peter Simpson

18th May - Zoom talk
15th June - Zoom talk

24th September 2021 Annual General Meeting, 2.30 by Zoom. Please take this as advance notice of the Annual General Meeting.

You will be sent a link to the above talks about a week beforehand, by email.

Should circumstances permit the AGM will be held as a regular face-to-face meeting

Inside this issue:	
Menai Bridge Development? Enough	1
Land fit for heroes?	
Recent Programme Notes	2
Future Events	3
What could you do?	3
Enough continued	4



Enough is enough!

Photos: Norman Kneale, Liz Moyle

In our April 2017 Newsletter we reported on promising plans to develop the Moreia Chapel site. The owners and developers, R. L Davies, were at last in active discussion with the County Council. They even held a meeting for stakeholders. A more detailed meeting should have been held on the 17th May 2017; it wasn't. It should be noted that the site was in an extremely poor condition for at least 15 years before that. So for the past 20 years, at least, residents have had to put up with dereliction at the heart of our community. During lockdown many shops on and close to the High Street have used the opportunity to paint and decorate their premises. I applaud their investment in difficult times. What has happened to the Chapel and the

equally derelict adjacent house: nothing! Talk of development lasting over 20 years is really an insult to the people of Menai Bridge. **An Order under Section 215 should be placed on the site.** What would that do? Section 215 (s215) of the

Country Planning Act 1990 provides a local planning authority (LPA) with the power, in certain circumstances, to take steps requiring land (including property) to be cleaned up **when its condition adversely affects the amenity of the area.** They may serve a notice on the owner requiring that the situation be remedied. These notices set out the steps that need to be taken, and the time within which they must be carried out. LPAs also have powers under s219 to undertake the clean up works themselves and to recover the costs from the landowner. Have a look at the site from by the Town Council's notice board (see below). This is what greets visitors to our town! Painting pretend windows on a derelict house is one thing, no windows, no roof, trees growing out of the walls.....



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CIVIC TRUSTS and NATIONAL NEWS

A LAND FIT FOR HEROES?

In our last Newsletter I mentioned Sir Patrick Abercrombie and 'Mona Nova', his plan for the Future Development of Anglesey (prepared for the Welsh Development Housing Association) looking at reconstruction after the end of WWI). Having now purchased a copy (thanks to Anglesey Archives) the booklet makes fascinating reading. It expresses deep concern at the housing available and especially for returning servicemen. The language is somewhat dated in parts, as is to be expected, but his central argument remains remarkably up to date that: "Housing does not stand alone' but is inseparably bound up with occupation.. and social requirements. Nor is it safe in dealing with so modern a subject as sanitary Houses to neglect Tradition

and local custom."

" No complete solution is possible unless a satisfying result is obtained under each of the four following headings :- the house, its interior, the house its exterior and garden, the Village and the Island." Sanitary housing here means the obvious and also the provision of ' a healthy family home'. Housing conditions in Anglesey cottages could be dark and damp, ideal breeding grounds for Tuberculosis and Anglesey had one of the highest infection rates in the country. In 1911 there were three institutions in North Wales set aside specifically for dealing with TB; one in Penmaenmawr, one in the Vale of Clwyd and one in Penheligyn, Menai Bridge (not far from where the recycling centre is now). This was founded and financed through the generosity of Miss Davies, Treborth. (continued on back page)

RECENT PROGRAMME NOTES

19th January 2021 A walk round the St Tysilio headstones with Military Associations. A virtual walk round YnysTysilio/ Church Island with Bridget Geoghegan. An interesting well illustrated exploration of Ynys Tysilio, looking especially at the graves of those who died in WWI and WW2 or who are also remembered on family graves. So many. Details of one of the headstones is given below.

Henry Harold Hughes, Architect and Designer of the St Tysilio Cenotaph.

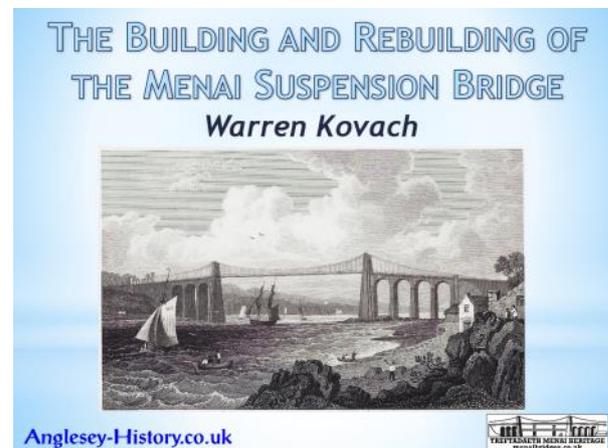
H. Harold Hughes is a non-combatant. He was a distinguished Architect, born in Liverpool and trained in London, with an interest in the local domestic architecture. He came to Bangor in about 1891; was appointed Diocesan Surveyor and Architect in 1900 and restored many Churches in the Diocese of Bangor. With Herbert Luck North, a local Arts and Crafts Architect, he wrote two books, still important reference sources: 'The Old Churches of Snowdonia' and 'The Old Cottages of Snowdonia'. He also had an interest in archaeology and



Photo: Bridget Geoghegan wrote for the Archaeologia Cambrensis magazine. Between 1926 and 1940 he edited the magazine and was President of the Cambrian Archaeological Association in 1930.

This April sees the Centenary of the unveiling of the War Memorial on the 20th April 1921. Many local groups, including our own, have joined with the Friends of Church Island to produce a short PowerPoint presentation to mark the occasion. Hopefully this will later be turned into a film. Ynys Tysilio/Church Island holds a special place in the hearts of many, resident and visitor alike; we do remember. The War Graves Commission looks after the graves of many servicemen and women at home and abroad. However it does not look after civilians killed in war. For our Memories section we include details of the McKie Family from Bangor and what happened to their daughters in WW2. Many thanks to David Price for this article.

16th February 2021 Warren traced the development of the Bridge from the earliest proposed plans. The Bridge still



Frontpage of PowerPoint talk: Warren Kovach

has the capacity to impress and inspire, so goodness knows what people thought of it 150 years ago! Excellent photos and information from Warren. His Anglesey-History.co.uk website is well worth a visit.

17th March 2021 An Antarctic Odyssey: in the wake of Scott and Shackleton. An illustrated lecture



Photo: Peter Williams

by Prof. Peter Williams. Up close with Antarctic wildlife and near/inside views of Scott's and Shackleton's 'huts' conserved by the Antarctic Heritage Trust based in New Zealand. Prof Williams reminded us that visitors were asked not to get too close to local wildlife; no one told the wildlife that, as this inquisitive pair, an Auk and King Penguin, show.

FUTURE EVENTS

Lectures are held monthly by Zoom and we hope before too long we will meet again in the lounge of the War Memorial Community Centre, Water Street, Menai Bridge! Meetings begin at 2.30 p.m.

The Society reserves the right to make reasonably necessary alterations to arrangements, if for example the Speaker or the Centre is suddenly not available. Where possible we will notify members by e-mail and offer an alternative programme. If you don't already receive our 'Latest News' and e-mails, and would like to, please let Jane Cherrett have your e-mail address.

Zoom Meetings are, unfortunately, becoming far more necessary. If you're uncertain about how to join them please let us know and we'll arrange for someone to

give you a hand. When you join a Zoom Meeting you can just listen in and view the slide presentation of the speaker; you don't need to show your own picture if you don't want to. Our talks so far have grown in numbers with about fifteen joining in. The next talks are:

20th April - The Anglesey Column - Peter Simpson

18th May - Zoom Talk

15th June - Zoom Talk

24th September 2021 AGM 2.30 by Zoom.

Please take this as advance notice of the Annual General Meeting.

You will be sent full details and a link to the talks about a week beforehand, by email.

Usually during in the Summer we would organise a couple of extra outings. Unfortunately nothing is usual at present and we can't be certain what may be open.

Jane Cherrett

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH - continued from page 1.

Would it be possible to repair the Chapel? No. Do we need a multinational hotel or grocery store. No, we favour locally owned, individually run stores where you can 'buy local'. Knock it down and use the land for car parking! Yes!

What can you do? A petition, begun at the first Food Fare in Menai Bridge, although collecting many signatures, didn't seem to have any effect. Write direct to the Town Council at Canolfan Coed Cyrnol, Ffordd Mona / Mona Street, Menai Bridge, LL59 5EA or email at townclerk@menaibridgetowncouncil.co.uk and tell them what you think. Write direct to your County Councillor, Cllr Robin Williams, Care of Democratic Services Council Offices, Llangefni, LL77 7TW or email at robinwilliams@ynysmon.gov.uk and tell him what you think. Ask your Assembly Member (or potential Assembly Member) what they think. **But most importantly ask them for what they think; what are they going to do? How long will this situation continue? Why has it gone on so long?**

You may notice that personal addresses and email are not given, nor given in the Town and County websites, this is so across the County - the result of Councillors being harried and the subject of abuse. That's not fair, you can tell people what you think and ask for a personal reply from your representative, without being objectionable.

The Moreia Chapel site, opposite the film studios, is the most obvious sign of dereliction in Menai Bridge but elsewhere in the town you can see signs of neglect. The Mostyn Arms, on Ffordd Cyman, near the side entrance to the Pier, is another where years of neglect are all too evident i.e. not caused by the recent lockdown, but years before. The house Bryniau at junction of Cambria Road and New Street was in the process of being renovated. Work stopped and the garden was left to its own devices. Brambles, weed and trees now hide the two cars parked in the garden - so much so it's become a tourist attraction in its own right and people come to take photos of it. And then there are the rats.

Such a shame when others are working hard and have some pride in where they live and work.



Mostyn Arms and Bryniau

What else could you do?

Do you apologise to your visitors, for the state of the centre, when you take them for a walk through the town? Do they say, 'Well we wouldn't allow anything like this where I come from!' Do you just shrug your shoulders and say 'Well that's how it is here'? We've not had many visitors over the last year but we will now. Not nice is it, people laughing at where you live. Check round about where you live, check local planning applications. Are they appropriate, do they enhance the Conservation Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty? The Council's website with Map Mon is a mine of information. Do you know of any other town on Anglesey where this sort of thing is permitted? Don't keep quiet about what you find. Let the Secretary know (see contact details on page 4).

Join the Civic Society Committee, if only for this one issue, and help us resolve this disgrace. Campaigning against unnecessary squalor is time consuming and never easy. Can you join us and help put Menai Bridge on the map for the right reasons in 2021, or will we still be reporting on rats, dereliction and one of the most expensive feral pigeon roosts in North Wales?



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See our Website at
www.menaibridgecivicsociety.org.uk

Green shoots and leaves. A couple of years ago members of the Society planted native daffodil and crocus bulbs round the town. Pleasing to say they're well established. Native daffodils were in short supply last year but it would be good to do more. Where else could do with brightening up?



A land fit for heroes - continued from page 2

The Davies family may have been economical in how they paid their staff but their support for community need was extensive and long lasting. Tuberculosis in Victorian times was almost given a romantic air— think of Keats, Kafka, Chekhov, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Poe, and all three Bronte sisters, plus their brother, Branwell; DH Lawrence, Katherine Mansfield, Walter Scott, Dostoyevsky, Robert Louis Stevenson: pale and interesting and dead! I didn't realise that the 5th Marquis of Anglesey died in Monte Carlo from TB complications'. Tuberculosis affected recruiting during WWI and many men (approx. 50,000) were discharged at the end of the War having contracted TB in the trenches/ poor living conditions. No wonder that sanitary living conditions came high up on Patrick Abercrombie's list of essentials for returning servicemen. But back to "Mona Nova" itself, he concludes that a combined action on a 'Comprehensive Plan' is needed in the control of your sea-coast development; in the stimulation of your agriculture and industries, etc. No one can deny that Anglesey, if it is to stamp out Tuberculosis and contribute its quota towards the Intellect and Prosperity of the country, must not only pull down its worst houses and re-model those capable of it, but build a sufficiency of new only based as to their number and position on the requirements of Agriculture and Industry. "

New houses were built at Bro Hyfryd and Rhyd Menai in 1919 (rented out for nine shillings per week for parlour houses and six shillings and sixpence for non parlour houses (source H Anthony's 'Menai Bridge and its Council'). This continued in 1930 and 1933 when some substandard houses in Well Street, Wood Street and Dew Street were demolished under the national Slum Clearance Act and new houses built in Mount Street, and Well Street itself. In 1938 plans for new build in Tyddyn To were shelved due to the advent of WW2. As for TB, cases declined with the use or sanatoria, slum clearance, health education, etc. But only in the 1940s did the use of the BCG vaccine and antibiotics really make significant improvements. Initially developed in 1921 in the Pasteur Laboratories its efficacy and safety was questioned. Not until 1948 was it safety agreed but its efficacy remained unsettled. 'Despite these disagreements a Scandinavian campaign was launched to vaccinate children and adolescents in war ravaged Europe. In 1948 the campaign received support from both UNICEF and WHO and became known as the 'International Tuberculosis Campaign'. A precondition for UN support was that the campaign be extended beyond Europe and BCG vaccination became a global enterprise.' Extract from 'Tuberculosis a Short History by the University of York and Orient Black Swan.

Menai Bridge and District Civic Society Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

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