



Discovering Old Welsh Houses Newsletters



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Gweledigaeth: Dathlu Treftadaeth Cymru drwy astudio tai traddodiadol a bywydau'r bobl oedd yn byw ynddyn nhw.

Celebrating Welsh Heritage through the study of traditional houses and the lives of the people who lived in them.

CYLCHLYTHYR 35 Rhagfyr 2020

NEWSLETTER 35 December 2020

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill.

OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events.

FROM THE CHAIR by Richard Cuthbertson

Hi everyone. Well, Christmas is only weeks away. Yikes! Terry is now taking over the Newsletter from Irene, and this gives me the opportunity to thank them both for their important service, thanks which I also wish to send to all the Officers, Trustees, and enthusiastic members. Their effort and interest is keeping everything going very well. I am glad that we have all learnt to Zoom a bit, because it means less travelling for everyone and none of us have easy journeys, no one more so than Margaret, who is still putting in a full week's work but not going on those risky journeys in ice, snow gales and floods.

We did meet up last month, however, to explore Old Court, Sarah Maitland-Jones's house at Caerwys. It is a fascinating house with a long written history of use given spice by Caerwys's Roman origins. It has many clues to past possibilities but, like many important houses, unravelling the building sequence is a very complicated task and we may never quite know the order of construction. It was very kind of Sarah to let us poke and prod!

On Wednesday night October 28th we had our first Zoom talk, by yours truly. We think 53 people tuned in to hear me talk about the things in my Plas Penmynydd study. Peter Masters was our 'host' and he managed to get most people hooked up, no mean feat! I should have given better descriptions of the objects (for those who had no picture), and I should have tried harder to follow a thread. I actually just rambled on randomly, but at least it got us started. I really think these talks will catch on; we don't need to be super professional, just enthusiastic about our chosen subject and I hope that anyone who wants to have a go will contact Margaret. I think we have three or four more lined up at the moment. I send you all my best wishes for Christmas. Stay safe!



Old Court Caerwys

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY by Margaret Dunn

DOWH Members' Zoom meetings

The first meeting on 28th October was a great success with over 50 joining in to hear Richard Cuthbertson's fascinating talk as he showed us a wide range of old and new objects in his study at Plas Penmynydd. Many thanks to Richard, also to Peter Masters for arranging all the details. Please contact Peter if you had any difficulties in joining in. The future Members' Zoom meetings listed below will be held at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesdays; most will be illustrated talks.

November 25th: Dr Martin Cherry "Cruck Houses - a North Wales speciality"

December 16th: Peter Masters will lead a session on "Christmas Crackers"

January 13th: Dr Shaun Evans, ISWE, Bangor University "An ancient seat of a gentleman of Wales' - the place of the *plas* in Pennant's Wales"

February 17th: Zoe Henderson “**Caerfallen - the History and Renovation of an Elizabethan Farmhouse**”

March 10th: Janice Dale “**The Fifth Dimension Project - Images and Poetry of North Wales Houses**”

April 14th: Peter Thompson “**Some Houses in the Townshipp of Llanaber, Merioneth**”

Please do contact the Secretary if you are willing to offer a talk.



Plas Penmynydd Anglesey

Covid 19

We do hope that you are all keeping safe and in good health. At present there is no telling for how long we may be unable to visit houses and meet together socially, but most of us are so fortunate to be living in beautiful countryside rather than in an urban high rise flat. Branches can play a major role in offering a range of projects to interest members and diminish any boredom these wet winter days. So do inquire about what is on offer and what help can be given between Branches to get you started as well as what you can offer. Some members managed to book sessions in Record Offices before they were closed again. We look forward to their re-opening.

Treasurer

DOWH is still looking for a Treasurer to succeed John Townsend next April. With only one active project this and probably next financial year, the role should usually take about half an hour a week. Contact the Secretary if you or a friend would like more details.

Newsletter Editor

Terry Williams is now our Newsletter editor. As you will know, until branches are able to start meeting together, we are asking someone from each Branch to write a 350-400 word item on something related to DOWH for each

Newsletter. Many thanks to those who have contributed to this December edition. Copy is needed by 1st February 2021 for the March Newsletter; Branch reps will be arranging who will be preparing their item, preferably plus a photo/drawing, to be sent to Terry.

Key points from the 3rd November trustees meeting

Branches are hoping to offer a wider range of activities in the New Year, and the Reps would like to know what YOU would like to be on offer. As was said in the summer newsletter, the Branches are currently leading the work of DOWH by encouraging local members to find something interesting to undertake, especially over the coming winter. Help is available - we have a range of experts and many online resources available. Some are completing unfinished research and others are starting something new.

There are some changes to **Branch names** from the New Year. The Snowdonia Branch will return to being the **Caernarfonshire Branch** and the North East Wales branch will be the **Flintshire Branch**. Those in Wrexham UA can join in with any Branch activities. We hope to hear from someone who may be interested in leading a **Wrexham Branch**.

Parishes Project

At present, Branches vary in the amount of progress being made. DOWH will be using these results to help identify future priorities, and so hope that in the New Year additional parishes will be checked online and/or by small socially distanced exploratory walks.

DOWH Houses Management Spreadsheet

Good news here as Jane Parry-Evans will be starting on this project in November and plans to complete it by summer 2021. Once the checked details of each house visited since 2008 have been entered, this will become a crucial tool to aid planning and prioritising future research and activities.

DOWH Executive committee now meets on Zoom monthly and the **trustees and Branch Reps** will meet every 3 or 4 months. Please forward suggestions and comments via your Branch Reps who have the full minutes. Some Reps circulate relevant summaries to Branch members, so do ask if you are interested.

Information which may be of interest to members

NLW Wiki Photos Project

Here's a link to further information on the NLW project: <https://blog.library.wales/wicipics/>

See also the N.E.Wales Branch section below for some other useful web links.

CONWY BRANCH

Report April - September 2020

by Ann Morgan

Conwy Branch members have mostly been working on personal projects relating to their own families or community projects in their own local areas. Any buildings which people have focused on would not, in most cases, meet the DOWH Group's criteria because they are post-1700 or have been extensively renovated. However, they do still have their own histories and importance to individual families or local communities. The research methodology is the same as for much older buildings although using just online resources has inevitably limited the process.

As soon as the Archives re-opened, it was possible to resume work on two houses in the Conwy valley which had had to be put on hold when lock-down was first imposed. Now, unfortunately, with the latest restrictions in place, the only Archives available to us are the newly relocated Conwy ones.

Apart from that, Branch members have been busy providing support to family, friends and/or neighbours. In regard to Discovering Old Welsh Houses activities, our members are happy to wait until normal business is resumed. The Zoom presentations may prove to be useful as an interim measure.

House History visits

by Ann Morgan and Gill Jones

Almost all of our house history visits have been very pleasant experiences. To our constant surprise we have been invited into farm houses and homes and offered tea and delicious homemade cakes - indeed, made to feel thoroughly welcome. We try to reciprocate at the following visit and offer jams and/or chutneys. Very rarely, things turn out quite differently!

One morning we went searching down some ever-narrowing country lanes until we found our farmhouse. We drove in through the yard, splashing through the mud and manure and parked at the very end.

As we got out of the car, the smell hit us - we turned and saw the dead sheep. Holding our noses we headed down the drive to the front door. I walked to the open door, knocked, and waited - I could hear voices inside. From the corner of my eye I could see Gill about two meters back; we usually approach together - but the farmer and his wife were at the door - so I explained who we were and that we offered our research services free of charge should they be interested in having their house history done. But no, thank you, they were very busy. I turned to leave and almost

tripped over a dead rat - that was why Gill had been standing two meters away!

We laughed all the way to the car, holding our noses to get in and drove out through the muck. "Well that was a dead end". We still laugh at the incident.

Victorian building on Denbighshire side of Betws-y-coed

By Tony Schärer, Conwy Branch



David Cox, *A Welsh Funeral*, Tate 4844, image © Tate released under Creative Commons CC-BY-NC-ND (3.0 Unported)

This version of the artist David Cox's famous picture *A Welsh Funeral* conveys the atmosphere in Betws-y-coed just before the railway arrived in 1860 (the station was built right across the foreground!). Behind the church lies a rocky hillside of bracken and heather, and my lockdown project has been to understand how a row of Victorian houses came to be built there between the date of this picture and 1900. Who were some of the characters involved, where did the money come from, and does anything remain of the landscape now cut through by the busy A 470?

The tithe map of 1840 shows that the road from Llanrwst had recently been diverted from the ford and stepping stones over the Conwy at Rhyd-y-creua to join the new Holyhead Road at Telford's Waterloo Bridge. It was along the upper side of this road that the new houses were built. The first of the 'developers' was William Griffith, an attorney at law from Llanrwst, who borrowed £400 from a local grocer (who'd returned from America) to buy Muriau Poethion farm. He soon had a new client who built one of the first 'Alpine style' houses in the area, with the steeply pitched roof and ornate gables in the Victorian gothic style. The new tenant at 'Myria' in 1851 was George Popkin, an aspiring artist and the son of a London lawyer. In the next few years more artists were attracted to Betws-y-coed, one family living in the cottage opposite the old Voelas Estate house at Rhyd-y-creua, which was given a new turret and re-named "Castell pwt".

These first artists moved amongst the farmers, lead miners, labourers and paupers who lived in the small farms and cottages on the lower side of the road. By 1861, some of the Capel Garmon glebe land on the hillside had been let for building and George Popkin had been driven away by the arrival of the railway. His successor at 'Myria Hall' was William Drury Lowe, ex- cavalry captain and heir to a Derbyshire estate, who came to consort with the artists and to establish the first plantation of newly popular larch trees on the hillside, with a network of paths to enjoy the views - the precursor of the modern forestry which covers David Cox's view.

By 1881, more buildings had filled the vacant spaces. A row of semi-detached villas rose up near the now-named 'Plas Muriau'. There was a substantial house on part of the hillside's glebe land, and next door was the sixteen- roomed Park Hill house. The latter was lived in by a local Welsh Methodist minister, whose boarders included a resident artist, his large family, and two English lady visitors - surely a pre-cursor to the line of bed and breakfast signs along the road today.

ANGLESEY BRANCH



Llethr Ddu

Report

The Covid pandemic has severely curtailed the activities of the Branch and there is little to report. After two years of sterling service Sue Hurst will be stepping down as Branch Representative and Secretary in 2021. Any Branch members interested in taking over should liaise with Peter Masters.

DOWH and Local History

by Peter Masters

One of the interesting things about the Discovering Old Welsh Houses project has not been just the dating of timbers or the building recording but the third piece of the jigsaw, the house histories. These valuable insights into the house's past involve more than just who built them and when, with their landholdings, but also who were in the household.

On a group visit to Henblas in 2014, among the many interesting things we learned was a tale of some unexpected visitors who turned up whilst the owners were away. Disappointed though they were, they did leave some interesting information. They were distant relatives, possibly from South Africa, being descended from Henrietta Dulcibella Evans of Henblas. Some research shows that she was born in 1834 on the 9th of December and baptised 7th January 1835 in Llangristiolus. She had married in c.1859 Capt. John William Trefor of Llanbeulan, Llechylched, Anglesey, although strangely the marriage was in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. In 1860 they were in Malta, as he was in the 22nd [Cheshire] Regiment who were stationed there at this time. The regiment disembarked in Malta on 22 June. Two of their children, Charles and John, were baptised in Malta in 1860 and 1863 respectively.

The name Dulcibella struck a chord and a check through my local village archives showed that in the genealogies and pedigrees there was a Dulcibella Evans of Llethr Ddu, LLanaelhaearn, Caernarfonshire. She was the daughter of William Evans [William ap Richard] and Margred Morgan of Henblas, Anglesey. Margred's father was given as Bishop Dr. Robert Morgan of Bangor who had bought the unexpired lease of the tithes of Llanddyfnan, Anglesey from the Bulkeley family. He managed to retain this parish when he was expelled from his other preferments during the Interregnum, and he was at this time living with the Lloyd family of Henblas, Llangristiolus. He married Ann Lloyd, daughter of William Lloyd, rector of Llaneilian c. 1620.

However, this history does not quite add up as Dr Robert Morgan died in 1673 and unless Margred was conceived from beyond the grave, (as she was not born until 1691), he



Henblas, Llangristiolus circa 1900

cannot have been her father. There was a daughter Margred born c.1645 but she married Edward Wynn of Bodewryd, Anglesey.

When we look at Henblas, Llangristiolus, Anglesey we see that according to the pedigrees, one of Bishop Morgan's sons was William Morgan (b.1640) of Henblas. He married Doucle (Dulcibella) Jones c.1690. Their younger daughter



Henblas, Llangristiolus

Dulcibella died unmarried aged 64 in 1772 in Penmorfa. It was their elder daughter Margred who married William Evans of Llethr Ddu, Llanaelhaearn, Llŷn, in 1725. He bought with him Bodowyr, and the old Trefeilir inheritance. His great-grandfather married Anne Wyn of Brynkir, Dolbenmaen. Several parcels of land at Llethr Ddu were still owned by the Brynkir estate, which would account for the Llethr Ddu connection. Coming from Henblas to Llethr Ddu must have been a shock for Margred.

Just eight years later William is noted as Esquire, of Trefeilir when appointed High Sheriff in 1733. Their daughter Dulcibella Evans, although again given as of Llethr Ddu, was baptised in Trefeilir, Anglesey, in 1732 and according to the Parish Register she married Henry Rowlands of Porthllongdy, Llanbedrgoch on 6th April 1763 with both being from this parish! Their daughter Dulcibella was baptized at Llanedwen, Anglesey, on 10th Aug 1766 but her parents are given as Rev. W. Rowlands and Dulcibella in the parish register. Sadly she seems to have died young.

So many Dulcibellas, so many untied knots! Henrietta Dulcibella Evans was a 1st cousin twice removed of Dulcibella Rowlands. Henrietta's mother [Henrietta Evans, nee Warren] died at the grand age of 84 in 1889 and left an estate worth £2250-7s-2d [about £134,850 today].

Madyn Dysw, Amlwch

by Susan Hurst

This Grade II listed building lies, tucked away, to the south-east of Amlwch in north Ynys Môn. It was first listed in 1951 with amendments in 2000. Madyn Dysw is said to be one of the few houses remaining in Amlwch to pre-date the copper mines at nearby Mynydd Parys, which caused the main growth of Amlwch town. It is thought to date from the early 17th century, on the site of an earlier house mentioned in rentals of the early C16th. It had a date stone (illustrated) of 1620. This was removed in the 1950s, when the house was

renovated, but unfortunately was subsequently broken and lost. The house had also been extensively remodelled and extended in the 19th Century with the addition of a three storey block.

The rear wing (marked as 1 on the map), incorporated into the north-south range of the house, retains some of the fabric of an earlier building, including a sub-medieval doorway with chamfered jambs and a 4-centred head. At the time the date stone was lost, the house and attached former stables and coach house were modernised to create three dwellings.



AMLWCH. (2) Madyn-Dysw, 1620.



MERIONETH BRANCH

Report

by Martin Cherry



Plas Meini Llanffestiniog

As reported in the last newsletter a number of members have continued working on the parishes project and making occasional forays to see (usually unoccupied) houses. Small groups (never exceeding six!) sort out arrangements for themselves and it's sometime possible to combine a visit with a good country walk. Four of us ventured into the uplands above Llanegryn one crystal-clear autumn day to look at an unrecorded cruck house discovered by Gill Caves. The name Hafotty recalls its early function as a summer pasture for cattle or sheep. The house originally had two rooms, both open to the roof, the hall heated probably with a stack or smoke hood. A late-sixteenth century date is possible. At some point the hall was floored over and a stone wall inserted between the two rooms. At the time of the tithe assessment in 1844 the farm comprised around 78 acres of arable, pasture and meadow with 40 acres of sheepwalk and the 1841 census shows that it was farmed by Hugh Jones (aged 70) helped by three live-in servants. By 1887/8 there was a new farmhouse with agricultural buildings including a forge, which survives, once powered by a horse gin - the platform for the horse to make its



Hafotty Llanegryn. Two pairs of full cruck trusses survive (one blade has fallen and the roof is not too stable!); this room was originally open but floored over when the wall behind our treasurer was built (see the socket holes for the joists).

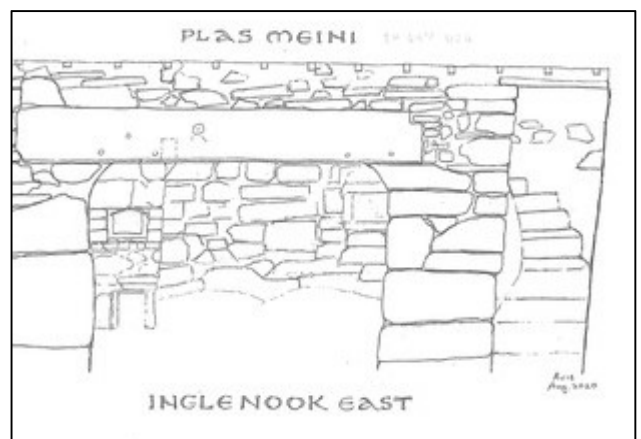


Plas Meini. One of two fireplaces in this Snowdonian semi.

endless rounds survives well as an archaeological feature. On another occasion, three of us carried out a building record of an interesting house near Llan Ffestiniog (Plas Meini) although working around builders and keeping our social distance was tricky. Its special interest lies in the fact that it appears to be a Snowdonian semi - with two separate houses divided by a substantial stone wall, each with two rooms to each floor and a large inglenook fireplace at the end adjacent to a spiral staircase set into the wall. The roof may be a replacement after a fire recorded in the documents. The two house parts are probably not coeval - Plas Meini was noted in the 1662 hearth tax as having a single hearth. A date of 1756 inscribed on one of the hearth beams along with daisy wheels and initials may indicate when it was extended. Because the house is one of several on the site it is difficult

to be sure which of the various people mentioned in the sources actually lived here.

Parish project work continues for Talyllyn, Llanelltyd, Trawsfynydd, Llanfrothen and Llandecwyn. The archives re-opened briefly (you had to book and order your documents beforehand, so there's none of the fun of following things up while you're there) but it has not been possible to resume our special branch mornings on one Wednesday a month - so the social contact, so important for group dynamics, is quite difficult to maintain.



Drawing Courtesy Avis Reynolds

DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH
Report to October 2020
 by Janice Dale

The latest list of members with a Denbighshire address includes 36, plus 2 out of the county. The pandemic has severely limited activity. However, a 'further useful information sheet' was circulated in September.

The membership has been emailed about what they wanted to do going forward, so far with limited response, so some Denbighshire members were polled by telephone. They all liked the idea of video 'tours' of houses - as per the Chairman's, of Plas Penmynydd. However, there is a problem with poor internet availability.

Not much is happening on the Parishes project. I have been typing up Llandderfel for one of our non-computer members, and I am working on Llandrillo. Again, there is, for some, a problem in this area with poor internet and consequent difficulty with access to online databases.



Betws y Coed view by Thomas Creswick, 1811-1869

Picture This

by Janice Dale

Following on from the work I did with the money from the Tesco Bags of Help grant [5th Dimension, looking at images and poetry of the houses in North Wales], I treated myself to a book on the *The Betws y Coed Artists' Colony 1844-1914*, by Peter Lord. I would recommend dipping into this book.

This area, including the Conwy valley, became a favourite area for artists and tourists, so much so that some of them came to live here, and by founding this colony, attracted even more artists to the area.

Although there are pictures of the area before the 19th century, Betws was not recognised as a destination, rather it had been somewhere visitors just passed through on their way to Snowdonia to paint the 'rocks, cataracts and ruined castles'. It was only when the artist David Cox spent many summer months working in Betws y Coed that a number of fellow artists became attracted to this area.

The most important artist to be attracted to the area was Henry Clarence Whaite, who eventually set up home in the Conwy valley. His work and his commitment, along with

that of colleagues, led to a collection of art which unfortunately has gone largely unnoticed. Their paintings, although somewhat romanticised, give an idea of the landscape and people who were living here. Many of these images can be found at www.digido.org.uk. The view above by Thomas Creswick, 1811-1869 is dated ca. 1835; it is entitled *A view along the street at Betws-y-coed showing women in Welsh costumes, mountains and a horse-drawn carriage*.

N.E. WALES BRANCH

Report to October 2020

by Wally and Margaret Barr 20.10.2020

The two periods of lockdown have meant that getting access to archive material has been very difficult. But despite this, research has continued (mostly online) in the North East Wales Branch. One point of interest is that when Margaret Barr went to the Archives when they re-opened for one day a week at the end of September, the only other person there was another DOWH researcher - Jean Jones! Talking of Jean, here is an edited summary of her recent research on her house, the Old Post Office in Llanasa; this from Jean Jones:-

The house history of the Old Post Office is still ongoing. I have established that the Baldwyn (alias Baudewin) family had substantial lands in Llanasa parish from about 1655. They owned my cottage until it was sold at auction in 1865, along with Henblas, several fields and other cottages.

During the lockdown I found several graves belonging to my husband's family in the cemetery thanks to copies of the parish registers kindly lent to me by Irene Brightmer. I also found a tomb in the Church graveyard covered in ivy, bindweed and nettles. This proved to be of a Vicar, Reverend Richard Lloyd and his wife Elizabeth. Rev Lloyd was Vicar in Llanasa from 1776.

Carys Biddle and Margaret Barr have been looking at the censuses for nos. 1 and 2 Water Street, Caerwys, the timbers of which have been dendro-dated by the ODL to 1465. During the nineteenth century it was one residence called 'Canol y Dre'. As its name implies, it was right in the middle of the town with the local veterinary surgeon living there for over 40 years. In 1861 the family had their own groom and dairy maid.

Margaret Barr has also looked at the censuses for the Old Court in Caerwys, home of Sarah Maitland-Jones, a DOWH member. The picture here is very different to Canol y Dre, with new people running the Cross Foxes Inn as it was then, every census. In 1851 the Innkeeper appears to have been a 16-year-old girl!

Work on the house history of Terfyn, near Trelawnyd draws to a close with another visit to the archives necessary

to research a family who have only just become apparent in the Parish Registers. Margaret Barr and Gina Skyner are working on this.

Also, work on the Parish Project has continued, in particular with Gerallt Brooks-Jones making good progress on the houses in Llanasa parish.

In case there are members out there who have not yet discovered this very useful site for tithe maps and schedules - here is the link sent by Gina Skyner:-

https://places.library.wales/browse/53.19/-3.204/15?page=1&alt=&alt=&leaflet-base-layers_63=on

Finally, a brief request from Irene Brightmer (brightmer@btinternet.com) and Shirley Walls - **please keep your eyes open** ! When visiting pre-1700 houses in North Wales don't forget to **look down** at the floors! We have found seven examples of stone floors in substantial farmhouses and high status country houses (as well as in Uchaf Chapel) which have interlocking square and large polygonal flagstones. There are surely some others. Such floors have not yet been reported anywhere else in Wales, nor in England. These floors seem to be rare survivals of renaissance building in our area, whereas elsewhere they have probably been lost due to modernisation. Do let us know if you spot such a floor, and if possible ask the owner's permission to measure the side of the square. The image shows such a floor in the porch of a C17th gentry house in Flintshire.

Editor's remark

We note that North East Wales Archives have posted this information: "We are excited to announce that our parish registers are now available on ancestry.co.uk and *The Genealogist*. From Friday 23rd October, digitised images and indexes of our parish registers will be available to search on ancestry.co.uk, *The Genealogist*".

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

If you are interested in old houses and are not already a member, why not consider joining the Group? Full details and application form are on our website.

Subscriptions

Membership subscriptions are due on April 1st. Individual membership £15 pa; Joint membership £20 pa; life membership £100. Please make sure you renew on time to

retain your membership benefits. To make it easier you are encouraged to take out a Standing Order (see website for form). Otherwise please send your cheque to DOWH Membership Secretary, Caerfallen, Ruthin LL15 1SL (01824 704404) membership@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk



Stone floor of polygonal flagstones

FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Firstly, all the Group's Patrons and Officers on their own behalf and on behalf of all our members, express their thanks and appreciation to Irene for her tireless work as Newsletter Editor. She will be a hard act to follow.

The incoming Editor fervently hopes that all Members will make every effort to contribute to future Newsletters. As the old saying goes, it is difficult to make the bricks of news articles without the good straw of members' contributed material! Nor need these be lengthy or original. As little as one or two paragraphs, or perhaps an abstract of some related published material of relevance, are equally welcome.

The present Newsletter 35 departs from the previous practice of bilateral Welsh-English columns, partly as a concession to the software available to the Editor and possibly also to our patient Translator. For this and possibly future issues the format will be back-to-back paper and separate online versions. The views and opinion of the membership in this matter are welcome.



TESCO Bags of Help



MARC FITCH



DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



NODDWYR/PATRONS

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CYLCHLYTHYR 36 Mawrth 2021

NEWSLETTER 36 March 2021

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members



Peter Thompson

PETER THOMPSON 1952-2021 by Martin Cherry
Peter Thompson, who died suddenly on the morning of 6th January, will be sorely missed by family and friends. Peter was one of those rare people who it always a pleasure to have around. He combined a mischievous sense of humour with a seriousness of purpose and deep knowledge of historic buildings. His expertise - a careful documentary historian and perceptive building recorder - is a great loss to the Discovering Old Welsh Houses group. He made important contributions to the North-West Wales Tree-ring Dating Project (that culminated in the publication of *Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia*, 2014) and, more recently, significantly expanded our knowledge of cruck-framed buildings in the region. He was a key player in organising two major conferences for the Vernacular Architecture Group (in 2005 and 2018), introducing (and bowling over) 80 delegates from all over the United Kingdom and beyond, to the delights of the traditional buildings of North Wales. At the time of his death, he was working on a project on the houses of Ardudwy and was

due to divulge some of his most recent findings to members via a Zoom presentation in the spring. It is hoped that enough of his papers and drawings survive still to bring this venture to fruition.

Born in South Africa, Peter worked in a South London planning department from where, via a series of odd jobs and adventures, he ended up in North Wales. Here he and Paula, his wife, bought a run-down house north of Barmouth overlooking Cardigan Bay, and carefully conserved and converted it into a high quality and popular small hotel. This had once been a high-status gentry house for which he was as pleased as punch to secure an accurate tree-ring date (1581) that helped him pin down the identity of the builder. His practical skills meant that he understood how buildings were put together. A glutton for learning - he had degrees from Aberystwyth, Leicester and the Ironbridge Institute - proved a good basis upon which to handle documents of all kinds, and his knowledge of Welsh enabled him to grapple with the tricky evidence of bardic poetry. Yet he carried his learning lightly, a personal quality that made him such an easy partner to work with and such a good teacher in training sessions. During house recording sessions, after some conviviality he would proceed quietly, observing details (that sometimes seemed invisible to others), resisting the temptation of coming too rapidly to conclusions; then he would start drawing the plan and sections, then measure up. At some point, the building came into focus and the remainder of the day would be spent in active, sometimes uproarious discussion and occasionally even with an interpretation agreed. It was amazing he did so much while keeping on top of a demanding business. From time to time, trips might need to be curtailed to attend to a leaking pipe or recalcitrant pump, or more prosaically, to cook the evening meal for guests. Whatever might intervene - and something normally did - field days with Peter would always be tremendous fun and highly instructive.

COLIN HARRINGTON 1940-2020 by Richard Cuthbertson

At Christmas we heard that Colin Harrington had died after a long period of poor health. I first met Colin in 1973. He owned a remote and ruined cottage in Llanberis at the bottom of the Telegraph pass, on the footpath over to Rhyd Ddu. Working in London he came up at weekends and holidays, made a very sympathetic job of its renovation and lived there like a Spartan. Our paths crossed again when he bought the mysterious house known as Gronant in the middle of Anglesey, uncovering fine wall paintings (very rare on Anglesey) and other interesting features. In his later life he became deeply involved in setting up the Nature Reserve at Sychnant, just on the Conwy side of the Pass. He was a shy, kind soul and struggled with many demons in his life, but he made a real contribution to conservation in North Wales and that will be his legacy.



Colin Harrington

FROM THE CHAIR by Richard Cuthbertson

Here we are in a New Year and tonight, the last night in January, the day did seem to draw out at last. We have drifts of snowdrops and even a few rogue daffodils, but the wind is bitter and I am sure we are not done with Winter yet.

I hope you have enjoyed our little series of Zoom talks; they seem to have been a great success and we will certainly keep them going. It is terrific to see everyone relaxed in their own home with a cup of tea or a glass of wine. No long, cold, dark journeys anywhere - wonderful !

Zoe is stepping down from her role as Membership Secretary after eight successful years, which have seen the membership rise from 40 to over 200. At the same time she has undertaken challenging repairs at her own house and started a very responsible new job. Maybe we can persuade her to give us a talk on time management! We are so grateful for all she has done and very happy that she will continue as a most valued Trustee. Her role now passes to Fiona Gale, who is already helping us in many ways; we know she will be a worthy successor.

Very sadly, we have lost one of our most knowledgeable Trustees when Peter Thompson passed away suddenly early in January. His friend Martin Cherry writes a fine tribute to him in this Newsletter and our sympathies go to all his Family and friends. I have also recorded the loss of our valued friend Colin Harrington above.

I wish you all well and I firmly believe that 2021 will be a good year for us as we have exciting projects in the pipeline which I think will appeal to all our members.

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY by Margaret Dunn

It was such a shock to hear of the sudden death of Peter Thompson and that of Colin Harrington. We send our sincere condolences to their families. We hope that you are all keeping well and finding plenty to keep you busy. Thankfully, we are now gradually receiving our vaccines, but with the spread of new variants, it seems we shall not be able to meet face to face for quite some time. We do not anticipate undertaking further tree ring dating until after summer 2021 at the earliest. However, it is good to meet on Zoom as well as continuing with online research, socially distanced walks etc. Do let your branch secretaries know if you need ideas or help with choosing what to do next.

Zoom meetings

These popular Wednesday monthly meetings start at 7.15 p.m. and members are requested to join at 7.00 p.m. It is now hoped to include discussion after the talks. Joining details are circulated each month by Peter Masters.

March 10th "The Fifth Dimension Project - Images and Poetry of North Wales Houses". Janice Dale, DOWH trustee, Denbighshire branch secretary and coordinator of this Tesco grant-aided Community Project.

April 14th "From Wales to Birmingham, from Birmingham to Wales - The Journey". Gina Maddison, DOWH member, part time lecturer at Grwp Llandrillo Menai and author.

May 19th "A history of the people who lived at Plas Penmynydd". Richard Cuthbertson, DOWH Chairman.

June 16th 6.15 p.m. AGM (papers to be circulated beforehand); **7.00 p.m. Annual Public Lecture: Old Welsh Houses - New Insights from Dendro-chronology** by Dr Martin Cherry, former Research Director at English Heritage, trustee of Vernacular Architecture Group and DOWH trustee.

July 21st "Discovering Old Welsh Houses - Past, Present and Future" Margaret Dunn, DOWH founder and secretary. There will be no meeting in August. Please contact the Secretary if you are willing to offer a talk.

Key points from the 9th February Trustees' meeting

The Trustees, officials and branch secretaries held an informative and useful zoom meeting on 9th February. The branch secretaries have a copy of the minutes. During the pandemic DOWH continues with as many activities as possible and we look forward to being able to meet up again when it is safe to do so. We are delighted to see many members at the monthly zoom talks and to read in the newsletters what members are doing. We would like these short newsletter articles to cover the very wide range of members' interests even if only vaguely related to houses. Perhaps you could share something? If so, your branch secretary would be pleased to help.

The **DOWH Houses Management Spreadsheet Project** is progressing well; we are collating and checking the records on all houses so far visited which will aid in prioritising future research and activities after the pandemic.

The **DOWH's Parishes Project** is developing at varying rates in each branch; do please contact your branch secretary to receive the formatted sheet and news about which parishes near you still require checking. When completed, this information will be added to the Houses Management spreadsheet.

House History Research continues wherever members and branch secretaries select houses. The DOWH **Executive** meet each month and the **Trustees** every 3 months; please let your branch secretaries have your ideas and comments to pass on.

One Member's House History Experience

"Thank you both for an amazing experience with Terfyn house history. Your expertise has been invaluable and I have really enjoyed the process. I expect you are both familiar by now with the feeling that 'more could be done' and of not having complete closure? I really did not think there was so much to be discovered - and that it would take so long! Thank you both once again for all your hard work and patience with me! I am going to look at my grandmother's old house now, as the roof beams were jutting down in the bedrooms. Very little is known about this small area, so there is a lot to do and I will keep you informed. I may turn my attention to learning how to use Zoom soon, as this seems to be the only way of keeping us going! Gina Skyner"

Why not have a go? Contact your branch secretary for help.

New membership secretary

As of early March 2021, Fiona Gale is taking over from Zoe as Membership Secretary. We want to thank Zoe Henderson who has carried out the role for almost ten

years, keeping track of where we all are, when we have paid and sending out information to us all about activities and events. This has been particularly important over the last year when we haven't been able to meet in person but have been able to enjoy online talks. Thank you so much Zoe, not an easy act to follow. Fiona Gale can be contacted by email at membership@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk and phone 07718625606 or 01824 520231. Hopefully there won't be too many teething problems with the changeover period which might go on for a little while.

DOWH Treasurer

We are delighted to report that Rosemary Brotherton, Conwy branch, has offered to become our next treasurer on the resignation of John Townsend at the end of this financial year. There will probably be a short period of joint working. We are immensely grateful to John for his hard work over the last eight years and we are glad that he will remain an active trustee with other roles.

News from British History Online

Please pass the following on to fellow parish-project workers and others.

"As we enter a new lockdown period (January 2021), we've decided to make all transcribed content on BHO freely available to individual users. This move repeats a similar freeing up of 200 volumes of BHO Premium Content in 2020. This material will remain available until 30 April 2021 in the first instance."

More details at

<https://blog.history.ac.uk/2020/03/british-history-online-makes-all-research-content-free-to-individual-users/>

The National Archives

has reinstated free access to digital records, allowing registered users to order and download up to ten items at a time, to a maximum of 100 items over 30 days. Registration is free on The National Archives website and you will need to be logged in to be able to download documents.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

CONWY BRANCH

Report to March 2021 by Ann Morgan

Due to the recurrence of Covid19 and the second Wales lockdown there has been no formal activity to report. Members of the Group have been pursuing local or personal interests - village history, ancestry research and Scouting history in Conwy - as well as accessing online lectures and talks. The local archives being closed, most

members are using online services and sharing information by email and telephone.



Fig.1 Romano-British seal box

SEALS by Ann Morgan

For about 7,000 years, seals have been used by 'royal' families, officials and merchants as security devices. Seals were important as was the post of 'Keeper of the Great seal' of England. Church officials also used seals. Later business men and companies used embossed seals on company paper. These were recorded in the *Register of Sealings*.

Throughout history many civilisations have used seals - Sumerians, Chinese, Mohenjodarians, Middle Easterners from e.g. Egypt and Bahrain, more recently the Romans and up to the present day use of red wax on parcels and letters.

Materials used to make seals could be clay, ivory, bone, metal, jade or intaglio carved stone, set in rings, wood, ceramic, paper, wax, gold, silver and lead. The Dilmun seals of Bahrain were round, button-shaped bone or ivory seals, whilst Mohenjodaro and Harappa (India and Pakistan) had cylindrical seals used to 'roller out' the design on wet clay.

Seals are often found during archaeological excavations

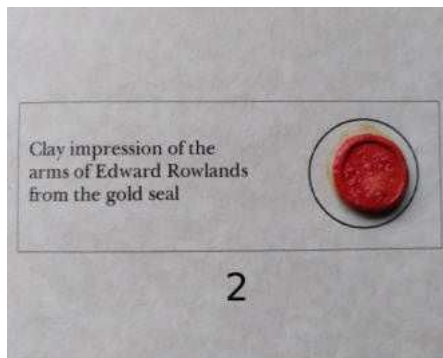


Fig.2 Edward Rowlands' seal Penarth Fawr

such as the Llandygai, Bangor, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust dig - here a Romano-British seal box was found - a Roman device, but decorated with a blue enamel Celtic design (Fig 1). Margaret Dunn's dig at Penarth Fawr (built about 1460) unearthed a gold seal mount set with a carnelian intaglio carved with the armorial of Edward Rowlands of Anglesey, from the C18th (Fig 2).

During our researches into documents and wills, Gill Jones and I asked to see an early C17th document. Such documents are often produced on vellum i.e. scraped calf

skin (vitulinum) or parchment. Today such materials feel stiff and brittle but often the script is in very good condition and legible. The particular document we asked for was a letter-patent of 1602 and it had a large clay slab attached to a 2cm-wide strip of parchment.

The seal was of an irregular shape but I noticed odd details, a ruff (Elizabethan lace collar) and a farthingale (Elizabethan dress). The more I studied the clay lump it gradually became clear that I could see the head of Elizabeth I, her arms holding the orb and sceptre. Perhaps the light falling at a particular angle revealed the details. We were charmed by the discovery and recorded the details in

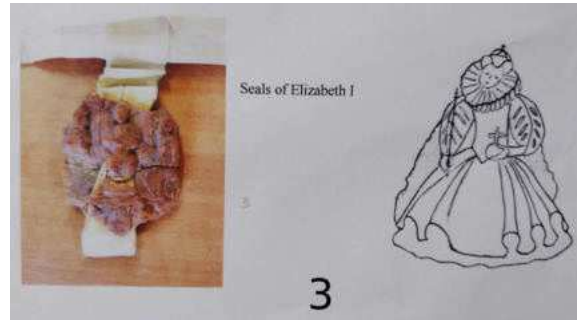


Fig.3 Elizabeth I seal

our study of Cwm Howard, Creuddyn, Llandudno. Gill Jones sketched the outline (Fig 3).

We also came across other seals of the more traditional



Fig.4 Henry VIII seal

type - one of Henry VIII (Fig 4) and another of Robert Dudley's dated to 1574 (Fig 5). Most later wax seals were red or brown but we came across a dark green wax seal (Fig 6) when we were researching the history of Penrhyn Old Hall, Creuddyn.

Meanwhile, fellow researchers, I hope you enjoy this brief introduction to the topic of seals. Keep a lookout -



Fig.5 Robert Dudley's seal

there must be more interesting seals out there buried in some dusty archive. We hope that soon we can all return to our researches.



Fig.6 Dark green wax seal Penrhyn Old Hall

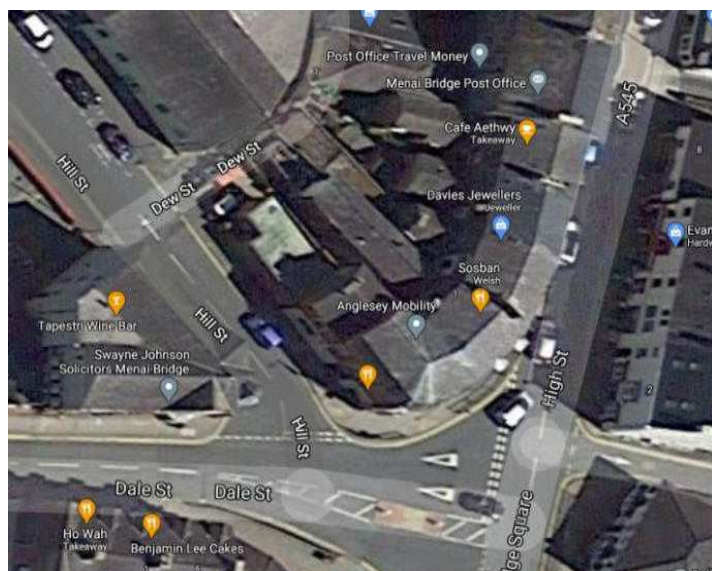
ANGLESEY BRANCH Report to March 2021

Due to the recurrence of Covid19 and the second Wales lockdown there has been no formal activity to report.

A Menai Bridge street name by Jane Cherrett

In the last Newsletter Peter Masters wrote about the family history of Henblas and Llethr Ddu. We hope members will be encouraged to venture into this field by Jane's account of her researches into the mysteries of the connections between the famous Anglesey Dew family and the town of Menai Bridge. She has yet to reach back to our nominal 1700 threshold date but perhaps it is time for that threshold to change. Ed.

Just before lockdown last March, I started looking into street names in Menai Bridge. One in particular, Dew street,



Location map Dew St, top left. Google Maps

is just off the Square, where Hill Street meets Dale Street. In 1896, one of the first edicts of the Menai Bridge Urban

District Council was to make several street names official and Dew Street was included.

Today, it is of little interest. It is unmade, has two derelict, boarded up cottages on its short length and is a dead end. It has the rears of several High Street shops opening onto it. At one time, large double doors (still there) formed the entrance/exit for Roberts Paints, who used the former Luxor cinema building as their warehouse.

In 1977, the Town Council agreed that all streets should have bilingual signage. Dew St's Welsh name is *Stryd y Gwlith*. This suggests that Dew was taken to mean atmospheric moisture forming on cold surfaces. I have been unable, so far, to get an answer to my question 'why Dew and why Gwlith'? However, my researches have taken me into the world of the Dew family, a very influential family of the late 19th and early 20th Century.

Samuel Dew, a noted solicitor, a deacon of Capel Mawr, (Calvinistic Methodists), and friend of Richard Davies M.P., lived at Brynteg House on Telford Road. He was involved in arguments and disputes with the Established Church authorities regarding the education of non-conformist children.

Then there is John Henry Dew, a professional bass singer, performing in Eisteddfodau and at the Crystal Palace, London. His family kept an ironmongery and leather shop on Beaumaris Road, Menai Bridge.

The Dews who really caught my interest were William and later his son William Arthur. They were auctioneers and land valuers. Their property sales included the sale of Broom Hall, near Pwllheli. In 1898, the Dews conducted the sale, in the Bulkeley Hotel, Beaumaris, of Glyn Garth estate. This estate, comprising 'a magnificent marine residence with lawns sweeping down to the Menai Strait', became for some time the Bishop of Bangor's Palace.

In 1905, the Dews were engaged in selling the contents of Anglesey Castle [Plas Newydd] after the Vth Marquess [the legendary 'Dancing Marquess'] had bankrupted the



Dew St today. Google Maps

estate. Sales took place at the property throughout that year. Some 17,000 items were listed in eight catalogues.

The wider Dew family prospered mightily. However the origin of Dew Street for me, remains a mystery, although I am still hopeful of tying down the provenance of Dew

Street to that family. [If anyone has information, Jane's email is jmcherrett@aol.com Ed.]



Gwyndy Inn, painting from about 1900

Anglesey's coaching road - romance and ruins by Richard Cuthbertson

Living in Anglesey one cannot help but feel surrounded by the past, and particularly its mystery and romance. Sometimes this crowds in at particular places and one of these, for me, is the old coach road at Glan yr Afon, right in the centre of the Island. It winds through this small village in a series of sharp turns forced upon it by outcrops of bare rock formed a thousand million years ago and ancient swampy areas neglected by agriculture. Surely on these bluffs the Druids met and after them, two great saints of Anglesey, St. Cybi and St. Seiriol. They walked towards each other from the Holy Island in the far west and Penmon in the Far East of Anglesey, the rising Sun browning the back of St. Seiriol and tinging the broad chest of St. Cybi. Oh, to have eavesdropped their discourse, the responsibility of leading their flocks in love and righteousness lying heavy on

conversed over, both gaining heart from the efforts of the other. These were real people, gazing 1500 years ago on views more crowded with trees but otherwise close to what we see today.

A few yards further and the ivy-clad ruins of Gwyndy come into view on our left. This great Coaching Inn stands gaunt and abandoned, a place of Owls and Rooks and dereliction. There may have been a building here in the 16th century, and the present Inn dates from the early C18th but the Royal Commissioners could find nothing of note; how could that be? The lists of its guests include the famous of three centuries and even in 1797 J. M. W. Turner stayed here and sketched and drew.

A hundred yards further on west and still on the left is a well-restored house, now an Artist's studio, but now go back 300 yards and turn to the west to see, after another 300 yards, the desolate, stark ruin of Llys Bodychen in a field away on your right hand side. This must once have been a very fine house indeed, certainly C15th and possibly C14th in origin. In 1871 it still had its roof and windows. Now it is nearly obliterated, but look closely and doorways and windows emerge, with the finest stonework I know of



The scanty ruins of Llys Bodychen today

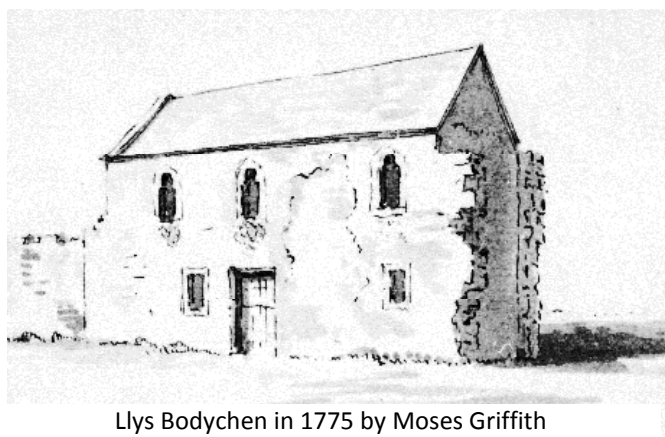
in Anglesey - of Inca quality! Even the garden can be made out as low mounds. These buildings show, with the utmost clarity, why the work you all do within the *Discovering Old Welsh Houses* Groups is so very valuable.

CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

Report to March 2021 by Peter Masters

Due to the recurrence of Covid19 and the second Wales lockdown there has been no formal activity to report.

How many people who have visited Bangor Cathedral have seen this lady? by Peter Masters



Llys Bodychen in 1775 by Moses Griffith

their shoulders. Then the long walk home, St. Cybi squinting in the setting sun and St. Seiriol's back becoming browner. Doubtless they would mull over the matters that they

She is Eva, now hidden behind a screen in the bookshop in a corner of this religious house. Her pedigree is long and impressive. She and her brother were co-inheritors of Gruffydd ab David ab Tudor ab Madog ab Iarddur of Penrhyn and Cochwillan [sic], who was in turn the son and heir of Iarddur, of Penrhyn and Cochwillan, Lord of Llechwedd Uchaf and Creuddyn, and "Grand Forester of Snowdon." Her family were landowners on Anglesey in various townships, (Twrgarw, Penhwnllys) and in Caernarvonshire (Bodfeio). They also held lands in Englefield.

When Eva married Gwilym ap Griffith ap Heilyn in c.1340, it was almost certainly this marriage which brought Cochwillan into her husband's Penrhyn lands, together with



The Eva slab in Bangor Cathedral

a share of her family's lands in Anglesey. By her brother Gwilym ap Griffith's will, dated 1375, her son, Griffith ap Gwilym [d.1405] inherited further lands in Anglesey and Caernarvonshire. Her grandson, Gwilym ap Griffith, is described as 'of Penmynydd' in 1400 and 1403, and his will, dated 1430, was signed there. Although there may have been a house at Cochwillan in the C13th, the present building is no earlier than 1450 and was probably built before 1480 by Gwilym ap Gruffydd, Sheriff of Caernarvonshire from 1485.

Some interesting scandal (see Note 1): Jane of Cochwillan born c.1512, died aged just 13. She was married to Edward Griffith of Penrhyn, born c.1511 [himself a teenager]. In 1527 Edward sought permission to marry Jane's sister Agnes. They married in 1529 but a year later she returned home! Following King Henry VIII's example, he sought to separate from or divorce Agnes and marry Jane Puleston [his cousin]. But it seems that soon after, he left

Jane to return to live with Agnes! Nevertheless, he later returned to Jane and they had three children - Jane, Elin, and Katherine.

Edward died of 'the flux' in Dublin on 11 March 1540. There then began a long dispute between his younger brother Rhys Griffith - who claimed the estates as the male heir - and John Puleston [Senior or Junior?], Edward Griffith's father-in-law [or brother-in-law] acting for his daughter [or sister] Jane and her three children (Jane, Catherine, and Ellen). John Puleston asked Thomas Cromwell for the wardship of the children and offered him '£40 for his good offices'.

Rhys Griffith complained that while he was in Ireland 'on the king's service', his sister-in-law and her father had ransacked Penrhyn, leaving 'nothing but the bare walls'.

Cochwillan was later the home of John Williams (1582-1650), Archbishop of York. Most of its history is linked to the Penrhyn Estate, in whose ownership it remains.

Notes

(1). There are differing accounts for these events depending upon which Documents/Family History you read!

Extracts from: Dictionary of Welsh Biography; Dwnn, Visitations, ii, 130-1;

Extracts from the Penrhyn Castle Papers.

Account of the Families of Penrhyn and Cochwillan' in Williams, Observations on the Snowdon Mountains (1802), 163-7; Rec. Caern., 13.

https://www.exeter.ac.uk/news/research/title_759856_en.html



Cochwillan

MERIONETH BRANCH

Report to March 2021 by Martin Cherry

Due to the recurrence of Covid19 and the second Wales lockdown there has been no formal activity to report.

The farm, estate and families of EGRYN, near Barmouth by Margaret Dunn

I became interested in the farmhouse of Egryn in the late 1990s, when the owner, Rodney Bryne, allowed Eryl Rothwell Hughes and I to squeeze among the amazing roof

timbers. Around 2000 it was left to the National Trust and it was realized that very little was known about its history or that of the Tudur family who had lived there. So I started to investigate.

No one knew where the Tudur family had come from, or when they had arrived at Egryn. I knew little about the area from the time of the Welsh Princes forward and began making notes of all the dated references to Meirionnydd and Ardudwy I could find, in the hope that eventually I might be able to work out when and from whence the Tudur family ancestors came to Egryn. This led to researching the English-Welsh interaction leading up to the Edwardian conquest of Wales in the 1280s and the likelihood of one Urien ap Tegwared, an important local leader from near Abergele, settling in the Harlech area before 1292.



Egryn Hall

Freestone from quarries at “Egrin” was used in the building of Harlech Castle, and later in many of the early churches over a wide district. Problems of climate change affected this area, along with the whole region; with no supermarkets to go to for supplies, many people, crops and animals periodically succumbed to and died of plague or famine. Using the detailed research of many earlier researchers, compilers and translators of rentals, extents and other records it is amazing that the probable background of the Egryn ancestors and several generations of the Tudur family have been traced back to Urien.

In 1420 the Tudurs owned around six farm holdings in Ardudwy and later, praise poetry and elegies were written in their honour. Around 1700 the Egryn heiress married the son and heir of Caerberllan, near Castell y Bere, bringing together these two extensive estates. The house history of most of the holdings on both estates has been compiled, and this includes farm holdings on Anglesey, where one owner with mental health problems was looked after. The history of the owners of both estates has been documented up to the year 2000. Currently, over 350 typed pages of closely referenced notes are being revised to form a series of articles, or possibly a book, which might be of assistance to anyone studying families or houses in Ardudwy.



Egryn timbers *M.Dunn*

DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH

Report to March 2021 by Janice Dale

Janice writes “For obvious reasons there is very little to report. In connection with the Parish Project, I have been working with one member to mark on OS maps the parishes in our branch. I have finished Llandrillo, and will look at Corwen next. I have recently emailed members on my branch list, to ask about progress on Parish Project and to ask about ideas for this year, but so far responses have been few, one reply just saying thank you !”.

Ty Nant, Branas, Llandrillo by Janice Dale

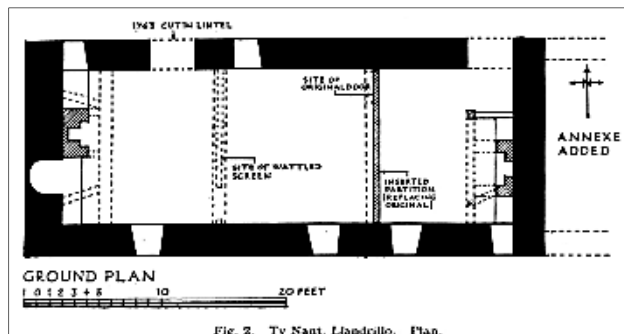


Ty Nant December 2020 *Janice Dale*

After reading Martin Cherry’s Merioneth Branch News and seeing John Townsend standing in the ruins of Hafotty Llanegryn, I was reminded of the ruins of Ty Nant, Branas, a house I hadn’t visited since 1994. So off I went to see how it had fared. As was to be expected, the condition had deteriorated, with the remaining roof timbers now totally collapsed. However, luckily W. J. Hemp reported on this house in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* Vol. 101. 1 January 1950

Back in the 1950s, although the slates had disappeared, roof timbers and fire hoods were easily visible. A date of 1763 was cut into the lintel of the main door on the north

side, though the author was of the opinion that this date relates to a reconstruction and that original construction



belonged to the earlier part of the 17th century. It was possible that this later date referred to the time when the building was subdivided into 2 cottages and an extension to the east end added.



Ty Nant circa 1950 W.Hemp

The original house had internal measurements of 36 x 12 ft [10.8 x 3.6m], consisting of 3 bays with the west and central bays forming a hall and with a floor over the eastern bay. Hemp thought the oak trusses were of an unusual design, with the main trusses rising 2 ft above the tie beam and then tapering to the ridge [i.e. like the top of a cruck, but without the upright]. There were fireplaces on the face of each gable wall, but with the flue disappearing into the walls at first floor height.

Anne Boleyn and North Wales by Janice Dale

While writing the history of the Wynns of Newborough family, I kept coming across references to Anne Boleyn having an association with Bodfean [Boduan]. The 6th Baron Newborough wrote the following for the BBC in 1959

... Wynn of Bodfean in the reign of Henry VIII was a close friend of Anne Boleyn. She often stayed here and it happened that Henry gave her, when they married, a considerable amount of land adjoining the Bodfean estate. Anne bequeathed this to the Wynn of Bodfean of that day.

Just before her execution it was suggested to the king that he should recover from the queen, by a signed deed, the property in Wales that he had given her. This he refused to do and so it was that her property in the county passed into the Wynn family and much of it remains to this day...

I have been unable to find the source of this - has anyone any ideas ?

FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

Report to March 2021 by Wally and Margaret Barr

A number of branch members have continued their work on house histories and the parish project. Gerallt Brooks-Jones has completed the parish of Llanasa and recommends *Ffynnonogroyw and District: A Journey Through Time* (W. Ken Davies, 2020) as a useful tool in adding detail to local history work. Further parish project work is ongoing but at a rather slow pace.

Margaret Barr and Gina Skyner have now finished their history of Terfyn and the report is available online in the DOWH library. Fortunately, an increasing amount of material is available now online, so some research has been possible even when access to archive departments has been denied. Nevertheless, the recent flooding in Ruthin may delay the opening of the N.E. Wales archive building even further.

We are pleased to note that branch member Gina Maddison will be giving a Zoom talk to the group on Wednesday 14th April.

Accessing the records of the Welsh Methodist (Wesleyan) Church by Rhian Morris

Finding records for Welsh Nonconformist congregations is not always easy, and in the days before lockdown I said that I would use my contacts as the daughter of a Wesleyan minister to find out if there was any centralisation of records and access to them. The short answer is no and finding the relevant records is no easy task.

Through a friend I was put in touch with Mr Gareth Williams, who before retiring was Archivist for Caernarfonshire. After retiring he took on the task of trying to track down the records in question, visiting archives throughout Wales. He told me that each local archive possesses some records which had been deposited with them and that the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, also holds some records. Mr Williams told me that the records for Flintshire are virtually all at the Record Office in Hawarden (presumably the *Gallery of Travelling Methodist Ministers/Oriel Gweinidogion D/DM/1712/1* which I came across when looking at the new NEWA site); what the situation is for other counties, I don't know. At Aberystwyth is a collection of records from all over Wales, *Papurau Hen*

Gapel Tre'r Ddol/Tre'r Ddol Old Chapel Papers, including a few records from the north-east, but this collection is yet to be fully catalogued.

However, finding relevant entries will be rather like looking for the proverbial needle in the haystack, because of the way Wesleyan circuits were arranged. Firstly, each Methodist minister kept their own records rather than individual chapels having a register. Secondly, Methodist ministers moved from one circuit to another every three years until the 1940s/50s, and thereafter every 5 years. Thirdly, to make matters even more difficult they worked as a team in a circuit, and during that 3 or 5 years would have officiated in up to 20 chapels. For example, my father served in at least 10 circuits right across N. Wales. In his last circuit there was a team of 5 ministers officiating in at least 18 chapels from Penmachno to Colwyn Bay. During one 10 year period circuit boundaries changed so often that we moved 5 times.

Hopefully the above will clarify what is available and where, even though it won't make anything much easier to find. The image below is of Rehoboth Chapel, Coedpoeth, before it was demolished. This was another chapel with which her father was closely associated.



Rehoboth, Coedpoeth © Eirian Evans cc-by-sa/2.0 :: Geograph Britain and Ireland

FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

The contents of this issue of the Newsletter reflect our members' determination not to be completely restricted by covid-19 and lockdown. This editor was delighted to receive articles on such topics as deed seals and street names, both topics not at all unrelated to house and family history. It is to be hoped that others will feel encouraged to follow suit

as we patiently await the release and return to full activity which vaccination promises.

While material can be accepted in almost any format, the ideal will continue to be Microsoft Word text and separate JPEG images. Failing this, Adobe PDF is almost as easy to handle. Thanks to all who contributed and keep up the excellent standard.



TESCO Bags of Help



MARC FITCH



DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



NODDWYR/PATRONS

Syr/Sir Simon Jenkins, FSA, FRSL; Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, MA, PhD

Dathlu Treftadaeth Cymru drwy astudio tai
traddodiadol a bywydau'r bobl oedd yn byw ynddyn nhw.

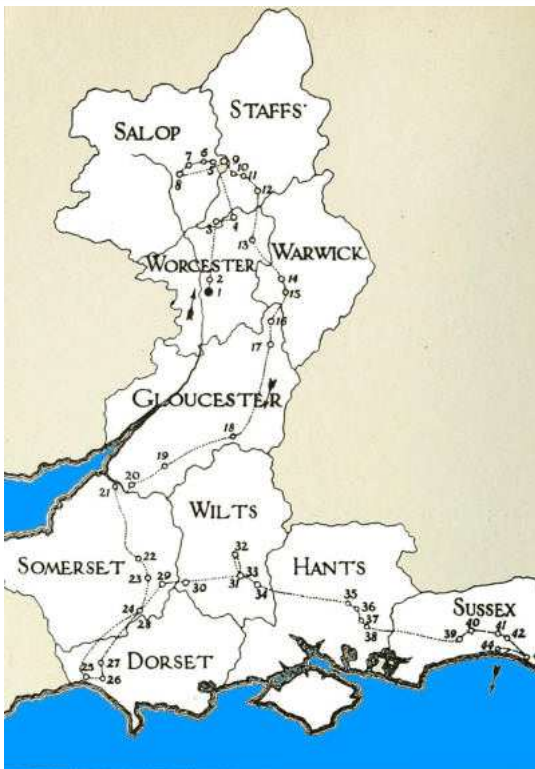
Celebrating Welsh Heritage through the study of traditional
houses and the lives of the people who lived in them.

CYLCHLYTHYR 37 Mehefin 2021

NEWSLETTER 37 June 2021

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members



Route of King Charles's escape

FROM THE CHAIR by Richard Cuthbertson

Summer must be just around the corner, but it's still so cold, especially at night where I can hardly remember so many frosts. It would be ideal weather to be going on House visits, but I must encourage you all to make up your own agenda and go and see a House you are interested in, even though all you can do is peep over a hedge !

I have been reading a lot about the very romantic story of the escape of King Charles II after the Battle of Worcester on September 3rd 1651. Many of the places he went to and the houses he stayed in still exist and I am amusing myself by planning a trip to follow in his footsteps. He had to deal with forests, swamps, wild heaths and desolate moorland where there is now either urban sprawl or well drained

farmland; yet the houses remain. I vividly remember many years ago speaking to an old vicar who lived opposite Dolbadarn Castle and he told me how in his childhood a young lad drowned in the bog between the castle and his house. It reminded me that the landscape we see today has changed in many ways. We rarely catch this in our studies and house histories. Maybe we should try harder to represent this somehow.

I would like to thank you all for the excellent numbers we achieve at our zoom talks, also to thank our speakers and to assure you that we have a most interesting program for you - going on almost to the crack of doom !

Last of all, how wonderful it is that the posts of the DOWH officers can change so smoothly, with excellent people leaving and excellent people replacing them. We thank them all. It is a sign of a happy and healthy organisation.



A descendant of the oak tree in which King Charles hid, photographed in 2011

We hope that you are all keeping well and still finding plenty to keep you busy. Thankfully, we are now gradually receiving our vaccines, but with the spread of new variants, it seems we may not be able to meet face to face for quite some time. We do not anticipate undertaking further tree ring dating until after summer 2021 at the very earliest. We are enjoying the monthly meetings on Zoom and thank all who have given presentations, as well as Peter Masters who hosts the meetings. We hear of many who are continuing with their house history research. Please let your branch secretaries know if you need ideas or help in choosing what to do next.

Zoom meetings These popular monthly Wednesday meetings start at 7.15p.m. and members are requested to join at 7.00 p.m. It is now hoped to include a discussion after each talk. Joining details are circulated each month by Peter Masters.

May 19th N.B. CHANGE of talk **“Interpreting a Country House”** Matthew Rowland, doctoral researcher, ISWE, Bangor University.

June 16th 6.15 p.m. AGM (papers to be circulated beforehand) then 7.00 p.m. Annual Lecture **“New Insights from Dendrochronology”** Dr Martin Cherry, former Research Director at English Heritage, Past President of the Vernacular Architecture Group and DOWH trustee.

July 21st **“Discovering Old Welsh Houses - Past, Present and Future”** Margaret Dunn, DOWH founder and Secretary.

There will be no meeting in August.

Autumn 2021 onwards A varied programme is being finalized for the next year as it is not clear when face-to-face meetings will be able to recommence. Also many more members are participating in zoom meetings than were attending former gatherings. We hope to start actual branch meetings when that is safe and wise.

The **DOWH Houses Management Database Project** is progressing very well; it is collating and checking the records on all houses so far visited, and will aid prioritizing future research and activities after the pandemic.

The **DOWH Parishes Project** is developing at varying rates in each branch; do contact your branch secretary to receive the formatted sheet and for news about which parishes near you still require checking. When completed this information will be added to the Houses Management database.

House History Research continues wherever members and branch secretaries select houses. The DOWH **Executive** meet each month and the **Trustees** every 3 months; do let your branch secretaries have your ideas and comments to pass on.

Membership secretary Fiona Gale has now taken over from Zoe as Membership Secretary. We want to thank Zoe Henderson for all she has done in this role for almost ten years. It has been particularly important over the last year when we haven't been able to meet in person but have been able to enjoy online talks. Fiona will soon be contacting anyone with incorrect or overdue subscriptions, she can be contacted at 07718625606 or 01824 520231 or by e-mail membership@discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk

DOWH Treasurer. We are delighted to report that Rosemary Brotherton, Conwy branch, is taking over from John Townsend as our new treasurer. There will probably be a period of joint working for a short while. We are immensely grateful to John for his hard work over the last 8 years and we are glad that he will remain an active trustee with other roles, especially with the Parishes Project and the House Management Database. Lastly, DOWH is grateful for the grants received from the Marc Fitch Fund and the Tesco Bags of Help Community Scheme, and for the continued support from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

CONWY BRANCH

Report to June 2021 by Ann Morgan and Gill Jones

Conwy Group members have followed their personal interests or been working on village housing, Scouts Association, ancestry and newsletter articles. Clearly no home visits were possible but we are hopeful that the Welsh government will be announcing further easing of restrictions quite soon.

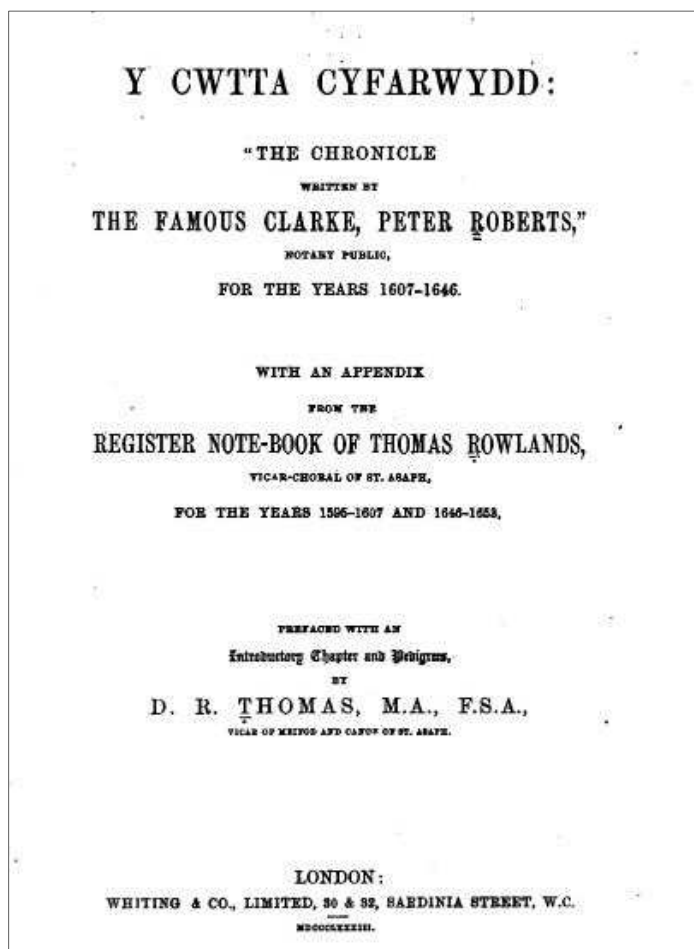
Personal Diaries by Gill Jones

Sometimes, when Ann Morgan and I are researching the history of a house, we come across a diary written by one of the owners or occupants of the house. This can potentially be a really valuable source of information about the occupant's or owner's everyday life.

The Parry family, who owned and lived at Tywysog, Henllan were staunch Catholics. Robert Parry (c.1540-c.1612), younger brother of Richard Parry (d.1613) of Tywysog, was a poet and he was also famous for his diaries, which are now held at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. He started them in 1558 in order to record the

mistreatment of Catholics in the reign of Elizabeth I, but in later years, they also contained entries relating to family events, his frequent trips to London and his visit to Italy. After the Gunpowder Plot in 1605, Parry was stripped of his

on a secret burial with a priest in attendance. A public ceremony in the church eventually took place several months later.



property, and he and his wife were placed under house arrest. They entrusted their son, Ffoulk, to Jesuit priests who took him to safety in France and gave him the pseudonym John Portland.

Peter (Piers) Roberts (b.1578), who lived at Cefn Meriadog near St. Asaph was a 'Notary Public' from about 1599 and admitted as 'Proctor of the Consistory Court' in 1624. He kept a diary between 1607 and 1646 which is known as 'Y Cwttta Cyfarwydd'. It chronicled notable local events. The following rather curious entry concerned the death and burial of Sir John Salusbury of Lleweni in 1612.

"Mem.- that Uppon Fridaye, being the xxivth daie of July, about ten of the clocke in ye morning, Syr John Salusbrie of Lleweni, in ye Co. of Denbigh, Knt.(father of Mr Henrie Salusburie of Beraine, grandson to Catrin Heiress of Beraine, who married ye daughter of Syr Thomas Myddelton of Chirk Castle, knight), died att his House of Lleweny, (and as the report was) was buried that night."

This is odd because he was supposedly a staunch Protestant, although other members of his family had Catholic sympathies. Maybe someone in the family insisted

"M'd that upon Sondag being the iiiith day of October 1612 the fun'all of the said S'r John Salusbry knight was celebrated."

Peter Roberts also records a number of clandestine marriages, but as his chronicle predates the 1753 Marriage Act, they would not have been deemed illegal. The following is one example from 1626.

"Md' that Upon Saturday being the 4th day of November 1626 about twilight one John ap Richard of Coyber and Elizabeth Lloid (one of the daughters of Evan Lloid) were clandestinely married in the chappell in Wickwer by John Williams clerke."

Robert Wynne (1738-1798) of Garthwin kept a diary in which he recorded events concerning his family, friends and neighbours. He regularly attended local funerals and he also enjoyed marriages and christenings.

After the death of John Salusbury of Bryn y Barcut in 1768 he wrote, *"Heard Mr. Salusbury of Bryn y Barkitt died of dropsy."* A few days later, he wrote,

"Mr Salusbury's funeral: 12 bearers, 4 mourners, 4 clergy and tenants. It was the largest coffin I ever saw over 3ft 4ins and 2ft deep, and very long. Said to weigh 1,200llbs."

On 13th November 1776, his entry read "This day was married at Bath, Miss Salusbury of Bryn y Barkitt to Mr. Jocelyn, an officer in the Navy. She is a very fine woman." When Robert Wynne died in 1798, someone else, possibly his wife, wrote in the diary:-

July 25th. Died at Trefriew, near Mold, to the unexpressible grief of his family and friends, Robert Wynne esq. of Garthwin aged 66. He was remarkably cheerful the preceding evening, went to bed at 10 (his accustomed hour), was taken ill about 4, and expired in the short space of one hour, without a groan. He was interred in the family vault in Llanfairtalhaiarne Church, on Friday Aug. 3 about 2 in the afternoon ... He was a cheerful companion, a steady friend, a good neighbour, and a truly honest man. With God rest his soul."

The Rev. John Foulkes of Mertyn Hall, Whitford, and Llanrydd, appears to have spent much of his time, prior to his marriage, with "jolly company" indulging in pleasurable activities. He was happy to spend time with both trades people as well as gentry. Diary entries from 1762, record that he drank and had "great funn" in the White Lion in

Ruthin (now the Castle Hotel) with " P. Kyffin and the doctor costing him 1s 5d + 5d. He "got drunk with Parson Maurice Roberts and Maurice Barker" and "played quadrille (a game developed in France in the early 18th century) and lost nothing - remarkable!"

There are numerous entries relating to him playing cards and mentioning the sums of money he won or lost; and he frequently dined with his mother and sister, Jane. On one occasion, he travelled to Oxford via Birmingham and Stratford, and on January 3rd, he mentions "the flying highwayman being apprehended". He also attended the Chester Races and enjoyed hunting. One entry from his travels records the following account. N.B. Vails (tips) were sometimes paid to servants by visitors.

Vails at Mr.Bennet's	2s 6d
Vails at Coddington	1s 0d
White Horse, Mold	1s 2d
Crown, Ruthin	0s 6d
Turnpikes	4d

And he obviously liked silk stockings and "paid one guinea for 2 pairs and 3s for a silken knee garter."

This is only a very small selection of entries from a few diaries. There is a short on-line talk which was produced by the Arts Society during the first lockdown in 2020 which is entitled 'Rescuing Unwanted Diaries' by Irving Finkel. It's well worth watching.

<https://www.connected.theartsociety.org/talks-lectures>
and
<https://www.thegreatdiaryproject.co.uk>

Further note on Peter Roberts (1578- c.1646), attorney and chronicler by Emeritus Professor Robert Thomas Jenkins, (1881-1969)

Born 2 February 1577/1578, son of Robert ap Hywel ap Rhys, of Bron-yr-wylfa, near St. Asaph, and his wife Agnes - a Griffith of Gwern-eigrion; he probably went to St. Asaph cathedral school. By 1599 he was notary public at St. Asaph, and in 1624 (30th June) he was appointed proctor in the bishop's court. In 1606 he married Jane, one of the daughters of David ap Lewis ap Gronw, of Meiriadog; and he lived in one of the houses on that estate till 1622, when his father left him sufficient money to build the house of Fron-goch nearby. He had a son and four daughters. The time of his death is not known, but the entries in his chronicle come down to the end of 1646. He wrote *Y Cwitta Cyfarwydd*, a most interesting assemblage of information about the history of the region around St. Asaph; it extends from 1607 down to 1646, and was printed in 1883 by D. R. Thomas (see title page opposite), on whose preface the present note has been based.

ANGLESEY BRANCH

Report to June 2021 by T.P.T.Williams

The second lockdown has of course curtailed any activity. We are delighted to hear that Sue Hurst, who had previously announced her retirement from the post of Group Secretary, has agreed to continue in office for another year.

Cefn Coch Llanfechell communicated by T.P.T.Williams

In Anglesey It has proved difficult to identify new candidate houses for DOWH research much outside Beaumaris. We are envious of the ease with which our Merioneth colleagues seem able to locate new sites in good preservation, almost at will. However, if a window of opportunity opens this year between easing of lockdown and the onset of a third wave, perhaps Cefn Coch will prove worthy of attention.

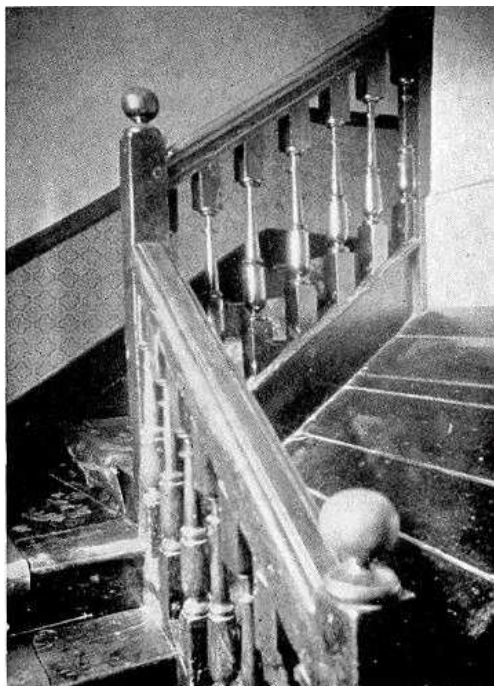


Cefn Coch Llanfechell circa 1936

Cefn Coch in Llanfechell (NPRN 15637, Map Reference SH39SW, Grid Reference SH3425090720) is a C17th central-hall type of house, altered and extended in the C19th and extensively modernised in the 1980s when it was re-roofed, elevations were rendered and new doors and windows installed. David Lloyd, Rector of Llanfechell (b.1691) bought Cefn Coch from Richard Roberts of Rhosbadric, Aberffraw; he married Ellen, daughter of famous diarist William Bulkeley of neighbouring Brynddu. Their daughter inherited the farm and married William, 3rd son of William Meyrick of Bodorgan.

From there, Cefn Coch passed down through the Meyrick family to **Thomas Meyrick (1718-1763), who is apparently buried near the north end of the house's rear elevation.** He was a notable preacher and the house is thought to have been used for services in the mid-C18th. The farm is recorded in the 1842 Tithe Schedule of Llanfechell as being owned by Edmund Edward Meyrick and

was then a holding of over 85 acres (34.43 hectares) farmed by Jane Hughes; it finally passed out of the hands of the Meyrick family when sold in the late C19th.



Cefn Coch C17th staircase circa 1936

Cefn Coch is a 2-storeyed gentry-farmhouse with a 3-window main range, attics, a lower 2-storey single-window range in line to the south and a gabled porch wing at the junction of the two ranges. It is rendered over local stone, with square quoins, a slate roof and exposed stone stacks at the gable ends. The main range is broadly symmetrical, with a shallow central gable surmounted by a chimney stack over the entrance. This has a doorway, not original, flanked by narrow windows. The window in the outer bays and the narrower window over the doorway have been renewed within earlier openings. The end-chimney stacks are diagonally set, with the larger principal stack at the left hand gable. The lower range to the south has an enlarged or inserted window to the north and a small window alongside beneath the eaves, with all detail modern.

The two-storeyed, gabled porch, advanced at the junction, is a later addition with an arched ground floor entrance and a small window above, again with modern detail. The rear elevation has scattered fenestration and a rear doorway into the main block. Within the main block is a central hallway, with principal rooms leading off to left and right. A corridor to the rear leads to the south wing. The C17th dog-leg staircase has turned balusters, a moulded handrail and square newels with ball-finials. The stairs continue beyond a doorway, as plain oak stairs up to the former servant quarters in the attic. The roof has pegged and collared hewn trusses. There is a hewn beam in the ground floor rooms, which runs along the length of the house (now covered). The south block is thought, by the

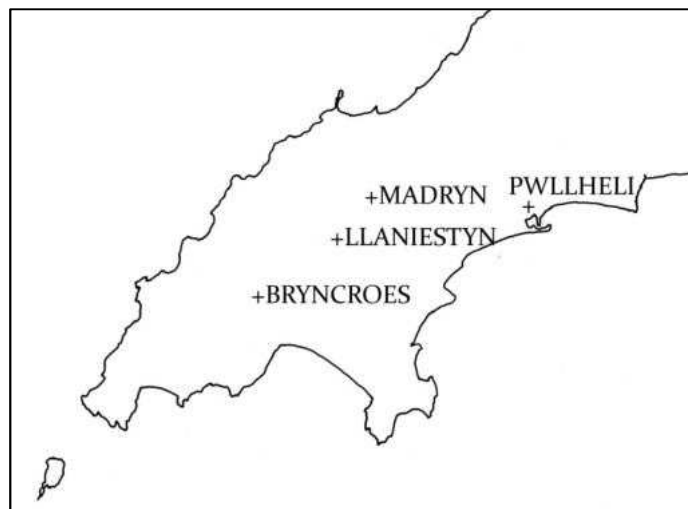
owners, to retain the original inglenook fireplace, now enclosed. There are shallow panelled doors throughout. *All details courtesy Coflein, Cadw and J. Hill, RCAHMS.*

CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

Report to June 2021 by Peter Masters

There has been little or no formal activity since January as a result of the second Covid-19 lockdown.

No Trouble at the Mill by Tom David



Sites in Llŷn

One class of document that can illuminate the lives of the people who lived in the traditional houses that we study is the Quarter Session records. In Caernarfonshire they survive incomplete between 1562 and 1870 (XQS at the Record Office). They provide vivid glimpses of quarrels and everyday events. Here is an example from Llŷn.

In October 1658 a gang of gentlemen and yeomen (John Wynne, late of Penllech, Edward Lloyd of Bryncroes, and six others) assembled unlawfully at Bryncroes (which is between Pwllheli and Aberdaron), with intent to disturb the public peace, unlawfully entered the mill called Melyn Ganol belonging to Arthur ap David, and assaulted the said Arthur and ejected him from his mill (XQS/1658+59/M/30). What was going on? Arthur had bought the mill from this Edward Lloyd, along with the Mynachdy estate, in the eastern part of Bryncroes. Ten years later he died, and bequeathed what looks like posthumous protection money: he left an annual payment to Edward Lloyd and his son Hugh Lloyd, on condition that they should in no way sue, implead, trouble or molest his son Hugh Arthur for the lands. So it seems that Edward Lloyd was not happy with the terms of the sale.

Arthur ap David is an intriguing figure. It is clear from his Will that he had bought a lot of land, in Bodegroes, Bodfel, Abererch (all near Pwllheli) and Cerniog (on Mynydd Nefyn) as well as Bryncroes, and had lent a good deal of money to

various gentlemen, much of it on mortgage. It does not appear that he inherited any land. One of his specific bequests was to his daughter Sidney Arthur and to his grandchild Wm Williams, which makes it highly likely that he is the 'Arthur ap David of Madryn' who appears on the Brondanw pedigree, and who was the 7 x great-grandfather of Clough Williams-Ellis. Where exactly at Madryn, one wonders? Madryn is about four miles north-east of Mynachdy. Was he renting part of the big house from Thomas Madryn, who was one of the most powerful men in the county at the time? The 1642 marriage settlement of Sidney and William Roberts is in the National Library (Plas Brondanw 29-31). It is dated the month before the outbreak of the Civil War. In 1652 all of them (Arthur, Sidney and William Roberts) seem to be living in Llaniestyn and getting into arguments with the miller's wife (XQS1652/123 and 130) - but the only mill in that parish appears to be Melin Madryn.



The ruins of Arthur's Mill today

So Arthur seems to have prospered in the years of the Civil War by shrewd loans and perhaps by milling; but the origin of his capital isn't clear. There is no evidence that he was a lawyer, which was one way to become rich. Edward Lloyd had perhaps borrowed money from him on the security of Mynachdy and Felin Ganol, and had been unable to pay the interest. Or perhaps they disagreed about the extent of the lands transferred. According to Griffith's Pedigree (p 297), Edward Lloyd's grandson Henry got back possession of the estate, not by troubling or impleading Arthur's grandson Arthur Hughes, but by marrying the

latter's daughter Sidney - a good ending, if Griffith's version is true: their monument in Pistyll says that they 'liv'd happily together upwards of fifty years and died much lamented by their neighbours and acquaintance.'

MERIONETH BRANCH

Report to June 2021 by Martin Cherry

Although no meetings or house visits have been possible during lockdown, the Parishes Projects has made progress. Phase 1 research for seven parishes is either well advanced or complete. This will have identified most of the pre-1750 houses that survive, including ruins. In many cases some desktop research has also been undertaken. The sum total of houses recorded that might justify further work or even in some cases a full house history and survey, stands at 283: quite a haul! One cruck-framed house in Llanelltyd parish has been tree-ring dated by Ross Cook (independently of DOWH) to 1573. A contract of exactly that date between two brothers that sets out the details of where the materials should be sourced and the building timetable, was discovered by Peter Thompson. A fuller account of this will appear in a future Newsletter.

News from Ceredigion communicated by Martin Cherry

Some parts of Wales are well served by modern county histories and another of the Cardiganshire series has recently appeared: Volume 2, *Medieval and Early Modern Cardiganshire*, edited by Geraint H Jenkins, Richard Suggett and Eryn M White, published for Cymdeithas Hanes Ceredigion Historical Society in association with the RCAHMW by the University of Wales Press (Cardiff, 2019). (Volumes 1 and 3 appeared earlier.) DOWH members will find much of interest here on landscapes and politics, the growth of gentry estates and education, castles and churches and above all Richard Suggett's substantial chapter on 'Medieval Dwellings and their Successors'. "Substantial" you may ask! How come, since the county is known to be among those with the fewest surviving houses pre-dating the mid seventeenth century? That fact raises intriguing questions. While the quality of buildings is often linked to levels of prosperity and access to markets, Cardiganshire does not appear to have been more disadvantaged in terms of remoteness than Pembrokeshire to the south west or Merioneth to the north, both of which have many fine survivors from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, stone predominating in the former, timber decoration and framing in the latter. The availability of building material may explain the absence of old buildings: given the poor local stone, the vernacular material in Cardiganshire was mud. A clay or earthen house (*tŷ pridd*, *tŷ o bridd*) is a vulnerable thing (although well shod with a stone footing, plastered and well roofed, cob houses

survive in Devon from the fourteenth century, sometimes with their smoke-blackened thatch). Churches in the county were normally stone walled, and Richard shows examples of wagon and king-post roofs to make the point that the medieval Cardy carpenter was alive and kicking. Archaeology and praise poems further demonstrate that medieval houses here were of similar size and layout as were those in adjoining counties. Interestingly, the tradition of houses where the main rooms were open to the roof - startlingly similar to the medieval open hall house - survived



Stone and clay-walled single storeyed thatched cottage at Llanon (Ceredigion), a rare survivor of a once common type

in cottage architecture well into the nineteenth century (and some are still to be seen). After some fascinating general sections, the chapter presents a number of case studies. Two struck me as particularly fascinating. At one excavated house (Llanerch Aeron) a coin from the reign of Edward III (mid fourteenth century) was embedded below a layer of ash signifying that the house burnt down around 1400 and was never rebuilt. Did Owain Glyndŵr pay a visit, or Prince Hal en route to Aberystwyth? And a fully cruck-framed gentry house of the sixteenth century (Gwastadgwrda, Abermeurig), contrary to normal expectations, was fully storeyed from the beginning, suggesting that crucks remained popular even after open halls had gone out of favour.

Plans are afoot to start a new West Wales Historic Buildings Group/Grŵp Adeiladau Hanesyddol Gorllewin Cymru aiming to identify vernacular buildings of historic interest in Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and (eventually) Pembrokeshire that date to pre-1750. Ross Cook, the prime

mover, writes: 'The current narrative in Ceredigion is largely of the wholesale rebuilding of medieval and early-post medieval dwellings and farm buildings from around 1750. With so many minor valleys and vales in the county, it seems unlikely that every single one of them was replaced in their entirety!' Details ross.cook@archaeodomus.co.uk

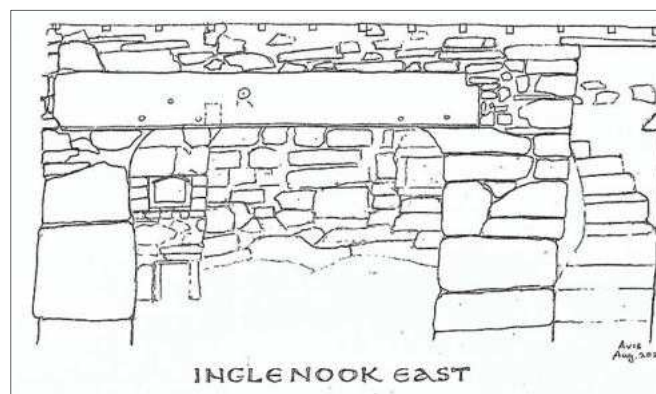
A fireplace at Plas Meini, Llan Ffestiniog, Gwynedd

by Avis Reynolds communicated by Martin Cherry

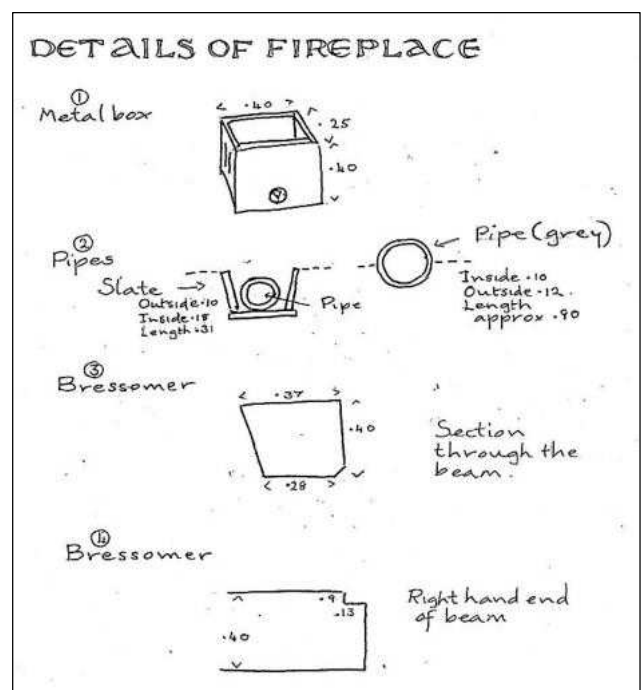
The Discovering Old Welsh Houses group was called in to Plas Meini by the new owners who had started restoration and had discovered what they thought was an old house of interest. When first viewed, the building was in the process of being renovated. A new roof had been installed and the most modern fireplaces had been removed, and the large fireplace was exposed with the bread oven and the stone spiral stairs to the right.

In the Rent Roll for 1623 it says that 'John Robert plas meini and tyddyn gwraig leuan goch, pay the sum of 1s 0d'. The house has a fireplace and stairs at either end of the building and they look very similar but, according to a reference in the Hearth Tax of 1662 for Merioneth, page 27, it says that there is only one fireplace. Which is the older?

In a quote from the book *Hanes Plwyf Ffestiniog* by G J Williams (1882), page 216, it says: 'Aeth hen dy Plas Meini ar dan oddeutu 1768 ac adeilwyd yr un presenol yn le. Y mae E. Ll. Lloyd, ysw U. H., wedi adeiladu palasdy bychan yn ymyl yr hen adeilad, a gelwir hwn ar yr un enw.' Translation: 'The old Plas Meini house caught fire around 1768, and was replaced by the present one. D. Ll. Lloyd, Esq. J.P. built a small mansion next to the old building, and is called by the same name.' We know that the house we are working on is the older one. The new larger building is only about fifty yards away and is well documented. The fire damage must have been restored as the building appears on the census maps and was a holiday let until recently. I have taken quotes from Lloyd's *Encyclopaedic Dictionary* to describe two technical words in the text: an inglenook is 'the corner by the fireside' and an ingle is 'a fire or a blaze or fireplace'. A bressomer or bressumer is 'distinguished from a lintel by its bearing the whole superstructure of a wall, instead of only a small portion over an opening'.



The inglenook at the east end of the building has stone mural stairs on the right-hand side. It is situated at the gable end of a rectangular structure. There is a corresponding inglenook at the opposite gable end of the building. A fireplace is also on the upper floor, above the inglenook (not excavated) now blocked in. On 21 July 2020 a start was made to excavate the fireplace at the east end of Plas Meini (the older building of the two). When first viewed the building had just been reroofed, fire grates had been taken out and the inglenook was exposed along with the bread oven. During the first week the workmen stripped the plaster off the walls. In the second week the upstairs wooden floor was removed. In the third week the tiles were taken up from the ground floor which had the fireplace. In the fourth week the concrete under the tiles was taken up revealing building rubble and the pipes; also the new upper storey floor was re-installed. Two weeks later the whole floor was resurfaced including the fireplace, and the oven was no more. The fill inside the fireplace below floor level was disappointing as the whole area was filled in with old brick and rubble down to a natural soil layer.



The bread oven (now demolished)

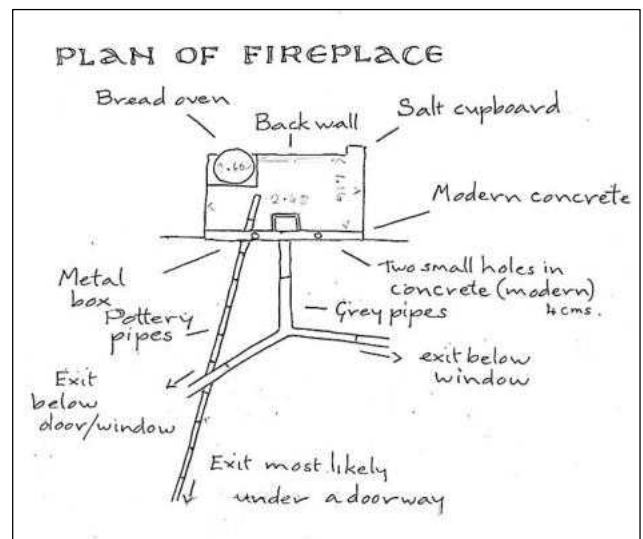
The bread oven was mainly built of shaped stones. There might have been some brick but it was difficult to identify. The surround of the oven door was of metal with a narrow slot behind to take air up the chimney. The oven was mostly freestanding but extended slightly into the back wall. The stokehole also extended into the back wall some distance but it had been filled in with cement before measurements could be taken. It is possible that the stokehole exited to the outside.

The bressomer

The bressomer measured 2.43 metres in length by 0.40 metres in depth. The cross-section is shown on the drawing on page 32. The right-hand end of the bressomer appears to have been severed at some time. There is a small piece cut from the top right corner and the end itself is a very straight cut, unlike the more natural end of the left-hand end. It is also noticeable that the stonework to the right of the bressomer is of small stones which were very loose. There were various marks scored on the bressomer, including a circle with a pivotal point in the centre, initials and various scratch marks. There was no indication that there was ever a slate floor in the room. There is what looks like a hard earth floor below the rubble and the broken building bricks.

Slate gully

The slate gully which crossed the room must have been inserted earliest. The slate was not roofing slate. It measured two centimetres in thickness and was cut to a specific size. Three slates made up a section, one at the base and two sides sloping gently outwards. Originally there would have been a slate covering but this must have been removed when the pottery pipe was inserted later. The pottery pipe of course did not need



a cover. The gully extended through the room to exit under a door. The channel and the piping were embedded into the earth floor.

Brick-coloured piping

This piping was resting in the slate channel crossing the room to exit below a door to the outside. The people putting this piping in took advantage of the existing route. These pipes were of a pot construction measuring one foot in length and four inches in diameter. The first pipe in the fireplace was situated near to the oven but a little to the right. If there was any attachment to the pipe it was lost years ago.

Metal box and grey pipes

The top of the metal box structure was level with the tiled floor of the modern room. The base of the box was set in concrete. The concrete was resting on a natural compact bright brown surface. After the builders had removed the tiles and the concrete and the brick rubble from under the concrete the

metal box was able to be seen in its entirety. There was a round opening at the base with a grid across it. Connected to the round opening were pipes (of a greyish colour and about a metre in length) of the same diameter as the opening into the metal box and extending into the room for about two metres where it divided and crossed to opposite walls and presumably exiting through the walls.

Finds (from inside the fireplace)

There was one piece of pottery in among the rubble and brick. A piece of bent metal was also found. I imagine these have nothing to do with the fire and have been imported with the general rubble.

In conclusion

I first came across pipes set in below floor levels a few years ago when a group of us were on an archaeological excavation in Cwm Penamnen in the Lledr Valley where we worked on several old stone houses. At that point we thought the channels of slate slabs were for draining water seeping into the buildings from the steep slope behind the stone houses. Some of these were, but the ones coming from the fireplaces were there in order to get a draught for the new smaller grates that had been installed when coal became available. The pipes at Plas Meini connected to the metal box were for a through draught after the fireplace had been reduced in size. I think the metal box must belong to the later brick fireplace, but I am not sure what part the box played in the working of the fireplace. Perhaps one of our members could explain? It would not have been to collect the ash as it would have been very difficult to scoop it out from the top and would block the flow of air.

I would like to thank the owners of Plas Meini for allowing me free access to the house. The excavation took place during the Covid pandemic in August 2020 and I had the place to myself at weekends. It was interesting to follow the progress of the builders as they uncovered the different levels of the room and this made it possible for me to get more information of the progression of the pipes across the room.

For more information on history, occupants and architecture, visit the website of the Discovering Old Welsh Houses Group at www.discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk.

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DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH

Report to June 2021 by Janice Dale

There has been little to report since January due to the extended lockdown caused by the second Covid-19 wave.

5th Dimension - Poetry and Images of North Wales Houses by Janice Dale

Why 5th Dimension? The DOWHG produces 4 reports of houses that have been investigated - House Histories, Dendrochronology, Architectural Reports and Architectural Drawings. These reports are all very factual, but I wanted to add something more colourful - about the people who lived in or owned these places and also locate other historic Welsh houses of note which can be found via the poetry and images available.

I would like to thank Gill Jones who reminded me that images need not just be a picture - a mental image can be formed from a written description, and where better to find this but in a diary. I came across this description

".... The scene of benevolence that's annually perform'd here on xmas eve vizt. Six ancient men, twelve women and as many boys as females, had a table spread for them to dine, the men and women being first finished, each had sufficient for another day to carry home and each woman two shillings. Mr Vaughan and his three sones attended, to see that every thing was done decently; the sight gave me a sensation productive of tears, which were augmented by hearing the persons prayers, as the received their benefaction"

Mr Vaughan was at Rhug, and the year 1782 and shows his charitable nature inviting them to his home. The above description can be found in "The Old Order based on the Diary of Elizabeth Baker" by Ben Bowen Thomas. To date over 700 houses in North Wales have been identified as 'of interest' and of these some 142 have a house history, so there is plenty of scope to find images and poetry. The National Library of Wales will be a major repository in which to carry out research, as it has a collection of some



Old Plas Rûg circa 1778 Moses Griffith

950,000 photographs and their portrait collection has the largest collection of Welsh portraits in the world.

I want to organise workshops using photography and art at some of the houses already on record. We will also look at poetry and other printed sources associated with a

particular house, to give us a flavour of the life of the people living there and to create a wider understanding of the lives of the people who we have encountered in our research - all of this will be possible thanks to a 'Tesco Bags of Help' grant.

I have secured the help of a professional photographer and an artist to assist in these areas, and also someone who can help with the poetry. To do this I would like to form a group interested in looking at these areas - so if anyone is interested in joining, do please let me know at jadale22@hotmail.co.uk



RUG near CORWEN.

Another view of Old Plas Rûg Arch.Camb. 1887

The House History Hour communicated by Fiona Gale

Working with the #HouseHistoryHour team of leading UK house historians, *Family Tree* held the House History Show, online, on May 15th 2021.

The House History Show is aimed at all those interested in tracing the history of buildings and the people who once lived in them. The combined expertise of the #HouseHistoryHour team of experts Prof. Deborah Sugg Ryan, Dr. Nick Barratt, Karen Averby, Melanie Backe-Hansen, Gill Blanchard, Ellen Leslie, Keith Searle and Cathy Soughton - bring together a wealth of experience and provide inspiring presentations on the records and research skills needed to help you to trace the history of a home. The full-day programme includes a one-hour Keynote: A House Through Time - which features a conversation with historical consultant Deborah Sugg Ryan and research consultant Melanie Backe-Hansen from the popular BBC series *A House Through Time*. The day also comprised presentations and discussions. Topics during the House History Show and in the forthcoming summer lecture series include: 'Terraced House Tales: New 19th Century Housing and its Occupants', 'Stepping Sideways: How to Step Round Brick Walls', 'Keynote: Sources for House History', 'London: Building Storeys', 'Don't Judge a House by its Plaque', 'Back to the Land: The National Farm Survey, Inland Revenue Survey, Tithe & Land Records', 'Who's Been Living in My

House?', 'A Virtual View: Online Sources', and 'The Interwar House: From Tenant to Home Owner'.

The House History Show was held online on 15th May 2021. Tickets at £45 included the full day of presentations and the series of four summer house history lectures that will be running from 20th May. Individual tickets for the summer lecture series are also available, £10 each, as is a ticket bundle for the summer lecture series, £25. Find out more about the programme and book your tickets at <http://familytr.ee/house>

FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

Report to June 2021 by Wally and Margaret Barr

Obviously, like other branches, the activities of the Flintshire Branch of DOWH have been limited by Covid restrictions. However some work has taken place.

One thing that has happened is that we have begun to distribute some of the copies of the house histories that we had printed. These have gone to individuals who were involved with the research. Archives and Libraries will receive copies when the situation gets back nearer to normal.

Jean Jones is nearing the end of her history of The Old Post Office, Llanasa. Carys Biddle and Margaret Barr have started on the house history of numbers 1 and 2 Water Street, Caerwys. This was formerly one property called Canol y Dre. The timbers of this cruck-framed building have been dendro-dated to 1465.

Childhood Memories by Gina Skyner

As a child, along with my sisters and cousins, a visit to my Granny Smith's at Tyn Rhos, Llanfynydd was filled with excitement. The house was always busy and there was a lot to do. Tyn Rhos was one of three 'connected' properties on the western side of Llanfynydd, on a hill. The others were Rhos Isa, the farm at the back and Rhos Ucha, the 'big' farm complex higher up the mountain. As children, we were allowed to go up to Rhos Ucha and look at the 'devils on the wall'. These were old stone carvings of various animals which we found fascinating. There was also an old chapel with an arched window and a small steeple with a bell. Formerly called 'Rhos y Maen Hir' there had been a standing stone in the grounds, now lost.

Tyn Rhos had the date 1740 built into the stonework on the front of the house and there was a collection of ruins at the side of the property, suggestive of an older occupation. We were allowed to play in the ruins if we were careful. Other games included 'tickling trout' in the nearby stream and telling each other stories in bed at night. The 3 boy cousins all slept in one big bedroom and the 4 girls in another. When jumping on the bed, one had to be careful not to head-bump the huge black beam which jutted down

into the room. Every evening we had to perform a 'concert piece' on the piano or sing a song, with my Granny Smith accompanying. Schubert songs were the favourites along with arias from the oratorios of Handel and Mendelssohn. On Sundays the radio came out, the large liquid accumulator batteries were checked, the switches turned on and after crackling sounds, whistling and necessary twiddling and tuning, the sounds of hymn singing filled the room - only to be drowned out as my Uncle Rupert's amazing tenor voice soared above them.

The inglenook was massive, with beautifully polished horse brasses on its big black beam. It was big enough to contain two small chests of drawers and a big range with ovens and hobs for kettles and pans. There was always a huge fire burning, summer and winter. There were mysteries here too. What was behind the door next to the inglenook fireplace? Granny answered 'spiders' if you asked. One day she opened the door to clean it out and she was right - the cobwebs were huge! She had decided not to use it as there was no window in there and it smelled a bit damp. There were other small cupboards set into the walls too and the window sills were very, very deep. The house had a dark passageway leading into the kitchen which was a wooden extension at the back, built into the sheltering wall which protected the house. A partition wall inside would occasionally be moved to open up the hall or to make the parlour bigger. There was a walnut tree in the garden and a well which we were warned to stay 'well' away from. This 'forbidden' place was often the subject of the night time story time as we invented its dead bodies, which could be murder victims! It's a wonder we ever got to sleep! There were legends about the house. It was supposedly an unlucky house, the horses refusing to pull the beams to the site when it was being built.

Granny Smith chose to move to Llanfynydd when her husband's work took him from Liverpool to Southampton. Tyn Rhos had been used as their holiday home until then. She loved the house and so did I. Llanfynydd is situated in the valley of the river Cegidog which joins the river Alyn beneath Hope mountain. Offa's Dyke runs through the valley and a Roman presence was noted in the nearby Ffrith village. Formerly a part of the old parish of Hope, then a township of Uwchmynydd, it became the new parish of Llanfynydd in 1845. Old houses of note in the area are Trimley Hall, Farm and Bryn Yorkin.

FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Once again members have resolutely declined to be deterred by a second lockdown and have contributed an excellent set of articles. We hope that by the time the next issue is due, individual groups will have more outside activity to report.

This issue is experimental in that it has been decided for a number of reasons, including the not unimportant one of financial economy, to attempt to use machine translation to achieve the Welsh language version. Whether this will be entirely successful remains to be seen and we shall welcome all comment and criticism, especially if constructive.



TESCO Bags of Help



MARC FITCH



DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



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Celebrating Welsh Heritage through the study of traditional
houses and the lives of the people who lived in them.

CYLCHLYTHYR 38 Medi 2021

NEWSLETTER 38 September 2021

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members

FROM THE CHAIR by Richard Cuthbertson

I hope you are all beginning to feel that at last we can begin to get out and about and visit the wonderful historic sites that surround us. Even if we only stick to our own Parish there is much to uncover. John Townsend has run a very successful seminar about how we can all help and plans to repeat this in September; members will be contacted with details pretty soon.

We have, in one form or another, now been going for 15 years and we plan to have a modest celebration of this at 2 pm on Sunday, 26th September at Plas Penmynydd. Most people know the venue and I hope will feel comfortable meeting up there. Full details will be circulated soon. I have already had visits from two groups and we all felt that we were able to cope quite safely. I look forward to welcoming you! With very best wishes to all.

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY by Margaret Dunn

We hope that you are keeping well and either enjoying the good weather or finding shade to keep you cool. Maybe like me, you have been busy out of doors and leaving the DOWH research to the "midgy" evenings and wet days! It has been so good to see lots of members at our monthly ZOOM meetings. We are very grateful to all those who have given such excellent presentations. A huge thank you! The varied topics have proved to be very popular and we have been joined by members from as far afield as the USA! Many thanks also to Peter for hosting the meetings and to Fiona for circulating the details to members.

The RCAHMW have, through DOWH, linked with a house owner in Denbighshire and undertaken tree-ring dating sampling in late July at a cruck-framed house. We eagerly await the results. With the continuing spread of new Covid variants, it seems we shall not be able to meet face-to-face indoors for quite some time. However very small groups from several branches have started to meet outdoors for guided community walks and for Parish Project rambles

seeking old houses so far only noted online. We also hear of a number who are continuing with their house and community history research at home and in Record Offices. Do let your branch secretaries know if you need ideas or help in choosing what to do next.



The late Peter Thompson with Martin Cherry at the launch of "Cruck Building: A Survey"

2021-2 DOWH Lecture Programme

The coronavirus pandemic has forced us all to adapt and one innovation adopted by most voluntary societies such as ours has been to deliver lectures by Zoom. This has proved popular and attendances have generally been far higher than for lectures held in physical venues. Our membership and branches range across a large geographical area - from Holyhead to Flint, Dolgellau to Prestatyn - making it difficult for many people to get to talks at the other end of the region. As a result, we have decided to continue holding group lectures by Zoom. We recognise that face-to-face contact is an important aspect of our activities and hopefully, as restrictions are eased, branch activities will resume, with real meetings, workshops, talks and visits.

All talks (except 9 December) will be on the second Wednesday in each month and will start at 7 pm. They will be given in English. Reminders and Zoom invites will be sent to all members nearer the time and fuller details of each presentation will be available on our new web site (going live later this summer!) Fuller details about the 2022 programme will also appear in the December Newsletter.



A beautifully painted Tudor rose in St Cybi's Church, Holyhead, with colours restored. *Crown Copyright: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW)*

8 September 2021 **Discovering Historic Wall Paintings in Wales** Richard Suggett. Zoom. Richard is Senior Investigator for the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. He has published widely in the fields of traditional architecture and social history and is currently completing a major book on wall paintings in Welsh churches. His talk will provide a survey of the range of wall paintings surviving in houses and churches.

13 October 2021 **New insights from dendrochronology on the houses of North Wales.** Martin Cherry. Zoom. Postponed from June. Martin, a DOWH trustee and Past President of the Vernacular Architecture Group, examines the ways in which scientific dating has confirmed or changed our understanding of architectural change in North Wales, looking in particular at the impact of the Glyndŵr rebellion and the post-war settlement and of the emancipation of bond tenure under the early Tudors.

10 November 2021 **Tŷ Du, Bishop Goodman's house in Llanberis - can it be saved?** Richard Cuthbertson. Zoom. One of two talks that look in depth at a single house.



Nearly 200 buildings have been scientifically dated in North Wales, much of the work commissioned by DOWH. The earliest tree-ring dated house is the remarkable Aberconwy House in Conwy, of 1420.



Tŷ Du, Bishop Goodman's house in the seventeenth century, still with its roof on, from an old postcard

Richard Cuthbertson, DOWH Chairman, looks at the extraordinary history of Tŷ Du, once the home of Godfrey Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester (d. 1656), who used it as a refuge during the Civil War and, at his death, left it to support his charitable work in Ruthin: but the building is now in a bad state - has it got a viable future?

9 December 2021 (N.B. Thursday) **The Pub Unwrapped and the Golden Age of Pub-building.** Geoff Brandwood. Zoom. Something different and festive: a well-known architectural historian, Geoff is a former chairman of the Victorian Society and has co-authored and edited a number of books on pubs. He has played a key role in the Campaign for Real Ale's fight to preserve historic pub interiors. He will take us on a virtual exploration of one of our great British institutions, focusing on their surviving historic pub interiors. He will show how the pub as we know it was essentially a Victorian creation with a truly magnificent flowering in the closing years of the nineteenth century. He will illustrate some of the (all-too-few) Welsh pubs which remain relatively unspoilt.



The Pub as we know it was invented by the Victorians and took on many forms, from the simple singe-room bar to the flamboyant gin palace. Here, the Albion, Conwy, adopts a domestic revival style to create a warm, comfy but elegant retreat.

Full details of the winter/spring programme for 2022 will appear in the December Newsletter, but do keep the following dates free.

12 January 2022 **The mysteries of tree-ring dating: explaining the science of dendrochronology.** Martin Bridge. Zoom.

9 February 2022 **Welsh houses in the hearth tax 1662-1674.** Elizabeth Parkinson. Zoom.

9 March 2022 **Bees and bee keeping before the modern hive (1851).** John Townsend. Zoom.

6 April 2022 **Framing and the mortice and tenon: how to think like a carpenter.** Andy Hyde. Zoom.

11 May 2022 **Introducing Henllys, Caerwys: a Tudor court house.** Sarah Maitland-Jones. Zoom. The second in-depth focus on a single house.

The **DOWH Houses Database Project** continues to progress well; the project is collating and checking the records on all houses so far visited, and, as a searchable database, will aid branches and the whole group prioritize future research and activities after the pandemic.

The **DOWH's Parishes Project Workshop** held in early July was well attended and was a great success covering many people's queries; a follow up workshop will probably be held early in the autumn. The Project continues to develop at varying rates in each branch as additional parishes are included, with some branches choosing to undertake different aspects out in the parishes such as checking if houses still exist, are derelict or ruins, and photographing house exteriors (from public footpaths etc); do contact your branch secretary to receive the formatted sheet and for news about which parishes near you still require checking.

When completed this information will be added to the Houses Database.

House History Research continues wherever members and branch secretaries select houses. The **DOWH Executive** meet each month (except August) and the **Trustees** every 3 months; do let your branch secretaries have your ideas and comments to pass on. The next Trustees' Zoom meeting will be on 15th September.

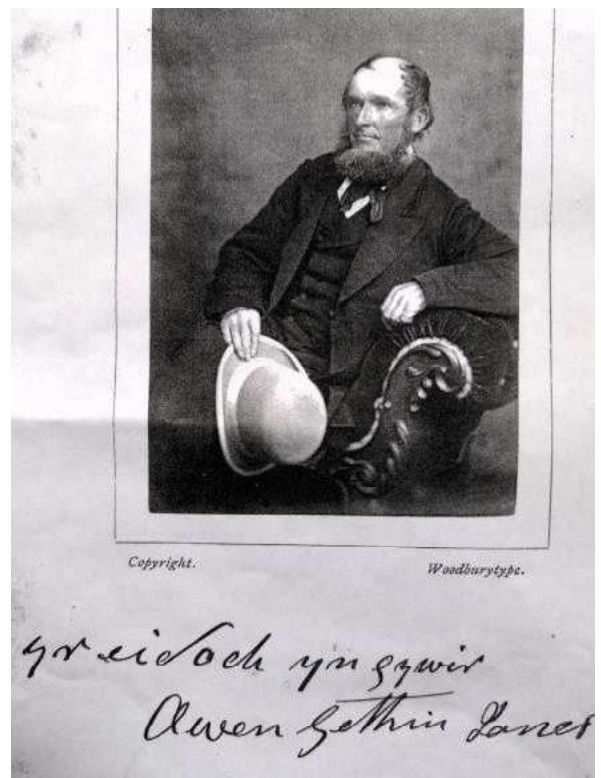
Membership: Fiona Gale will soon be contacting anyone with incorrect or overdue subscriptions, or with Gift Aid queries; she can be contacted by email at membership@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk or by phone on 07718625606 or 01824 520231.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

CONWY BRANCH

Report to end August 2021 by Ann Morgan and Gill Jones

Conwy Group members have followed their personal interests or been working on village housing, Scouts Association, ancestry and newsletter articles. Clearly no home visits were possible but we are more optimistic that the Welsh government will be announcing final easing of restrictions soon.



Owen Gethin Jones by Ann Morgan

Owen Gethin Jones (1816-1883) of Penmachno, Conwy, North Wales is known to some local people, but I suspect

many who pass under the fine stone-built railway bridge known as Pont Gethin know very little about the man who built it. The bridge is a few miles south of Bettws y Coed on the A470.

Owen Gethin Jones was born at Tyn y Cae, Penmachno to Owen and Grace Jones. His father was a stone-mason and joiner and he passed on these skills to his son Owen. It is said that Owen loved carpentry and his first major work was building a 'factory' near Pandy bridge, Penmachno.

In 1843 he married Ann, daughter of William Owen, Coetmor and they lived at Dolydd. In 1852 he bought Tyddyn Gethin. Gethin and his brother-in-law and nephew set up a construction company. He was involved in the building of Penmachno Vicarage and school, Plas Bryn Derwen, Llan Station and the church in Bettws y Coed. He was also involved in building several railway stations on the Blaenau Ffestiniog to North West Coast Line including Pont Gethin. Gethin had many other abilities - he wrote poetry and essays and gave lectures. A book published after his death, *Gweithiau Gethin* (Gethin's Works) recorded his poetry and a long poem (*W. awdl*) won him the bardic chair at the 1876 Llanrwst Eisteddfod.

He also wrote *englynion*; these are 4-line verses (a bit like a haiku) and can be humorous or serious and embrace subjects such as marriages, births, deaths, nature, local characters, elections, new fashions, smoking and religious topics.

Gethin was also interested in history and wrote a book about the history of Penmachno, *Hanes Penmachno* (The History of Penmachno). Other books written by him are *Ysbytty Ifan a'i Hynafiaethau* (Ysbytty Ifan and its Ancient History), *Hanes Plwyf Dolwyddelen* (The History of Dolwyddelen Parish) and *Cartref Doctor William Morgan* (The Home of Doctor William Morgan - translator of the Bible to Welsh in the 16th century).

Gethin wrote about many of the farms in his area and when researching some of the C16th houses in Penmachno e.g. Bennar, Coed y Ffynnon, Dyllassau Isaf, Hafodwryd and Dugoed, we found his poetry and histories very useful and interesting.

This man came of humble beginnings but was truly very able - a builder, carpenter, engineer and literary figure, a polymath of his age. As this is only a brief summary of Gethin's life, I recommend for further reading Vivian Parry-Williams' *Plwyf Penmachno* and Gethin's *Hanes Plwyf Penmachno* which can be ordered through the North Wales Public Library. I believe also that an English translation is available on disc.

Taxes - Hearth, Window and Land by Ann Morgan Hearth Tax

During our House history searches Gill Jones and I have found the Hearth tax records quite useful as they can add

information to the body of knowledge being gathered for a particular house.

The Hearth Tax was introduced in England and Wales on 19 May 1662. Householders were required to pay a charge of 2 shillings per annum for each hearth, half of the payment being due at Michaelmas and half on Lady day. Exceptions were people receiving Poor Relief and houses worth less than 20 shillings a year. In 1664 the revision of tax made it payable by all who had more than 2 chimneys. In 1689 this tax was abolished.



Chimneys and windows of Ddualt, Maentwrog

Our first success came as quite a surprise. In Caernarvonshire archive, searching for Maenan Hall hearth tax we were given the original 8 - 9 inch wide scrolled record. We spotted Maenan township, Conwy clearly recorded with the Hall having 5 hearths. Some other examples we found are Foxhalls, Denbighshire (12 hearths), Berain (5 hearths) and Penrhyn Old Hall (3 hearths).

I have also searched for Hearth Tax records on microfilm. This can be tedious and the films can be hard to read. Here is a tip to make it easier to find your house or owner. Just follow the column recording the number of hearths - anything over 3 should be checked. This speeds up the search considerably.

This is only a brief introduction to the subject of Hearth Tax. For more information, note that on 9th February 2022, Elizabeth Parkinson (University of Roehampton) will give a lecture 'The Hearth Tax in Wales with special reference to Glamorgan' (provisional title) via a forthcoming DOWH zoom meeting.

Window Tax

Records of Window Tax, when available, can be useful when a house has been partly or wholly demolished. This tax was introduced in 1696 in the reign of William 3rd and Mary and is said to be the method by which revenue was raised to compensate for the losses due to clipping of coinage. It was finally abolished on July 24th 1851 after pressure from doctors and others who argued that lack of



The caption reads *Hello! Old Fellow, we're glad to see you here.*

light was detrimental to health.

The tax had two parts. The first was a flat rate of 2 shillings (one shilling is nominally equivalent to 5p) per house and the second part was an additional tax depending on windows exceeding 10 in number. 10 to 20 windows were taxed at 4 shillings and 20-plus windows at 8 shillings. Cottagers too poor to pay Poor rates or Church rates were exempt.

It was not a popular tax and some tried to avoid paying the tax by boarding or bricking up some windows. Occasionally such 'bricking up' can be seen on an older building. It is said that the expression 'daylight robbery' comes from this tax as it was seen as a tax on light.

Land Tax

The Land Tax was levied between 1692 and 1963. Originally it was a tax on real estate and personal property but by the 1730s it was levied mainly on land ownership. For example, when researching Plas Penmynydd, Anglesey, we looked at the Land Tax records in the Anglesey County Archives. Here we found the name of the occupier, after 1772, and the amount of the tax assessment. This information was very useful to us as it added documented information to the house history, naming the occupants of the house on a given date.

This is a brief introduction to 3 types of taxation from which much information can be gleaned by the researcher. I hope you find it useful.

ANGLESEY BRANCH

Report to end August 2021 by T.P.T.Williams

There has been no formal activity to report. However, an initial meeting with the owners of Cefn Coch, Llanfechell (see NL37) is scheduled for September, with a view to further visits to this C17th *plas*.

Trwyn Penrhyn, Llanfwrog, Anglesey by T.P.T.Williams

Anglesey is short of new candidate pre-1700 houses to investigate and so we cannot afford to neglect even faint clues. Trwyn Penrhyn (usually just Penrhyn) farm and associated holiday park are situated on the west coast of Anglesey opposite Holyhead. Although shown on the earliest Ordnance Survey maps, it is not mentioned in any of the standard references such as RCAHMW, CADW, Coflein or Listed Buildings Wales.

However, there exist sea charts of Holyhead Bay and adjacent coasts drawn up by Captain Grenville Collins, Hydrographer to Charles II. They show few land details but one location is clearly marked *Penthrine* and is undoubtedly that of present-day Penrhyn. The adjacent coast is undistinguished and without prominent marks visible from the sea, so it is possible that there was a prominent building on the site in the second half of the C17th. Nothing more is yet known but if we finally emerge from Covid more work is clearly needed.



CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

Report to end August 2021 by Peter Masters

Other than steady progress with the Parishes Project there is little to report.

Hidden houses by Peter Masters

In her recent Zoom Talk Margaret Dunn spoke of the "hidden houses", modern-looking houses which have had a makeover or undergone renovation rather than restoration, which to all intents had little of interest to offer but sometimes retained enough details to give a tantalizing glimpse of the their past glory.

Whether this was in a distant or more recent past, it was valuable because it meant a continuity of occupation on the same site and usually using the same footprint. By using shrewd observations, old documents, and careful building



recordings, the House Detectives can read the scene and create an image of what stood before.

This practice of makeovers is a long-established means of making the most of what you have and continues even down to the most basic houses.

Our humble abode is 100 years old this year. A parcel of land was bought from the Church In Wales by a local farmer for the sum of £290, and a plot of this land was sold to John Williams, quarry man of Llanaelhaearn and Sarah M. Green for £20 with a covenant stipulation "that there must be built a suitable bungalow and 'offices' on the said land".



The subsequent building erected was a corrugated tin and timber construction. The building was to remain largely unaltered for 48 years. New owners in 1966 made some alterations and modernisations but very little changed until 1975 when the property again changed hands and Planning



Consent was granted to extend the Kitchen and 'add new external walls, whipped in grey pebbledash, re-roof and widen the access'.

One of the stipulations was that the re-roofing was to be carried out in natural Welsh slate; the original corrugated roof is still under the slates!

Also tucked away in subsequent internal alterations and decorations are to be found the original tongue-and-groove internal walls, remnants of the sheeting and a tantalising half of a door! Intriguingly, this where the kitchen extension abuts the original building [at right in second picture].

There were three such houses built here, the middle one later being demolished in 2015 and a new build erected. The other remaining house had the sheeting removed and replaced with marine ply which was covered with "chicken wire" to provide a key for the cement render.

There are numerous houses of similar construction in the area, indeed in the region; in many respects they were the Snowdonia house of their time and hopefully they will become the historic houses of the future.

There are also instances of Tŷ Unos houses being updated in the same or similar ways. Ironically it is the ones which have been best preserved which have not survived.



MERIONETH BRANCH

Report to end August 2021 by Martin Cherry

As with the other branches, there is nothing to report from Merioneth, except steady progress on the Parishes Project.

Who built Y Faner - Monastic upgrade or Lancastrian Regional Headquarters ? by Martin Cherry

The parishes project for Llanelltyd has thrown up lots of interesting houses but by far the most significant is Y Faner (Vanner), situated on the perimeter of the monastic enclosure of Cymer Abbey. The building timbers were felled in the summer of 1440 and spring of 1441, meaning that building could have got underway as early as the summer of 1441 or within a year or two of that date since the greener the wood, the easier it is to work. So, the most likely date of construction would be at some point between 1441 and 1443. It has received quite a lot of specialist attention, notably from Peter Smith (in volume II of the *History of Merioneth*, pp. 447, 470-1). Y Faner has puzzled historians. Its plan is most unusual. It differs from the usual medieval arrangement where the cross passage separates the open hall and private rooms on one side from the service area (sometimes containing accommodation for livestock) on the other. At Y Faner, the cross passage is at one end of the house. The heavily smoke-blackened 4-bay open hall has a striking arch-braced roof with two tiers of cusped wind braces. The rear wing, accessed from the high (or dais end) of the hall, seems to be of the same date as the hall and



Y Faner from the SW, close to the perimeter wall of Cymer Abbey. The door leads into the end cross passage - the house appears never to have extended to the left. The open hall (the floor was inserted in c. 1900) is to the right.

was similarly open to the roof. It differs in its details from the hall and, unlike the hall, its roof is clean (i.e., not smoke-blackened by a central hearth), so it must have had an integral fireplace, now gone (the present fireplace is an insertion). There was also a cross wing beyond the hall, since demolished. It is the most ambitious house of its date in the county.

The precise purpose of the building remains uncertain. Standing as it does on the edge of the precinct, perhaps even just outside it or adjacent to the gatehouse, it is generally considered to have been the abbey guesthouse. Some have speculated that it was the abbot's private house. Upgrading monastic guest houses was not uncommon in the fifteenth century and by then, although the founding fathers of the Cistercian Order would not have approved, abbots were keen to enjoy the benefits of more private space and better facilities. But Cymer's finances were very shaky at this time - it was always a poor establishment - and it seems improbable that the abbey would have been in a position to pay for the project by itself. Looking at the events around the time of its building provides some clues - and some surprises, since the 1440s were turbulent times for the abbey, not at all the sort of environment where you would expect lavish investment of this sort.

The struggle for power at the court of Henry VI, where the weakness of the king encouraged the growth of factions that excluded the less favoured from power, spilled over into local politics. This became particularly intense in parts of Wales where a vacuum was created as a result of the exclusion from major local offices of Welsh-born nobles - a legacy of the post-Glyndŵr political settlement. The Stanley family especially, kings of Man and powerful in the north-west of England, saw an opportunity to build a Lancastrian power base in North Wales, and gradually gained an

ascendancy there in the 1440s and '50s. So great was the tension locally, that a conference was held at Harlech in August 1443 to 'try to still the tempest of feud and violence' in Meirionnydd.

Feud and violence spilled over into church affairs. At some point, probably in 1442, John ap Rhys, the abbot of Cymer, forcibly ejected the abbot of the neighbouring Cistercian monastery of Strata Florida, imprisoned him in Aberystwyth Castle and then took his place. On the reasonable assumption that the post of abbot of Cymer was now vacant at this point, John Cobbe was elected, but no sooner was he in post than Rhys returned and forcibly ejected him, stole the abbey's seal along with other goods, made grants and leases of land and surrendered the precinct to 'diverse riotous misdoers'. Cobbe appealed to the king to take the abbey into royal protection. The Lancastrian stalwart, Sir Thomas Stanley, controller of the royal household, chamberlain and justiciar of North Wales and a key royal agent in North Wales and the north-west of England, was duly granted custody in February 1443 along with some of his friends and family. By this time a new abbot was in place, Richard Kyrkeby, possibly a member of a family with strong Lancastrian sympathies. He went on to



The west tower of Cymer Abbey, added to the thirteenth-century church possibly in the 1440s. The corner closest to the viewer contained an internal stone stair. There is no external access. It gives every appearance of having been defensive.

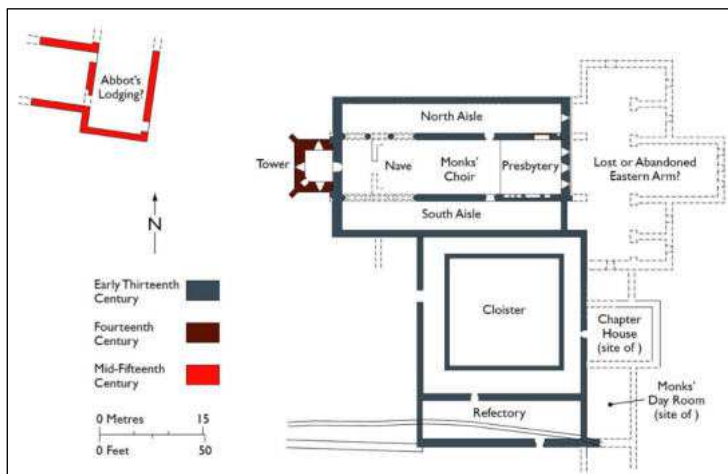
be abbot of Basingwerk where he got embroiled in further disputes.

So, who built Y Faner and why? There are more candidates than one would wish for! Also, there is no dependable list of abbots with their dates of office. It is not clear when John ap Rhys was appointed although, as we



Buck bros. print of 'Cumner' Abbey in 1729 includes Y Faner

have seen, he was in post in 1442. Rhys's predecessor, John Loncastell (Lancaster), was abbot in 1398 when he was appointed a papal chaplain, but it is not known when he died. Why would he have started building 43 years on and so close to death? John Cobbe hardly had time to get his feet under the desk. John ap Rhys is a possibility - he was clearly a man with pretensions and determination - but I wonder if the driving force behind the building was an abbot at all. Construction in 1443, when Stanley was appointed keeper of the abbey, is more likely. I suspect that Kyrkeby, a monk from Aberconwy Abbey whose family would have been known by Stanley, was brought in as a front man and Y Faner built, in effect, as a local headquarters for the Stanley clan from which to dominate the local area and milk the abbey's estates. Its unusual plan suggests it might have served as accommodation for men passing through - hence the plausible theory of its having been the abbey guesthouse - with two big open spaces, one a conventional hall, the other a large kitchen: we do not know what the now lost north wing looked like. Furthermore, the 'end-passage plan', although rare nationally, tends to be associated with the north of England - Stanley country - although there is one other in North Wales.



General layout of Cymer site Courtesy CADW

Further study may reveal more late-medieval fabric in the adjacent house and the farm buildings to the east of the abbey. But one structure seems particularly significant given the turbulent times: the west tower of the abbey church. This is clearly an addition to the church and where a date has been hazarded it's been placed in the later fourteenth century. But there are no diagnostic features to confirm this. The small single-light windows to the ground floor and the internal circular stone stair in the south-west angle give the whole structure a defensive appearance. Undoubtedly its ostensible use was to contain bells (expensive items!), but could it also have served as a retreat in case of trouble? Castles throughout North Wales were hurriedly repaired in the years following the Glyndŵr war and the troubled decades that followed. The existence of a defensive tower (now lost but portrayed in a nineteenth-century water colour) at nearby Dolymelynlyn makes a defensive role for the Cymer tower perfectly feasible. Could this then date from the same time as Y Faner? This may be a speculation too far but it provides food for thought as to how people lived in such turbulent times.



General layout of Cymer site Courtesy Coflein

DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH

Report to end August 2021 by Jenny Lees

Other than steady progress with the Parishes Project there is little to report.

Tithe Martyrs and a Poet from Llangwm by Jenny Lees

As always with DOWH research, compiling a house history for *Cysulog*¹ led to intriguing new discoveries about the area's past inhabitants, and one unforgettable source was Hugh Evans' 1931 work² *Cwm Eithin*. This intriguing volume, set in the countryside around Cerrig-y-drudion, recounts not only the events of Hugh's youth but also the fascinating tales and memories of his grandparents' generation. Born at Cwm Main, Llangwm in 1854, Hugh moved in 1875 to Liverpool, where he founded the newspaper *Y Brython* and



Cysulog, nr. Maerdy, photographed during initial renovation.
Jenny Lees 2017

is buried, but he died in 1934 at Pen-y-bryn, Cynwyd, having married Jane Williams from that village.³

Edward E. Jones of Cysulog was one of the 'Tithe Martyrs' (*Merthyron y Degwm*) whose story is told by Hugh Evans. In the early 1880s prices for agricultural produce were extremely low, but when local farmers asked for reduction of their tithes, based on crop value, not all local clergy agreed. After around eighty farmers refused to pay in 1887 Ecclesiastical Commissioners attempted to seize their property, but crowds gathered at threatened farms to prevent this. At *Fron Isa*, home of Hugh's cousin and her husband Thomas Hughes, a forced sale of two cows was tried, but by the time the auctioneers arrived

'All the people of the district were there also - every farmer with his stout stick and the farm servants with cudgels, while the womenfolk encouraged them to give battle to the authorities. The auctioneer put the cows up for sale but not a penny was bid'.

The crowd prevented an attempt to 'distrain' the unsold cattle [seize in lieu of rent or money owed] and Hugh Evans heard that some 300 people 'escorted' the auctioneers and their police protectors along the Holyhead road. Other farm sales were also prevented by a system of watchers lighting beacons on high ground to warn of the auctioneers' approach. At one point a distraining party was made to kneel on the road, sign a promise not to come again anywhere in England or Wales to attempt to 'sell for Tithes' and finally, to wear their coats inside-out to show repentance! After they were accompanied by a screaming crowd for five miles to Corwen railway station, proceeding with a red flag in front and a black flag behind, about 15 of the leaders were charged with preventing officers from removing cattle and causing 'a riot on the highway'. In July 1887 the *Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser* announced that 31 people were on trial for an *Anti-tithe Affray at*

Llangwm, including E. E. Jones, 'son of John Jones, *Cysulog*'. But by the time of the Assizes the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had realised the strength of public feeling, so the prosecutors agreed not to press charges on condition that the defendants admitted they had broken the law, and the Judge 'bound over' the accused for £20 each. In March 1888 the *Llangollen Advertiser* reported E. E. Jones as among those speaking at a Welsh Land League meeting in Corwen Assembly Rooms, where 'deep sympathy' was expressed for the farmers whose goods were being sold for tithes. Hugh Evans' opinion was that the tithe martyrs 'did much to secure the disestablishment of the Church in Wales'.



The Tithe Martyrs; Edward E. Jones of Cysulog is seen at second from the left in the back row



The plaque at Pont y Glyn commemorating the local tithe martyrs (Jenny Lees 2021).⁴

On 4th October 1907 the *Llangollen Advertiser* announced that David Ellis of *Penyfed, Tynant* and his cousin John Evan Jones of *Cysulog*, both at Bala County School, had been granted scholarships following the Central Welsh Board Examination. But tragedy was to strike the families of both cousins. In 1910 John's father John David Jones of *Cysulog* died after being gored by a bull and John Evan Jones, working in a Liverpool bank at the time, had to return to run the family farm. Then in 1918 David Ellis, born at *Penyfed* in 1893 and nephew of John's mother Harriett Elinor Jones,

mysteriously disappeared in Macedonia while serving in the Royal Army Medical Corps during World War One. David (Dei) had already become a celebrated bard before the war and his life and work are celebrated in a fully illustrated biography.⁵ He also features as protagonist in a novel by his army friend, the Welsh war poet and dramatist Sir Albert Evans-Jones, known also by his bardic name Cynan.



Penyfed, Tŷ Nant, home of the bard David Ellis. Jenny Lees 2019

References

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2. Hugh Evans (1931), 'Cwm Eithin'. My extracts in this article are from the English version *The Gorse Glen*, translated by E. Morgan Humphreys (1948), The Brython Press.
3. Dictionary of Welsh Biography,
<https://biography.wales/article/s-EVAN-HUG-1854>
4. I am grateful to Anwen Lloyd of DOWH for alerting me to the location of the Pont y Glyn bridge wall plaque, and to the photograph of the Tithe Martyrs.
5. Alan Llwyd and Elwyn Edwards (1992), *Y Bardd a Gollwyd: Cofiant David Ellis*, Cyhoeddiadau Barddas, Llandybie. I am indebted to Professor Gruffydd Aled Williams for providing references to the biography and novel.

FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

Report to end August 2021 by Margaret and Wally Barr

Very gradually we are making tentative moves out of Covid lockdown. On Wednesday 21st July, in searing heat of 26 degrees, a small group of members clutching water bottles and wearing hats, were taken on a tour of Caerwys town. This was led by 2 members of the Caerwys Historical Society - Carys Biddle and Vicky Jones. Carys is also a member of DOWH. There were 8 people present. It was a very informative tour, and the town has many plaques on houses explaining their historical significance. Vicky also peppered the talk with experiences from her own life, as she has

always lived in the town and was the daughter of the local vet. Two buildings of significance for us were the Old Court which Margaret Dunn, Peter Thompson and Martin Cherry visited last year, and nos. 1 and 2 Water Street. The latter was formerly known as 'Canol y Dre'. An Architectural Report was compiled on the building by Ross Cook, Peter Thompson and Martin Cherry in 2019 and Carys Biddle and Margaret Barr are working on the house history. Dendrochronology has put the primary phase of building at 1465. The afternoon ended with very welcome refreshments at tables outside the 'On the Corner Café'.



Reflections on past Study Tours by Wally Barr

We look forward to re-starting house visits and Study Tours as soon as possible. In the meantime, perhaps those who have been on previous Study Tours might enjoy the memories of reading about these again, and hopefully those members who haven't yet tasted the delights of a DOWH Study Tour might also like to have a flavour of the experience.

There have been five Study Tours so far and, as former DOWH events coordinator, I worked closely with Margaret Dunn and others in organising some of these. Though this short piece can only mention some of the wonderful places visited, each Study Tour has had its own distinct focus and its own memorable moments. Whilst every Study Tour has followed a similar pattern - usually spanning three days, staying in an interesting venue and consisting of visits through the day and talks in the evening - each has been uniquely different from the others.

Tour one

Our first Study Tour in October 2012 took us to South Wales to explore St Fagans National Museum of History, where Dr Gerallt Nash, Senior Curator, gave a personal guided tour of the site. We also stopped at Cosmeston Medieval Village, Penarth, for a walk around this fascinating reconstruction. In all we visited four sites, beginning with Tretower Court, Crickhowell, and ending finally at Hafod y Garreg, the oldest dated house in Wales. Dated to 1402 it is only a little younger than the houses represented at Cosmeston village, which is set in around 1350.

Tour two

In July the following year, 2013, the group visited a number of the timber-framed houses on the Mid-Wales Border. One particularly interesting feature was seen on the journey down when we were given a guided tour of Ty Mawr, Castle Caereinion. For myself, the most memorable thing about this limewashed box-framed house was the smoke hood, dendro-dated to 1631 and seen in the photograph. Somewhat surprisingly the hood is made of wattle and daub, but rather than burning to a frazzle the moment the fire is lit it seems the daub would set into a form of ceramic that could withstand the heat of the blaze.

The tour was led by the very knowledgeable architectural historian Duncan James. We stayed in the Green Dragon Hotel, Hereford and Duncan provided the evening lecture. The next day we went on to visit the picturesque and historic buildings of Weobley and Leominster, followed by Ludlow and Presteigne on the third day. Throughout this time, we had the benefit of Duncan's extensive knowledge of building techniques and the history surrounding the many fascinating buildings and villages we saw.

Tour three

In May 2014 members visited some of the older houses of North-East Wales. Unusually, on this Study Tour some of our members were non-resident, the others staying in Beaufort Park Hotel, Mold. On the way to the hotel we climbed the motte at Sycharth, where the castle - burnt to the ground by the future Henry V in 1405 - was the birthplace of Owain Glydwr. Led by Spencer Smith of GAT, we heard some of the poetry of the time, written in praise of the castle, its occupants and grounds. We also called at Leeswood Green Farm (C15th), Plas Teg Jacobean house near Pontblyddyn, and later, historic Denbigh, Nant Clwyd y Dre and Porth y Dwr in Ruthin. The sights and talks were informative and quite exciting to arrange (requiring almost split-second timing to negotiate at least two separate buses criss-crossing the countryside so as to split the group and not over-laden those dwelling in the houses we visited).

Tour four

In 2016 we made a tour of the Timber-Framed Houses of Montgomeryshire. Expertly led by DOWH members, Nick and Eva Moore, twenty-nine of us set out in our rather large coach on an epic tour through some very narrow and windy roads. Taking in several wonderful buildings we each were provided with a splendid information booklet to read as we went. Amongst the many interesting places visited was our hotel itself - Gregynog Hall - a fascinating and historic mansion near Newtown. One particularly memorable house was the Vicarage in Berriew. Here the plan was to appreciate the house from outside, but when we arrived the vicar very kindly, and quite unexpectedly, allowed all of us to wander around his beautiful home, an exceptional example of early C17th timber framing (the house is shown on the front cover of the 1st edition of Peter Smith's *Houses of the Welsh Countryside*).

Tour five

In September 2018 the next tour, with twenty-six members and friends, visited the ancient buildings of Cumbria. We stayed centrally in Carlisle at the Hallmark Hotel and were ably assisted by members of the Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group, who provided daily leadership for our visits and informative lectures in the evenings. On the journey to Carlisle we called in for a tour of Newbiggin Hall, Penrith, a private castle dating from the early C14th. The next day we saw Clay Dabbins houses in Burgh by Sands, like Leigh Cottage in the photograph (mid C17th-early C18th). In areas short of stone and timber, Clay Dabbins were made using earth and clay. Clay is mixed with sand and straw, then layered around a cruck frame, and the roof is thatched.

The following day we visited Lanercost Priory (1169), a fortified farmhouse (known as a bastle) near the Roman fort of Epiacum, and the picturesque town of Alston. Here the early houses, like the bastle, had their living quarters on the first floor. On our return trip we called in at Dove Cottage, home of the poet Wordsworth. Whilst this has been a whistle-stop tour, I hope it's fired your enthusiasm for the next DOWH Study Tour.

Childhood Memories - image of Tyn Rhos by Gina Skyner

In the last Newsletter we published Gina's fascinating account of her childhood memories of her grandmother's house at Tyn Rhos, Llanfynydd. By an oversight an excellent image she provided of this house was omitted and is included below to complete the story. Apologies to Gina ! Ed.



FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Articles, booklets and books written by DOWH members and others on DOWH-related subjects.

We request members to send details of printed articles etc on DOWH-related topics to the DOWH Newsletter Editor to share with other members. This is the first list and covers recent publications.

Cruck Building: A Survey. Edited by Nat Alcock, P.S. Barnwell and Martin Cherry. Published by Shaun Tyas, 2019. Includes the following chapters of particular interest to readers in Wales: *Crucks in Wales* by Richard Suggett and *The Afterlife of Cruck Houses: Modernisation and Obsolescence in North Wales* by Martin Cherry and Peter Thompson.

Rev. Henry Rowlands of Llanidan and the discovery of the Juvenius englynion by T.P.T. Williams. The Anglesey Antiquarian Society and Field Club 2020 *Transactions*, pp. 69-80.

A Prism for his Times: Late-Tudor Anglesey and Hugh Hughes of Plas Coch by Robin Grove-White. The Anglesey Antiquarian Society and Field Club 2020 *Transactions*. Book Review by Prys Morgan pp. 99-102.

A Fireplace at Plas Meini, Llan Ffestiniog, Gwynedd by Avis Reynolds. *Vernacular Architecture Group, Newsletter* April 2021 No. 80 p.29.

Bryn Moel, Dolwyddelan by Sue Buck. *Gwreiddiau Gwynedd Roots - Journal of the Gwynedd Family History Society*. 2021 Spring /Summer Vol 1. No.80 p.6.

Olrhain Teulu o 'Stiniog by Ann Penelope Morgan. *Gwreiddiau Gwynedd Roots - Journal of the Gwynedd Family History Society*. 2021 Spring /Summer Vol 1. No.80 p.30.

Teulu Siop Gogerddan neu Siop Fawr, Tal-y-sarn by J Dilwyn Williams. *Gwreiddiau Gwynedd Roots - Journal of the Gwynedd Family History Society*. 2021 Spring /Summer Vol 1. No.80. p.32.

Ismael Williams, Master Mariner by Sue Hurst. *Gwreiddiau Gwynedd Roots - Journal of the Gwynedd Family History Society*. 2021 Spring /Summer Vol 1. No.80 p.47.

An Iron Age Feast: Excavation of a Shell Midden at Parc Coed, Llanfrothen, Gwynedd by Clive Hudson. *Archaeology in Wales* 2019 Vol.59 p.11.

Excavations at Conwy Vicarage Gardens by I. P. Brooks. *Archaeology in Wales* 2019 Vol.59 p.79.

A looped palstave found by Nick and Margaret Smyth in Llwyngwrl, Merioneth note by Frances Lynch. *Archaeology in Wales* 2019 Vol.59 p.122.

Caerwys, 1 and 2 Water Street by Ross Cook, ArchaeoDomus. *Archaeology in Wales* 2019 Vol.59 p.129.

Pontrickett, Ceiriog Ucha by Ross Cook, ArchaeoDomus and Martin Cherry, *Discovering Old Welsh Houses. Archaeology in Wales* 2019 Vol.59 p.136.

Hendre Farm barn, Gwyddelwern by Ross Cook, ArchaeoDomus and Martin Cherry, *Discovering Old Welsh Houses. Archaeology in Wales* 2019 Vol.59 p.140.

A Quest for Cymer in Edeirnion and its Barons: Part I c.1200 - c.1700 by Jenny Lees. *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*. 2019 Vol XVIII part II, pp. 129-40.

A Quest for Cymer in Edeirnion and its Barons: Part II c.1700 - c.1900 by Jenny Lees. *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*. 2020 Vol XVIII part III, pp. 254. [Part 3 will be published in the same Journal (2021) this autumn]

The Quest for Cymer Part One: Hafod y calch, Gwerclas and Plas Uchaf by Jenny Lees. *Clwyd Historian/Hanes Bro Clwyd, Gaeaf/Winter* 2013/14, Rhif/No. 69, pp. 2-17

The Quest for Cymer Part Two: Some 18th Century Confidences by Jenny Lees. *Clwyd Historian/Hanes Bro Clwyd*, Winter 2017/18.

In DOWH Cynwyd Scrapbook One (2014) by Jenny Lees
https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Publications/Cynwyd_Scrapbook-1.pdf

The lime quarry at Hafod y Calch, pp.12-13
Cryniarth Rescued for Posterity, pp.14-16
The Mysteries of Cymer, pp.22-28
A Cynwyd Timeline, pp.59-63 (with June Lister)

In DOWH Cynwyd Scrapbook Two (2016) by Jenny Lees
https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Publications/Cynwyd_Scrapbook-2.pdf

Our own medieval hall house - Plas Uchaf, pp.2-7
Near Calamity at the Corwen Races! A true tale from Gwerclas, pp.8-10
Ty'n y Wern Gwnodl, pp.11-16
Confidences of an 18th Century Baroness (Part One), pp.17-22
William Ferguson Irvine - an unsung hero, pp.23-30
Brave local pioneers in the 18th century!, pp.31-34
Our finest Medieval Historian - Professor Sir Rees Davies, pp.35-36
Blue Lion memories, pp.37-41 (with Betty Booth)
Plas Isaf - another Edeyrnion Dynasty, pp.49-52

In DOWH Cynwyd Scrapbook Three (2019) by Jenny Lees
https://www.discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/cat/catalogs/Cynwydd-Scrapbook-3/pdf/save/bk_1.pdf

Confidences of an Eighteenth-Century Baroness: Part Two, pp.4-8
Deeds and Drovers at Mynyllod, pp.9-13
Home Comforts at Hafod y calch, pp.14-19
Remembering Dai Morgan Evans pp. 20-21
A Most Colourful Cynwyd Character - Memories of Major Leslie Dow, pp.29-30
Our ancient township of Gwnodl: The First Six Centuries, pp.31-36
Once upon a time at Glan Alwen, pp.37-41
Our Farming Heritage: Part One, pp.43-47
Plas Isaf - Another Edeyrnion Dynasty: Part Two, pp. 48-50

The Quest for Cymer-in-Edeirnion and its Barons - From Medieval Plas Uchaf to Eighteenth Century Gwerclas and beyond by Jenny Lees
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The Record of Caernarvon for the commote of Nantconwy by Frances Richardson. *Caernarvonshire Historical Society Transactions* 2018/19 Vol .78 p.31.

Re-discovering medieval Nantconwy by Frances Richardson. *Caernarvonshire Historical Society Transactions* 2018/19 Vol.78 p.41.

Pwllheli Bricks "Does dim plwc yn y Cymro" by Tom David. *Caernarvonshire Historical Society Transactions* 2018/19 Vol.78 p.62.

Discovering Old Welsh Houses by Margaret Dunn. *Cambrian Archaeological Association* website February 2021. The Cambrian Archaeological Association is 175 years old!





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Syr/Sir Simon Jenkins, FSA, FRSL; Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, MA, PhD

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houses and the lives of the people who lived in them.

CYLCHLYTHYR 39 Rhagfyr 2021

NEWSLETTER 39 December 2021

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

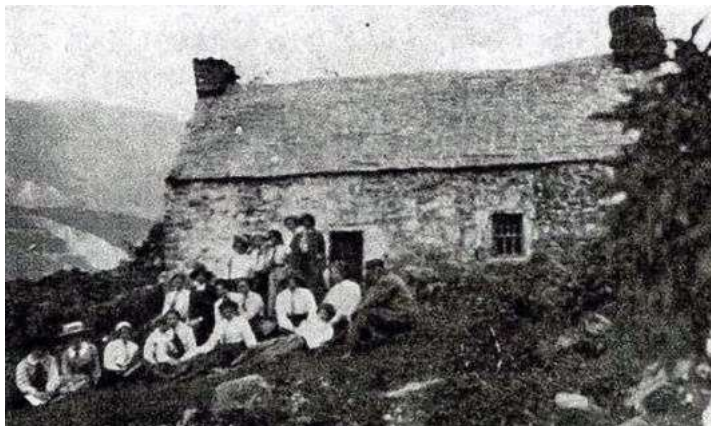
OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members

FROM THE CHAIR by Richard Cuthbertson

Well, the days get darker and gloomier as November advances. I cannot remember when the hour changed so late! However, we have our monthly Lecture Series to cheer us up and I must take my hat off to Martin Cherry, whose October talk was a brilliant exposition going to the core of what we were set up to do, 'discovering' the evolution of the Welsh vernacular house from the very earliest which we have found (around 1400) down to 1700, where we have many examples. It made for a riveting journey and has given us all much food for thought.

I can only aspire to the same level of delivery when I talk about **Bishop Goodman's House, Tŷ Du**, five hundred yards up the road from *Pete's Eats* in Llanberis - but of course I'll do my best to entertain!

Lastly, Margaret D., John T. and Terry W. each have had or expect to have surgery soon. I know you will join with me in wishing them well. My best wishes to you all!



Tŷ Du circa 1912. The people seated are said to be a group of students from Crewe



Godfrey Goodman of Ruthin 1583-1656 Bishop of Gloucester

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY by Margaret Dunn

While the pandemic is still causing a considerable number of mainly slight illnesses, we are gradually all working out how to start enjoying our interests and hobbies in a safe way. Now we are well into autumn there is less to do outside in our gardens, so hopefully many members are meeting together on architecturally / historically interesting walks, or Parish Project rambles seeking old houses so far only noted online or meetings in village halls etc. It has been so good to see lots of members at our monthly talks. We are very grateful to all those who have given such excellent Zoom presentations. A huge thank you! The varied topics have proved to be very popular and we have been joined by members from as far afield as the USA! Many thanks also to Peter for hosting the meetings and to Fiona for circulating the details to members. We also hear of a number who are continuing with their house history/community history research at home and in Record Offices. Do let your branch secretaries know if you need ideas or help to choose what to do next. Unfortunately, the interesting Denbighshire cruck house which was recently sampled failed to date.

The web users' group, led by Peter and Martin, has been working flat out on the **new DOWH Website**. It is hoped to launch it in the not-too-distant future. It should be both clearer and easier for members and others to find out about who we are, what we do, what we offer and how to access our re-catalogued reports. We owe our thanks to them all, and especially to Peter.

The **DOWH Houses Database Project** continues to collate and check the records on over 1,000 houses so far visited, and, as a searchable database, will aid branches and the whole group prioritize future research and activities after the pandemic. Good progress is being made and this phase of the database should be completed by the time this Newsletter is distributed. In the next phase all branch secretaries and their branch members will be invited to use their local knowledge to check the entries relating to their unitary authority. A brief guide will be circulated before this phase starts.

The **DOWH's Parishes Project** is developing at varying rates in the branches as additional parishes are included, with some branches choosing to undertake different aspects out in the parishes such as checking if houses still exist, are derelict or in ruins, and photographing house exteriors (from public footpaths etc); do contact your branch secretary to receive the formatted sheet and for news about which parishes near you still require checking. When completed this information will be added to the Houses Database after it has been checked by branches.

House History Research continues wherever members and branch secretaries select houses. The **DOWH Executive** meet each month (except August) to guide the current developments and the **Trustees** meet every 3 months; do let your branch secretaries have your ideas and comments to pass on to them. The next Trustees' Zoom meetings will be on 1st December 2021 and then 2nd March 2022.

Membership Fiona Gale and branch secretaries have started to contact anyone with incorrect or overdue subscriptions, or with Gift Aid queries. Fiona can be contacted by phone on 07718625606 or 01824 520231 and by email at membership@discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk

Programme of 2021-22 Zoom meetings

As a reminder, the following is a summary of the forthcoming attractions discussed in the last Newsletter and still to come:-

Thursday 9 December 2021 (note the day!) Geoff Brandwood - *The Pub unwrapped and the golden age of pub-building*.

Full details of the winter/spring programme for 2022 will appear on our website, but do keep the following dates free:-

12 January, 2022 Martin Bridge - *The mysteries of tree-ring dating: explaining the science of dendrochronology*

9 February, 2022 Elizabeth Parkinson - *Welsh houses in the hearth tax of 1662-1674*

9 March, 2022 John Townsend - *Bees and bee-keeping before the modern hive (1851)*

6 April, 2022 Andy Hyde - *Framing the mortice and tenon: how to think like a carpenter*

11 May, 2022 Sarah Maitland-Jones - *Introducing Henllys, Caerwys, a Tudor court house*.

FROM THE TREASURER Rosemary Brotherton

Do you shop at Amazon? If Yes, please keep reading. Are you logged in to smile.amazon.co.uk? *Discovering Old Welsh Houses* is one of their listed charities. For every purchase you make, while linked in, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price. It doesn't amount to much, but every little helps. So, take time and register yourself with us at smile.amazon.co.uk.

Discovering Old Welsh Houses 15th Anniversary 2005-2020
By Margaret Dunn



Richard Cuthbertson talks about his famous house *Plas Penmynydd*. Margaret Dunn (right) is all attention!

An anniversary celebration was held in the gardens and house at Plas Penmynydd, Anglesey on 26th September 2021, by invitation of Richard Cuthbertson, our chairman. This had been much delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Thirty people attended and there were apologies from many others. We basked the warm afternoon sunshine and followed a one-way system indoors to enjoy of delicious home-made cakes, and endless tea and coffee. Rosemary, our new treasurer relieved everyone of £5 towards our

funds, took their contact details and also sold 3 copies of *Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia* (now reduced to £15 + p.p). Margaret was presented with a lovely bouquet of roses and gave a brief overview of some highlights since 2005. Richard then spoke about his house and its families back to the period of the Tudor dynasty.

Some DOWH Highlights

It all started with the Beddgelert History Society excavating a ruined C16th house in Nantgwynant in 2000 and wanting to date some house timbers re-used in a nearby cowshed. I



Richard Cuthbertson and Margaret Dunn
at Plas Penmynydd

think that Terry Williams is the only other person who was involved from the very beginning. We first heard about dendrochronology in 2004 and obtained a grant of £400 from the Snowdonia National Park Community Grant for Prof. Nigel Nayling from Lampeter to assess timbers in this cowshed and three nearby C16th houses; in 2005 two of these houses were dated and we became 'hooked' on dating more houses.

We have since visited **over 1,100 houses across North Wales** and have **assessed around 138 for tree-ring dating**, almost entirely in collaboration with the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratories. We have completed **160 volunteer-researched house histories** and **74 professional building reports**. This would not have been possible without the financial support of many grant-aiding bodies to whom we are very grateful. **Over £252,000 has now been received in grants** and we have raised additional match-funding through subscriptions and special events. All

our Annual reports and Financial statements can be seen online at the Charity Commission (Reg No 1131782).

We thank the staff of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales, and especially Richard Suggett, for their support and advice, particularly that related to the joint publication in 2014 of the illustrated book **"Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia"**.

We started by hunting for houses in Caernarfonshire using the 1950s *Inventory* by the Royal Commission with its very useful summaries and house plans, concentrating on tree-ring dating and house history summaries. Over the years our emphasis has widened from solely tree-ring dating towards researching the overall development of domestic architecture and of the lives of the people who lived in these houses. This is indicated by the changes to our name, particularly in June 2016, moving from **"DATING"** to **"DISCOVERING" Old Welsh Houses**. With the help of local members many "unknown" old houses have been identified and some have yielded very unexpected early dates which have changed the understanding of Welsh domestic architecture.

Interest has spread across north Wales and we currently have six county branches and over 200 members. Over the years a much larger number of volunteers has become involved and the group could not have developed without the hard work of so many. We thank them all and especially those with roles as officers or trustees. Pre-2020, over 180 "live" talks had been given to a variety of large and small organisations.

In 2018 Heritage Angel Awards Wales was established to encourage voluntary activities in five aspects of Welsh heritage. *Discovering Old Welsh Houses* (DOWH) was one of thirteen organisations across Wales to enter the "Best Heritage Research, Interpretation or Recording" category and was selected as one of three organisations to go forward to the finals. These were held in Caerphilly Castle in November 2018 where DOWH received a "highly commended" certificate. DOWH was delighted by this recognition of the importance of the heritage work undertaken by our members across North Wales.

In 2020-2021, during the Covid-19 pandemic, we have held monthly Zoom lectures which have proved very popular and we have widened the scope of our bilingual quarterly Newsletters to include a range of articles contributed by members. Both these features will be continuing. This year we have also been working hard preparing a searchable database of all houses visited, developing a comprehensive parish-based search for houses built pre1700, and revising our website. We very much look forward being able to meeting together face to face both in branches and as we plan future priorities.

We were recently described as **"the most successful community architecture group in Wales - and maybe in the**

UK". So, **THANK YOU** for all your contributions to our growing and enthusiastic organization as we look forward to an exciting and interesting future.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

ANGLESEY BRANCH

Anglesey Branch Report by T.P.T.Williams and Susan Hurst

There is still little formal activity to report. A planned visit to Cefn Coch, Llanfechell had to be postponed when the owners were affected by Covid-19 and were required to isolate. It is hoped to reschedule.

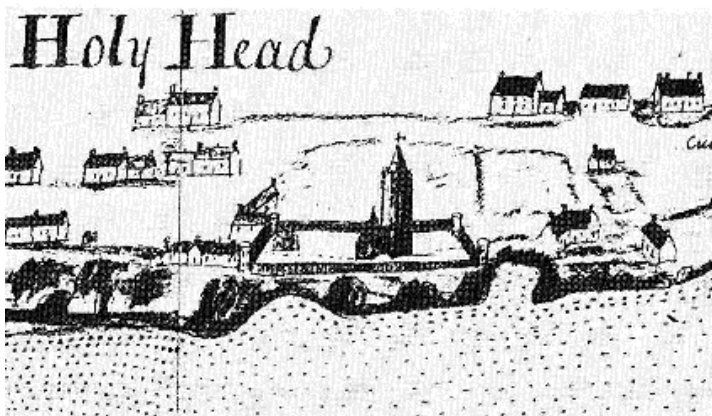
A lost Holyhead treasure by T.P.T.Williams

We in Anglesey constantly lament the lack of candidate DOWH houses to study. This is felt all the more by those who know a little of what was still to be seen only a

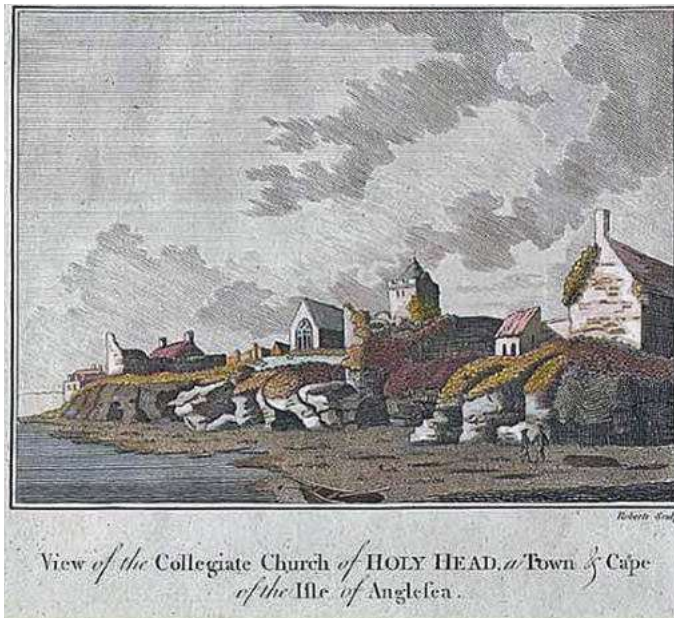


Francis Place's view of Holyhead from 1699 with the site of the C15th hospice marked

relatively few short decades ago. Thus in Holyhead as the war clouds lifted in the late 1940s there stood in Swift Square adjacent to the 4th century Roman fort, an incredible

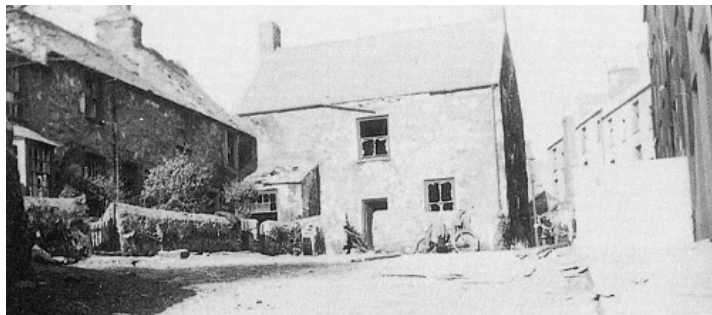


Lewis Morris's view of Holyhead from 1739-40 with the L-shaped 'Welsh' Inn at right



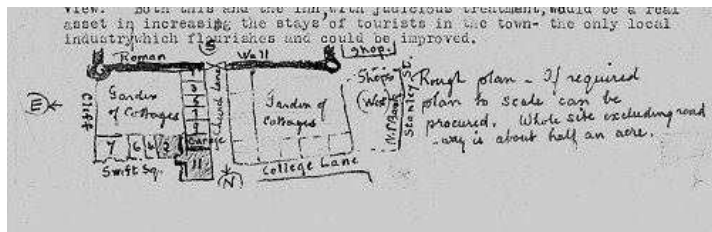
Francis Grose's 1775 painting showing the gable end of the C15th hospice at the right

medieval survivor - the pre-Reformation 15th century hospice from the days of the *clas* church of St. Cybi, embedded in the remains of an old L-shaped complex of buildings known for centuries as Swift's or the Welsh Inn. Artists including Francis Place in 1699, Lewis Morris in 1740 and Francis Grose in 1775 captured it in sketches and paintings. But by 1947 no one cared for these relics and they were soon thoughtlessly swept away. There was no CADW or Coflein then, of course. Only one heroine was concerned enough to record their passing, Holyhead's great local historian Ms Lucy Williams. In papers in the *Transactions of the Anglesey Antiquarian Society* 1947 and elsewhere, she recorded the 'fine oak trusses', 'flat-laid purlins and rafters' and 'oak wattle' revealed as the ancient house was unroofed and demolished. She lovingly cleaned and preserved sections of ancient oak panelling - where are these now, one wonders ? Lucy also secured some photos of Swift Square and the old building in its last days, one of



Lucy Williams' 1947 photo of Swift Square with the C15th hospice, later the 'Welsh' Inn, to the left

which is reproduced here together with a page from her notes of the site . How she would have revelled in the work of DOWH were she with us today !



A page of Lucy Williams' notes on Swift Square with the L-shaped C15th hospice and 'Welsh' Inn shaded

New light on the Llanddwyn Island ruins ? by Susan Hurst

With the widening of the remit of DOWH to include house history as well as pure dendrochronology, we are more moved to consider built remains now too degraded for the latter but still redolent of interest and even romance.

In 2011, excavations on Llanddwyn Island, off the Newborough coast of Anglesey, uncovered built remains associated with St. Dwynwen's ruined medieval church. Currently the excavator and SLR Consultants are conducting geophysical survey there¹ and speculate that a medieval priory may have been converted into a parish church some time after the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the late 1530s. It is at least as likely that the church, with its associated cult of St. Dwynwen, formed an important centre of pilgrimage, as celebrated in the C14th poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym.



Moses Griffith's 1770s painting of Llanddwyn Church - note the distinctive round tower, now utterly lost

Edward I's conquest of Wales reached as far as Llanfaes in the east of Anglesey, then the principal sea port of Gwynedd. His nearby planted borough of Beaumaris required that Llanfaes be effectively transplanted to form a new borough near the western commotal centre at Rhosyr, which became Newborough. The inhabitants, however, just got on with their lives providing archaeological evidence largely lost on the mainland. The most famous cleric associated with the Llanddwyn church complex in the 15th century was Dean Kyffin, the notorious 'Deon Ddu' who

with others plotted the successful landing of Henry VII in 1485. In the 1770s Thomas Pennant could see what he called 'the small ruins of the prebendal house' which he thought to be Kyffin's residence. Foundations of probable secular buildings have indeed been found both adjacent to the church and on the adjacent mainland in the sandhills forming the coastal hinterland. The former have been referred to as the Sexton's house or sometimes the Rectory. It is much to be hoped that the present work may throw new light on these.

St. Dwynwen's church was already in ruins by 1742 as is clear from a contemporary print by the Buck brothers. There

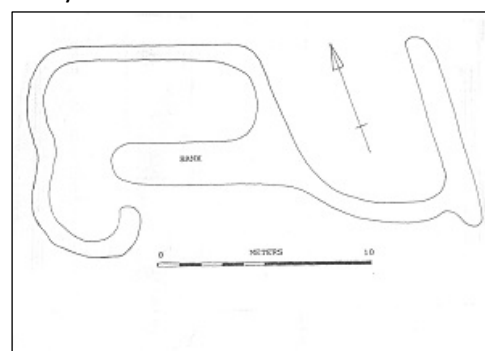


Llanddwyn church - house ruins at left *Buck brothers 1742*

is a strong tradition that its roof timbers were reused in the construction of the Abermenai ferry boat, the subsequent sinking of which, with much loss of life, was seen by the superstitious, as divine retribution for this impiety.

The current excavator suggests that much stone may have been taken from the church ruins in order to build the two lighthouses on the island. It may also have gone towards the construction of the pilots cottages, associated outhouses and the large Pilots Cove breakwater.

To the north of the church are fields that were farmed by a small community of crofting families between the 18th and 20th centuries. Evidence is said to suggest there were as many as four or five families on the island. As well as farming they would have assisted in the upkeep and running of the two lighthouses and pilot boats. The last residents left in the early 1900s.



Plan of the 'small ruins of the prebendal house' *After Hugh Owen 1920*

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-58925766>

CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

Peter Masters draws the attention of members to the fact that *British Archaeology No. 178* has a detailed article about the medieval roof of Westminster Hall - *Secrets in the roof of Westminster Hall* by Dan Miles of the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory; a well illustrated and in depth report of this important project. See also his *Tree ring dating of Westminster Hall, Palace of Westminster, London. Pilot study* Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory Report 2019/30.

MERIONETH BRANCH

Branch Meeting Wednesday 8 December 'Discovering Medieval Dolgellau' by Martin Cherry

Sounds unlikely? But an hour or so's walk around the town can throw a lot of light on how it might have looked in the Middle Ages and how later changes respected the ancient street pattern. A relaxed stroll with the option of some light pre-Christmas refreshments to follow - a cup of coffee, a glass of wine, a sandwich or something hot at a local cafe or hostelry - venues to be confirmed when we know the numbers attending. **Meet 11.00 under the arches in Eldon Square (outside Tŷ Siamas).** Let Martin know if you can come and if you wish to join us for refreshments afterwards. E-mail martincherry@btinternet.com - by 15 November if possible.

A Merioneth oddity - or is it? by John Townsend



Garth-gell

Between Llanelltyd and Bontddu is a small valley called Cwm Mynach. It runs from the Mawddach estuary north for just over 4 miles, after which it merges into the hinterland of the Rhinog mountains. There is a small community called



The ruined house

Tai Cynhaeaf at the bottom of the valley. My wife and I live in an offshoot of Cwm Mynach called Nant Cesailgwm.

We are keen walkers and, like others, were restricted in how far we could travel from home during the pandemic, so we explored some of the more minor paths in the area. When we go on our walks, we are always on the lookout for old houses. On a walk on the west side of the valley we came across a large derelict farmstead we didn't know about. I took some photographs and then we continued on our way over to the Clogau gold mines.

Once we got home, I did a quick check to see if the farmstead had a name on the current OS map - it didn't. So, more investigation was needed. Although the local Archives were closed because of Covid restrictions, this was not a



The associated shed ruins

problem as all the initial research could be done online. I started with the OS six-inch 1888-1913 map (the Merioneth County survey was undertaken between 1873 and 1888) which showed the farmstead but without a name.

Then to the tithe map of 1842. Unfortunately, in this area the maps and apportionments are poor; only the landowners' boundaries, the occupiers of the land, field and

farm names are shown, but no house names, just red blobs on buildings. The farm name for this area was shown as Garth-gell which I know as a Victorian house near to the Cwm Mynach road, about ¾ mile north of the farmstead - so the tithe map didn't help.

Onward to the O.S. 1st Series map of 1838 (the Merioneth County survey was undertaken between 1805-1838) - and success! The farmstead is shown as Garth-gell. This was a complete surprise, especially as where the current Garth-gell now stands, the map shows a house called Cae-pellaf. A bit of measuring and map overlays confirmed that the current Garth-gell is built on the site of Cae-pellaf.

So, what appears to have happened is that sometime after 1805 and before 1888 Cae-pellaf had been pulled down and rebuilt as the 'new' Garth-gell - the old farmstead being abandoned (the owners of Garth-gell believe the house was built in 1805, which would fit). Incidentally, the name change seems only to have affected the house since the substantial woods to the north of the current Garth-gell are still called Coed Cae-pellaf.

I've not come across a house name change like this before. Normally, the original house name remains when it's rebuilt, but not in this case. Is this an oddity in Cwm Mynach, or do other areas covered by DOWH have similar examples? If so, please let me know via merioneth@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk and I'll write a follow-up article. Any DOWH member who wants information on how to access the maps mentioned in this article, please use the email above.

beekeeping that can still be seen in various structures on farms and in gardens. No doubt Peter Masters will be announcing further technical details in due course. Ed.



Penarth-fawr, near Criccieth. Built at some time after 1476. The so-called 'spere truss' echoes the aisled halls of the princes.

Insights from tree-ring dating on the houses of North Wales Summary of a lecture by Martin Cherry via Zoom

The second Zoom presentation of the 2021-2 season was given by Martin Cherry on 13 October. As it was not recorded, a summary is given here.

161 houses in the north have been tree-ring dated (up from 26 in 1994), many of them yielding dates for several phases. A tree-ring date refers to the time of felling, often very precisely to the season as well as the year, and it is generally accepted that building would have followed within a year or two while the wood was still soft and malleable. After that time timber becomes increasingly difficult to fashion. (A note for your diary: Martin Bridge, of the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory, our main tree-dating partners, as it were, will be giving a Zoom lecture on **Wednesday 12 January**²)

With the exception of some ex-situ timbers from Basingwerk Abbey, Flintshire (c. 1385), nothing in the north has been tree-ring dated to before 1400. Clearly, buildings survive from before that time (notably the stone castles) but there is no convincing explanation for this 1400 threshold. One or two early castle doors and thirteenth-century church roofs have been found further south, but the

² *The mysteries of tree-ring dating. Explaining the science of dendrochronology at 7 pm.*



17th century bee-keepers at work. *Contemporary print.*

Bees and bee keeping before the modern hive (1851)

On **March 9th 2022** John Townsend, a DOWH trustee and keen beekeeper, will talk **via ZOOM** about honey bees and bee-keeping from the post-medieval period up to 1851 when the beehive as we understand it today was invented. He will cover the importance of bee products (wax, honey and mead) during this period, as well as the physical signs of

earliest scientific date for a house in Wales is 1402 (in Breconshire) and, for our region, 1420 (Aberconwy House in Conwy, pictured). Some have suggested that the wars



Hendre, Llandrillo. Built around 1502/3, possibly on former bond lands, manipulating traditional land law a little before Henry VII made it legal to do so.

between Glyndŵr and the Lancastrians might account for it but, while damage was extensive, it strains credibility to maintain that nothing survived. More likely is the inherent obsolescence of the building methods used in earlier centuries; common-rafter roofs (once common in churches) have a tendency to rack and keel over, while the earliest



Aberconwy House, Conwy. The earliest tree-ring dated house in Wales (1420), reflecting the confidence of a new breed of merchants in a town severely damaged by Owain Glyndŵr.

cruck-framed buildings, documented in North Wales in the fourteenth century, may well have had their cruck feet embedded in the earth and so highly susceptible to rot.

Nevertheless, it is curious that in none of the fifteenth century houses are any old timbers re-used from earlier buildings. There seems to have been a conscious decision to wipe the slate clean and start anew. As Richard Suggett has

pointed out, there was a widespread rebuilding, on the part of wealthy merchants, of houses in towns (some of which we know were badly damaged in the wars, as with Aberconwy House) or by great lords asserting their authority in buildings such as the court at Ruthin (1421). More research will doubtless throw light on what lay behind the substantial number of gentry country houses such as Penarth-fawr near Criccieth that sprang up across the region. (More house histories, please!) Probably built by a new generation of powerful administrators appointed by the crown, these men also had roots in the ancient Welsh dynasties: they had a foot in both camps and helped to foster a new consensus that prepared the path for the Tudor settlement. They believed (or possibly they knew



Cae-glas, Llanfrothen. A 'modern' fully storeyed house built around 1547/8. A prosperous cattle farm: the owner and many like him were commercial money lenders and not at all 'near the margin of existence'.

from houses that still survived in their time) that the Welsh princes and aristocrats lived in great aisled halls and their own new houses self-consciously referred to these - as can be seen in Penarth-fawr (pictured). Their houses were a statement of current power and ancient lineage.

By around 1500, a buoyant land market, stimulated by various arrangements designed to circumvent the tradition of subdividing estates, created opportunities for families of more modest status - what might in later centuries be called yeomen farmers - who built substantial cruck-framed houses with open halls, such as Hendre, Llandrillo of 1502/3 (pictured). The legal changes introduced by Henry VII hastened this process, although it took many families two or three generations to acquire the wherewithal (and perhaps also a sense of security) to build afresh - and in a new style. Prosperous cattle farmers, for example, began to build quite modern houses, floored throughout (such as Cae Glas, Llanfrothen, 1547/8), although it took many decades before the old symbol of hospitality, the open hall, was completely jettisoned. By that time, families of gentry status were adopting the new fashions of the Renaissance.

A longer and more fully illustrated version of this summary will be placed on our website in due course.

DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH

Denbighshire Branch Report by Janice Dale

I organised our first event on 1st October for a walk around Llandrillo village, which I also threw open to villagers - the number who turned up outnumbered DOWHG members. It turned out very successfully and I have been asked to repeat for more people of our village - so if any DOWHG members want to join the 2nd walk, do please contact me. I have had offers of a couple of house visits close to Llandrillo, which I will be organising in the near future.



Earl of Dudley Vanity Fair 18 June 1870
Carlo Pellegrini, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Help needed by Janice Dale

John Williams Lord Ward became 1st Earl of Dudley in 1860. According to *Great Landowners of Great Britain* of 1883 he owned 4472 acres in Merioneth and I have been trying to find records for all these acres, when his seats were in Worcestershire and Staffordshire. In my parish of Llandrillo he owned 848 acres and several houses in 1827 [from a Llandrillo rate book] - but where else in Merioneth did he have an interest ?

I e-mailed the Dudley R.O. who replied comprehensively, but do not hold any information on Lord Ward's Welsh properties. I have tried *TNA Discovery* but there is apparently nothing there. Nor is there anything in the Gwynedd archive schedules. The N.E. Wales archives at Hawarden do have some deeds, supposedly deposited from Thomas Kenrick 1837 [D/BC 6288] by trustees under the will

of the late Earl of Dudley. I had great hopes of this and bought a digital copy, only to find it doesn't mention any properties at all, just lists the parties to transactions. So my plea is, does anyone know where I might be able to find out more about Lord Ward/Earl of Dudley's Welsh holdings? Or if you come across any information, do please let me know !

FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

Flintshire branch report by Wally and Margaret Barr

Since our first post-lockdown outing around the historical town of Caerwys in July this year, we have held two branch meetings. In September, 11 of us met in Llanasa Village Hall and afterwards watched a DVD on the repair and restoration of old timber-framed buildings. In October, 10 of us met in Caerwys Town Hall to continue with the DVD, looking at stone-built buildings this time, followed by an interesting discussion on old buildings in the county (see photo).

Our branch meetings have of course followed Covid rules and we have taken care to be socially-distanced. Progress with the Parish Project and House Histories continues.



A note about summer bat visitors to our houses and farm buildings by Irene Brightmer

I am sure some of you had the pleasure of hosting bats in the eaves of your house this summer, and saw them flying off at dusk to hunt for insects. They seem to favour old houses and farm buildings, but new houses are also occupied sometimes.

If the bats were numerous it is likely that they were nursery roosts of 'common pipistrelles', which is the most widespread British bat species and one of the smallest in size. Or you may have had the related 'soprano pipistrelles', a species only differentiated in the 1990s by the higher notes of their call. Soprano pipistrelles create larger nursery roosts than their lower pitched relatives. Pipistrelles tend to return to the same roost each year. We have had soprano

pipistrelles visiting us for over ten years; they first came following an illegal disturbance to their previous roost.

These nursery roosts consist entirely of pregnant females, which gather in May to prepare for the birth of their pups in late June/early July. Like most bat species the pipistrelles give birth to only one pup per year. For their first month or so the pups are fed solely with the mother's milk. Then the pups learn to fly and are able to hunt for insects on their own. Young pups learning to fly are at their most vulnerable, falling from heights and being predated by cats etc.

As the bats leave the eaves of our roofs each summer



Soprano pipistrelle bat. Hard to differentiate from its cousin, the common pipistrelle bat, this widespread species hunts close to water and can be found in woods and gardens

evening at dusk, their direction of travel is towards water or woodland where each individual catches and devours thousands of insects on the wing every night. Their droppings, which are dry and crumbly, consist of the minute remains of insect wings etc.

Bats are mammals but have an unusual life cycle. At the age of one or two years the adults reach maturity and mate in the autumn, following dispersal from the summer roost. The female retains the sperm during hibernation, until the spring when she ovulates, and only then does fertilisation take place and she becomes pregnant.

From their arrival at the roost in May, the pregnant females emerge each evening at dusk, about 20 minutes after sunset. Precise timing depends on the temperature and the light. Around the solstice this year there was no activity in our roost of soprano pipistrelles until 21.45 (BST). They stay out foraging for insects for several hours until the light breaks near dawn, and they return. During daytime the bats are inactive and silent, and a mother sleeps with her pup curled up under her wings.

Bats are very long-lived for their size, compared with mice for example, and may live for 20 years. The adults have few predators being nocturnal, and it is believed that

living in colonies helps them to develop immunity to disease.

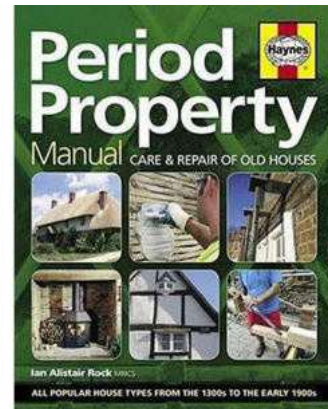
The UK population of pipistrelles has been declining in recent decades; like all bats they are protected by law, with heavy fines imposed for interfering with roosts. Reasons for the decline include modern agricultural practices, as well as renovations to residential and agricultural buildings and the use of toxic timber treatment.

For various reasons bats have an unjustified bad press. **But bats do not damage our properties and they pose no known health risk to humans in the UK.** If you want to know more about your summer residents you can contact the groups of local enthusiasts, the champions of bats - they will be pleased to hear from you, and may help you to do a count. It will all help to add to our knowledge about these important and fascinating tiny flying mammals. Try the 'Bat Conservation Trust' or your local bat group such as the 'Clwyd Bat Group', the 'Gwynedd Bat Group', etc, all easy to find online.

BOOK REVIEWS by Richard Cuthbertson

There is a steady stream of interesting books published about subjects that may interest our members and it seems to me that it is worth having a section of the Newsletter dedicated to this. The views expressed would always be those of the Author, but it will give us all a chance to know better what's out there. I hope 100 to 200 words would usually be enough. I have recently read two books which I review below.

Period Property Manual, care and repair of old houses by Ian Alistair Rock, MRICS, published by Haynes.



Yes, this is the old Haynes Manual that many will know from our teenage years was an essential guide to keeping our old cars on the road ! Now it's about a clear and simple guide to looking after old houses.

In the last five years the cost of building and Maintenance work has considerably increased, and even if you can afford it, can you find a Builder you can trust to do the work in a professional manner?

This well presented Manual gives us tips and clues about

how to do the work and might even encourage some of us to do simple jobs ourselves. It gives clear and well illustrated advice and might well be shared with potential contractors before work starts just to make sure that they understand your requirements. It is an easy read and simply to run through its pages gives us plenty of informative insights that will help us understand and care for our houses. I see it rather as a home owner's Bible which can easily and cheaply be bought second hand from eBay, ABE Books, or Amazon. Thoroughly recommended.

House and Cottage Restoration by Hugh Lander, published by Acanthus Books



This book differs from the first in that it does not cover the techniques of house repair in detail, but gives many lists of do-s and do-nots, in all the many situations which may face the owners of all kinds of period property. It is profusely illustrated with good photos, and simply by looking at these you will greatly increase your knowledge of period taste and design. Sometimes the advice given is not so much about what is right but about the author's view; but in general it gives a sound base on which to make decisions and I am happy to recommend it as an important contribution as to why Old Property can give so much enjoyment. Buy it on eBay, ABE Books, or Amazon for a few pounds.

FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Stop Press - Caernarfonshire Branch activity by Margaret Dunn

The following report from Margaret was too late for inclusion in sequence in the already assembled Newsletter so

is given below. Ed.

Our second attempt to hold a guided historical and architectural walk around Beddgelert village successfully took place on 4th November in dry and sunny, albeit chilly, weather. Following late cancellations there were only five of us but it was an enjoyable afternoon and it was great to meet together. We discussed the impact the rivers Glaslyn and Colwyn had in dividing the village into three parts, each mainly owned by one owner who determined when and how that part of the village was developed and what styles of architecture were used.

Apart from the medieval priory church and two sixteenth century farmhouses, we noted only early and mid nineteenth century houses. On the village outskirts small houses were erected for quarrymen, labourers and those servicing the needs of early tourists. Towards the village centre almost alpine-looking guest houses, inns and hotels were erected later in the century. The 1802 opening of the Beddgelert hotel followed the opening of the Turnpike roads and triggered the popularity of Beddgelert as a major tourism centre for which it continues to be well-known.

It was agreed that further outside/community hall meetings should be arranged to encourage us to restart our research.

Members' publications

The Old Houses of Llanddulas and Rhyd y Foel by Gill A. Jones and Wendy A. Williams. 2021. Mentions almost 100 local houses. Contact the DOWH Conwy branch for further details. See the DOWH website under Publications/Booklets.

Llanddulas and Rhyd y Foel - the Story of Eighteen Schools by Gill A. Jones and Wendy A. Williams. 2021. Contact the DOWH Conwy branch for further details. See the DOWH website under Publications/Booklets.

The Forebears of Anne Lloyd and those of her two husbands Thomas Yale and Theophilus Eaton by Gill A. Jones. 2017. See the DOWH website under Publications/Booklets.

A quest for Cymer in Edeirnion and its barons. Part 3: Gwerclas in focus by Jenny Lees. *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*. 2021. Vol XVIII part IV pp 247-356.





DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



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CYLCHLYTHYR 40 Mawrth 2022

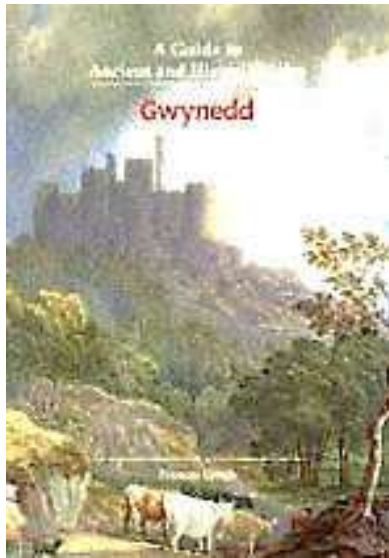
NEWSLETTER 40 March 2022

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members

FROM THE CHAIR by Richard Cuthbertson

Slowly the evenings seem lighter and we all begin to think, with Chaucer, of going on pilgrimages. A brave band turned up on a very cold miserable day to look round Ty Du in Llanberis earlier in January. The day could hardly have been worse weatherwise, but they all showed extreme fortitude. This set me thinking about how fortunate we are in the group to have such enthusiasm. How fortunate too, to have so many members with specialist knowledge in our areas of interest. If we are to go on pilgrimages we need a good guide and none could surpass the wonderful books by one



of our members, Frances Lynch, where in her *A Guide to Ancient and Historic Wales. Gwynedd (and Powys)* published by CADW 1995, she effortlessly takes us round the built heritage of Gwynedd and Powys. Each site is chosen with care to be representative of its type (sometimes uniquely so!). Excellent information is given as to where you can park your car and how far you have to walk to reach each

destination. There are more than 300 choices, which would keep the most enthusiastic of our members going for years and years. If you have not got copies I think your local libraries will be able to find them for you. They are a treasure chest of interesting outings, invaluable in these days of Covid, when it may be sometime before we can return to our much loved excursions. Thank you all so much for your support.

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY by Margaret Dunn

We hope that you enjoyed your Christmas, even if it may not have included all your usual activities. I had a different but contented time self-isolating prior to a successful operation, while my husband briefly visited the family. Here we are already in February and we wish everyone a peaceful, healthy and active 2022. Maybe you will soon be busy searching the newly released 1921 census returns! It has been good to hear of several face-to-face branch meetings, carefully organised to keep us all safe. The visit to Ty Du, Llanberis, was very well attended despite the bad weather. Probably many of us are looking forward to meeting up again, at least outside for the time being. Hopefully opportunities will increase as the weather improves and the virus declines.

It has been so good to see so many members at our monthly talks. We are very grateful to all those who have given such excellent Zoom presentations. A huge thank you! The varied topics have proved to be very popular, with around 50 at the talk by Dr Martin Bridge, and we have been joined by members from as far afield as the USA! Many thanks also to Peter for hosting the meetings and to Fiona for circulating the details to members. We also hear of a number who are continuing with their house history / community history research at home and in Record Offices. Do let your branch secretaries know if you need ideas or help to choose what to do next.

DOWH Website We were delighted that the new DOWH website was launched in early December 2021. We do hope that you are enjoying using it. It should be both clearer and easier for members and others to find out about who we are, what we do, what we offer and how to access our re-catalogued reports. We owe all the website users' group our thanks, and especially to Peter for the huge amount of work he has undertaken. We are currently reviewing the layout of individual reports and adding additional reports as

we receive them. Please do let us know if you are aware of any reports not currently on the website, especially any with which you have been involved.

The **DOWH Houses Database Project** continues to collate and check the records on over 1,000 houses so far visited, and, as a searchable database, will aid branches and the whole group prioritize future research and activities after the pandemic. There have been some unavoidable delays but this phase of the database should soon be completed. In the next phase all branch secretaries and their branch members will be invited to use their local knowledge to check the entries relating to their unitary authority. A brief guide will be circulated before that phase starts.

The **DOWH's Parishes Project** continues to develop at varying rates in the branches as additional parishes are included, with some branches choosing to undertake different aspects out in the parishes such as checking if houses still exist, are derelict or in ruins, and photographing house exteriors (from public footpaths etc); do contact your branch secretary to receive the formatted sheet and for news about which parishes near you still require checking. When completed this information will be added to the Houses Database after it has been checked by branches.

House History Research also continues wherever members and branch secretaries select houses. The DOWH **Executive** meet each month (except August) to guide the current developments and the **Trustees** meet every 3 months; do let your branch secretaries have your ideas and comments to pass on to them. The next Trustees' Zoom meeting will be on 2nd March 2022. Details of the **June AGM and Annual Lecture** will be circulated when the details have been confirmed.

Please remember to renew your **Membership** by 1st April. (Individual membership £15, Joint membership £20). Fiona Gale and branch secretaries have been contacting anyone with incorrect or overdue subscriptions, or with Gift Aid queries; Fiona can be contacted by email at membership@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk or by phone on 07718625606 or 01824 520231.

Zoom lecture series (all lectures at 7 pm) Details supplied by Martin Cherry

Wednesday 9 February 'North Wales houses and their occupants in the hearth tax of 1662-1674' **Elizabeth Parkinson**, Senior research fellow at The Centre for Hearth Tax Research at Roehampton and an affiliate at the Cambridge group for the History of Population and Social Structure. Author of *The Glamorgan Hearth Tax Assessment of 1670*, South Wales Record Society (1994).

Tax records may be repetitive but not necessarily tedious. Dr Parkinson has studied the hearth tax records for well over twenty years across many of the counties in England and Wales. She will explain in her February talk how best to understand the documents having first located the most legible. Using several examples of old Welsh houses, she will show how teasing out details from the tax records can add immeasurably to the study of a house and its occupants.

Wednesday 23 February 2022 'The Homes of our Ancestors 50,000,000 years ago to 1400 AD' **Richard Cuthbertson**, DOWH Chairman

A bit of a tongue in cheek overview for your edification and entertainment!

Wednesday 9 March 'Bees and bee keeping before the modern hive (1851)' **John Townsend**, a DOWH trustee and keen beekeeper'.

John will be talking about honey-bees and bee-keeping from the post-medieval period up to 1851 when the beehive as we understand it today was invented. He will cover the importance of bee products (wax, honey and mead) as well as the physical signs of bee-keeping that can still be seen in various structures on farms and in gardens. Two further lectures will follow, so keep these dates in your diary as well. Fuller details nearer the time.

Wednesday 6 April 'Framing and the mortice and tenon: how to think like a carpenter' **Andy Hyde**, Member of DOWH and the VAG, furniture maker and carpenter.

Andy will look at the long history of the mortice and tenon and its critical role in the development of timber framing and will raise interesting questions about why we develop traditions as we do.



Henllys from Caerwys main street

Wednesday 11 May 'Introducing Henllys, Caerwys: a Jacobean court house' **Sarah Maitland-Jones**, DOWH member and owner of Henllys.

Legend has it that in 1523 and 1567 this ancient structure was host to the Tudor Eisteddfodau granted by Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. Sarah proposes a better candidate for these events but, in a 'virtual tour' of the house, will explain how it has been re-purposed over the centuries and may contain some surprisingly early fabric. She will welcome input from the audience!

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

CONWY BRANCH

Conwy Group were well represented at the Tŷ Du visit in Llanberis. Mr D. & Mrs G. Jones, Mr & Mrs R. Brotherton, Mr Richard Jones and Mrs A. Morgan. Despite the exceptionally windy, wet weather we all enjoyed the visit. Thanks to Richard Cuthbertson for the visit to a house with an interesting history, and the tea and coffee! Gill Jones and Jane Parry-Evans have also been working on house and family histories.



Granite memorial plaque to Conwy Scouts

New memorial to Conwy scouts who died in World War 2
by Ray Castle, Group Scout Leader of 1st Conwy Scouts and Rowen Scout Camp Warden

In 2020 DOWHG paid (*from the Conwy Tesco Community Projects grant fund*) for the publication of a booklet giving information about Conwy scouts (established in 1910) who died in World War 2. A local funeral director, Phil Lambert (an ex-Conwy Scout) has donated a granite plaque listing the scouts names. This plaque has been installed in a new wall at Rowen Scout Camp in the Conwy Valley. On 14th November 2021 (Remembrance Sunday) a ceremony was held at the camp to commemorate those fallen scouts and a wreath was laid by the plaque. There were several speakers, a prayer and one minute's silence. The silence was ended by

piper Danny Blair, a 1st Conwy Young Leader, playing the lament "Flowers of the Forest". This piece was composed in 1513 after the Battle of Flodden Field in which the Scots were defeated by English forces. The booklet details can be seen on the website "History Points". The lament played by Danny can be seen on Youtube by searching "Conwy Scouts War Memorial Nov 2021".

Inventories of Personal Effects Part 2 by Gill Jones
See Newsletter no. 21 June 2017 for Part 1

Some of the most important items included in inventories were the beds and bedding. They represented a high proportion of the total value of all the household goods, which is why they were passed down from generation to generation. Bedrooms were often used as places to receive visitors, and so a house owner had an opportunity to show off his wealth by having very expensive beds and bedding.

The early beds had fairly simple frames. A **'tester'** or canopy was added as early as the 13th century, but this was not initially attached to the bed but suspended from the ceiling. Later, half testers began to appear. They were attached to a high headboard and had curtains attached to them. Some inventories include an item called a **'hilling'**. This term seems to have been used for a variety of different types of covers. Listed as follows - **'testour, three curteyns and the hilling'** - it suggests a type of canopy or roof-like structure over the bed. In other contexts, it may have been a coverlet or a cover for a table.

The more elaborate four poster beds arrived from Europe in about the 15th century. They were usually made of oak and were often heavily carved and hung with expensive



Half tester

fabrics which kept out draughts and provided some privacy. The hangings were described as '**curtains**' and '**valances**'. The beds were often raised high off the floor, sometimes so high that it was necessary for step stools to be needed in order to climb onto them. This type of bed frame was generally known as a '**standing bedstead**'. It often had a '**truckle**' or '**trundle bed**' underneath which could be rolled out for a servant or sometimes a child to sleep on.



A modern version of a standing bedstead and truckle bed

This painting of the 'bed of the Tudors' was sketched by Edward Pugh of Ruthin whilst on his walking tour of North Wales at the end of the 18th century. He discovered the bed at a nearby house. It had apparently been purchased from a sale at Plas Penmynydd. He wrote in his journal,

"Mr Williams has now in his house a valuable relic, which, until lately, was not known to have been such; it is an ancient bed of the Tudors, made of oak, nearly square, and very low, being only about thirteen inches from the floor; it has four pillars, beautifully turned. The design of the ornamental headpiece is very elegant, and curiously carved; in the centre are the coat of arms and supporters; on each side of which are four Egyptian Termini, supporting the architrave. He had bought it for nine shillings, not supposing, from its odd and unfashionable appearance, that it was so valuable an acquisition. The bed is a little injured by worms, but when the age is considered, it must appear to have been well preserved. It has upon it in some places small marks of gold leaf; whence we may suppose it was gilt in better days."

Making a bed

A bed was made up of several layers. Ropes or woven straps

were strung across the bed frame through holes in the side rails and the footboard and headboard to support the mattress. The first layer was an 'under mattress' or '**pallet**' which was firmly stuffed with wool, straw or chaff. The bags which formed the outer cover of the mattresses were known as '**ticks**'. These were made of closely woven material so that the filling could not escape. Next came the '**featherbed**', which would have been expensive and was also well stuffed. They were often valued according to their weight. In the 1740 inventory of Thomas Parry of Rhos Fynach in Llandrillo yn Rhos, there is mention of several sets of '**featherbeds and boulders**' which together weighed 90lbs, 80lbs, 72lbs and two of 65lbs, and three pillows weighing 7lbs. In total they were valued at £6 5s 3d. The inventory also mentions '**bedsticks**'. These were short posts



Plas Penmynydd - the bed of the Tudors

which slotted into the side frames of a bed in order to keep the mattresses and bedding in place. Plas Mawr in Conwy has some examples.

Less wealthy people would probably have had a '**flock bed**' stuffed with bits and pieces of wool, but even those were valuable enough to be mentioned in wills. Next came a '**bolster**' which stretched the whole width of the bed and was covered by a '**head sheet**'. These were gradually replaced by pillows with covers known as '**pillow beres**'. The sheets came next and could be of linen, silk or cotton. Some of the best ones were made of Rennes linen from Brittany. In the Inventory of Henry Williams' of Maes y Castell, dated 1658/9, there were ten '**Holland pillow beares**', five '**flaxen pillowbeares**'; nine pairs of fine '**sheetes**'; fifteen pairs of '**Hampton sheetes**'. These were also all of very fine quality. Henry Williams was descended from the Penrhyn and Cochwillan families. He led a very profligate lifestyle and eventually had to sell most of his possessions, including Cochwillan Hall.

Warmth came from the following layers – blankets which could be made of wool, '**fustian**' (a coarse fabric made from

a mixture of cotton and linen); **'quilts or counterpanes'** (stuffed with down, flock or feathers). The finest ones were made of two layers of silk with a down filling quilted together with a running stitch. The top surfaces would also be decorated with embroidery or appliquéd designs. Less affluent households were more likely to have had cotton counterpanes with flock fillings and be simply decorated with quilted patterns. Finally, the uppermost bed layer was a **'coverlet'** (bedspread) which being on show, was also often very richly decorated.

Servants or poorer people generally slept on **'pallets'** (straw filled mattresses). Their blankets or **'caddows'** would have been made of coarse wool. Henry Williams' inventory also includes some of these less expensive fabrics - a **'red cadowe'**, a **'green cadowe'** and one **'coarse cadowe'**, and **'searen fustian pillowes'** (waxed fabric). In the porch chamber, where a servant appears to have slept, there was **'one truckle bedstead, one flockebed, one boulster, one cadowe, one blankett, one little table, one hilling'** (table covering) valued at £1 10s.

ANGLESEY BRANCH

Our Tŷ Du visit by Jan Lewis, John Davies and their dog *Bobadog*

It was a dark and stormy day when John and I attended the society visit to Tŷ Du, which happened in the pouring rain and a howling gale! It might have been a terrible experience, but after doing so few trips out during the Covid pandemionium, it was actually a delightful experience - lovely to meet up with members (even if we all looked like drowned rats), and interesting to see the house in real life (much better for me than pictures). Must have been an idyllic spot before the factory arrived! Thanks to Richard for providing the follow-up visit and further talk about the history and plans for the future; also for his kindness and forethought in bringing drink-making facilities, plus keeping his van warm for anyone needing shelter. It was a treat for us afterwards to leave our sodden anoraks in the car, and retire for sustenance to Pete's Eats. We look forward to more hysterical historical excursions in the coming year.

CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

Hafodydd Brithion - one name, two farmhouses
by Margaret Dunn

In DOWH Newsletter 39, December 2021, (page 6) John Townsend's article titled "A Merioneth Oddity - or is it?" concluded by requesting information of any other farmhouses where the house name had been moved to another house on the same land. I have no idea how rare this is, or who else knows of other examples, but it appears



Hafodydd Brithion today

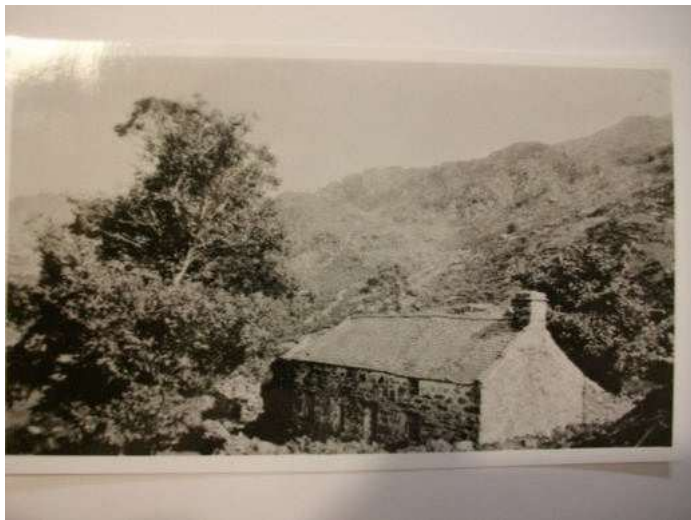
to have also occurred at *Hafodydd Brithion*, formerly in Nanmor township, also originally in Merioneth. However, in 1895 Nanmor became part of Beddgelert parish, Caernarfonshire, and is now within Gwynedd.

Hafodydd Brithion is a large upland farm and sheepwalk stretching from the watershed running from Cnicht towards Moel Siabod along the S.E. side of the Nantgwynant valley, reaching downhill as far as the upper boundary of the former monastic lands granted by Llewelyn to the Cistercian house of Aberconwy founded circa 1189 and which became the Caernarfonshire / Merionethshire county boundary. The old house is situated at NGR SH 641494, approx. 700 ft (250m) above sea level, lying along the slope at the end of a partly engineered unsurfaced track running N.E. from the ancient track running from the former Glaslyn estuary of Traeth Mawr near Aberglaslyn, towards Pen y Gwryd, Llanberis and also to the Conwy valley. Although thought very remote now, it was originally close to both the medieval route described above, and also another ancient track crossing the *col* between Nantgwynant and Dolwyddelan, with its castle and routes south and eastward towards London.



Old Hafodydd Brithion today

The old *Hafodydd Brithion* was a stone-built storeyed farmhouse. It is first recorded in the 1623 Ardudwy Crown Rental which states “Gr’ ap Re’ pro Hafodydd Brithion Os 3d”. A Gr’ ap Re’ also paid rent of 1s 0d [5 p] on Sygun Uchaf in the Nanmor township. That house, near Beddgelert, may be that now called Sygyn Fawr, as the earlier ownership is linked. A Gruffydd ap Robert’s son Robert, of Sygyn, was living in 1626. (J.E.Griffith, *Pedigrees of Anglesey and Caernarvonshire Families*, 1911, p.220).



Old Hafodydd Brithion circa 1920

Hafodydd Brithion was part of a large sheepwalk of over 1,000 acres which, under the pressures of increasing population later became divided into two separate farms, *Hafodydd Brithion* (E. ‘summer dwellings in the speckled uplands’) and *Llwyn yr Hwch* (E. ‘grove of the sow [female pig]'). (C. A. Gresham, Nanmor Deudraeth, *Journal of Merioneth Historical and Record Society* 1978, vii. pp. 97-121.) By the eighteenth century the tenants had had generations of relations farming various farms over the watershed in Dolwyddelan. Today stock is still gathered, sorted and the Dolwyddelan sheep returned to the adjacent Dolwyddelan farms over the mountain ridge. The (in)famous William Jones (1782-1863), a *Hafodydd Brithion* shepherd lad, gained several occupational opportunities with local gentry families, eventually married an heiress at Bath, and as William Lloyd Caldecot Esq. became the sheriff of Caernarfon in 1822 - 23.

Early in the 1800s, *Hafodydd Brithion* and its neighbour, *Llwyn yr Hwch* were still part of the small estate of the Roberts family of Sygun Fawr, and by 1828 both had been left to a relation, David White Griffith of Bodegroes, Pwllheli. In 1853, to pay off his debts, he sold them to Henry McKellar who died in 1862 leaving the Sygun estate to his wife. On her death in 1886 the estate passed to her son in law Samuel Wix who in 1889 sold *Hafodydd Brithion* to I. O. I. Priestley, the owner of another local estate. By 1909 he was planning to repair the old farmhouse and outbuildings. However, the Vawdrey family of Plas Gwynant bought

Hafodydd Brithion which adjoined their small estate and, around 1911 decided to build a modern house on a new site. Soon a new farmhouse (approx. NGR SH 640492), with inside toilet facilities, was built about a quarter of a mile below the old house at approx. 600 ft (180m) above sea level, where there is a more level patch of land, close to the same rough track up to the old house and the new house took over the name.

The last people to live in the old “Fodydd” were Joseph and Maggie Richards and they had left by 1922 to move to another farm. The old house was then used as an outbuilding. It was a derelict ruin when I first saw it in the 1950s. The new farmhouse is storeyed and has detached farm outbuildings, all built on much more level ground than that up at the old house. A small stone-walled reservoir was built nearby but has not been in use for the last 60 years. In the 1950s the new house and farm were said to be last place where transhumance was practiced in Wales, with the family moving down in winter to their lowland holding and their children spending one term in one school and two in another about fifteen miles away. It is still home to the same farming family who have been there almost since the second house was built, with part of the family living on a lowland holding and travelling up to care for the stock. I first came to a neighbouring cottage on an adjacent small holding in 1947 for the long school holidays and from then on explored all over the mountainsides, but did not then appreciate the importance of the semi-ruinous nearby farms and cottages.



Old Hafodydd Brithion unroofed circa 1961



There and back again by Peter Masters

On the morning of January 6th 2022 a dedicated group of people travelled Hobbit-like from the Shires, on an incredible journey to the mountains of Snowdonia where, nestling amongst the moss-covered boulders on the hillside high above Llanberis, are the remains of the dwelling of Bishop Goodman, where he resided during the dark times of the interregnum in the 1650s.

The fascinating story of this good man was recounted to us by Richard Cuthbertson in a recent 'Zoom' talk. So we were eager to see this humble but important house. Although now a ruin, it has been saved from dereliction by Richard, its current owner, who has made the building secure and rescued many important parts of this historic house, to whit some roof timbers, several windows and other architectural features, with a plan to restore the



house to its former glory.

Thank you all for travelling halfway across north Wales in the most appalling weather, to walk ¼ mile to stand in a derelict building in the pouring rain and a howling gale, drink tea and pay £2 for the privilege. If you did not make it, you missed a great experience which must be the best value for money had this year (so far). Thank you Richard for taking the time to talk to us about this important historical house.

I have received the following appreciative comments on Richard's talk.

"As I live fairly near Llanberis I made a visit to the Ty Du site the week before the scheduled visit. I walked up from Llanberis on a dry sunny day and got a feeling of what it was like in Bishop Goodman's day. It has many interesting features notably in having had an upper storey with fireplace, quite unusual in such a poor area. One has to wonder why the Bishop chose to live there instead of in Ruthin where many of his family lived and where his endowment is based. Maybe it was the remoteness which appealed at that point in his life. What were also very fascinating to me were the remains of the 2 rooms adjoining the gable end where in the early 20th century sphagnum moss, collected on the adjoining hills, was stored before being sold for medicinal purposes. A fascinating site still with many secrets, I feel, and well worth a visit but preferably in good weather." Audrey

"A great day, (many thanks to Richard) and a meal afterwards at Pete's Eats was greatly enjoyed." Jan

"Strangely despite the rain, we enjoyed the whole experience." Maggs

MERIONETH BRANCH

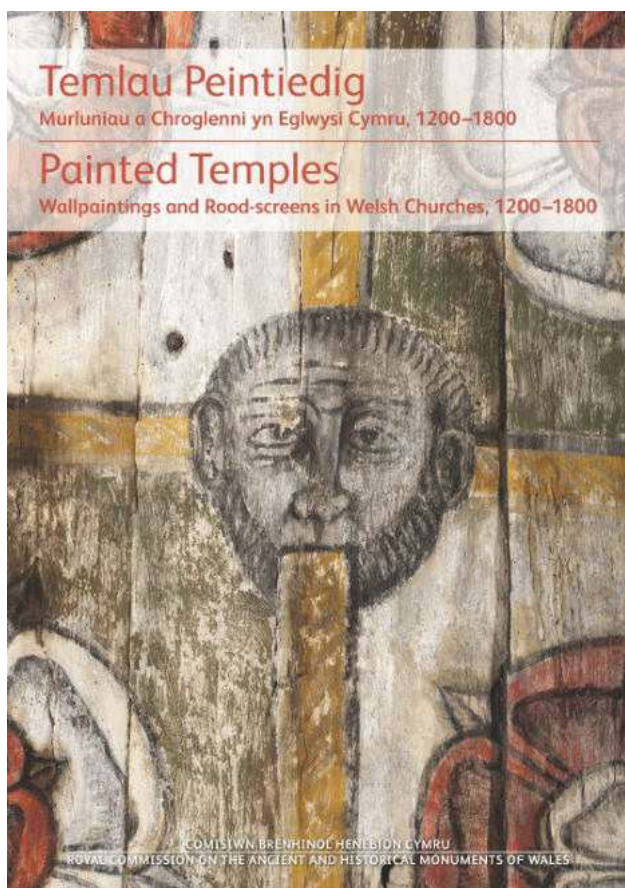
A publishing milestone in the history of Welsh Churches by Martin Cherry

(Review of *Painted Temples. Wallpaintings and Rood-screens in Welsh Churches, 1200-1800/Temlau Peintiedig. Murluniau a Chroglenni yn Eglwysi Cymru, 1200-1800* by Richard Suggett with Anthony J. Parkinson and Jane Rutherford, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales/Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru Aberystwyth, 2021. 366 pp. 250 figures, mostly in colour. ISBN 978-1-871184-58-7. £29.95. Written in both Welsh and English).

Historic churches have been particularly vulnerable during the last two years of pandemic, closed to the public for much of the time, impacting on income and maintenance, exacerbating a trend of closures, re-orderings and other rationalisations. This fabulous new book is both a celebration of an extraordinary artistic legacy and a plea to double our efforts in securing its long-term future.

By any measure, *Painted Temples: Wallpaintings and Rood-screens in Welsh Churches, 1200-1800* is a publishing triumph and remarkably good value for money (especially if, as a DOWH member, you order it before the end of March - see note below). Richard Suggett, the principal author, has distilled more than one hundred years of research, much of it secreted away in the records of the Royal Commission, into a lively and highly readable text. This is adorned with over 200 wonderful colour photographs, mostly taken by Iain Wright. Two exciting chapters (by Jane Rutherford and Anthony Parkinson respectively) tell two remarkable stories, one about the discovery (in 2008) and conservation of the internationally

scores of candles. The interiors of all of the 900 medieval churches that once existed in Wales would have been brightly painted inside, even the most modest, and in many cases rendered externally, too - the land of the poets 'sparkling' with white churches. Chapters 2 and 3 look in detail (with abundant illustrations) at rood screens (there is evidence for these at about 300 churches) and wall-paintings. The great age of church wallpainting was cut short at the Reformation when the iconoclasts wreaked havoc - not mindlessly (as Rowan Williams reminds us in the foreword to this book) but as a necessary part of



The figure of St George, St Cadoc's Church Llanfarcfan, uncovered by Jane Rutherford and Anne Ballantyne in 2008. This sophisticated and beautiful fifteenth-century wall painting was possibly paid for by Sir Thomas Bawdrip, Richard III's constable of Newport, as part of an extensive scheme, most likely part-financed by pilgrims passing through. © Crown copyright: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW)

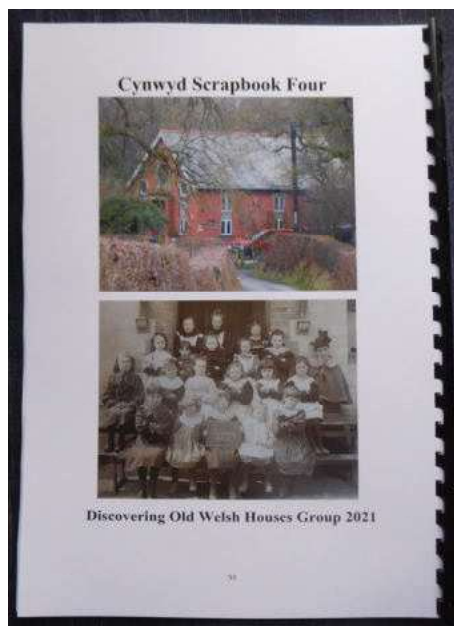
important painting scheme at Llanfarcfan (Glamorgan) that includes the exquisite St George (pictured), and the other about the removal of the threatened church of St Teilo (Llandeilo Talybont, Glamorgan) - wall paintings included - to St Fagan's National Museum of History, where its vibrant colours astonish visitors used to the pale monochrome that characterises most churches today.

The story starts in earnest with the great rebuilding of churches in Wales during the 'long fifteenth century' - around 1420-1530, not coincidentally a period of frenetic house building, too - when aisles, chapels, towers and bellcotes were added, bells hung, naves and chancels re-roofed, walls painted, rood screens erected and adorned and the whole interior lit by stained glass and studded, jewel-like, with painted effigies and candelabra, and lit with

combatting superstition and renegotiating symbolic priorities. Most books on the subject stop here, but *Painted Temples* takes us further in looking at the adornment of seventeenth and eighteenth-century churches and the rediscovery of medieval art and the delight in colour in the early nineteenth century.

This book is a delight; very big and heavy (it's best read on a lectern!) it literally sparkles with pictures. It graphically conveys the richness and vibrancy of Welsh church art over six hundred years. **DOWH please note** There is a 10% discount for DOWH members until 1 April. To order visit the Commission's shop at <https://shop.rcahmw.gov.uk> and use the code DOWH10 at the checkout. This will automatically reduce the price to £26.96 - cheaper than Amazon! It's

worth remembering that if you join the Friends of the Commission, which is free to do, you get 10% off all books all the time as well as regular news updates and invitations to our events.



DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH

Cynwyd Scrapbook Four by Jenny Lees

Published in November 2021, this is the fourth in the series presenting our evidence-based DOWH research in a form accessible and enjoyable for the general public. With 51 pages and over 55 original photographs, ranging from the 1890s to the present day, this fourth installment also covers areas of Merionethshire, Denbighshire and Conwy extending well beyond Cynwyd itself - readers of previous DOWH publications having contacted us from as far away as New Zealand with fascinating new information on ancestors connected with our local area! Article titles from the book include



Sunday School outing at Tre'r ddôl

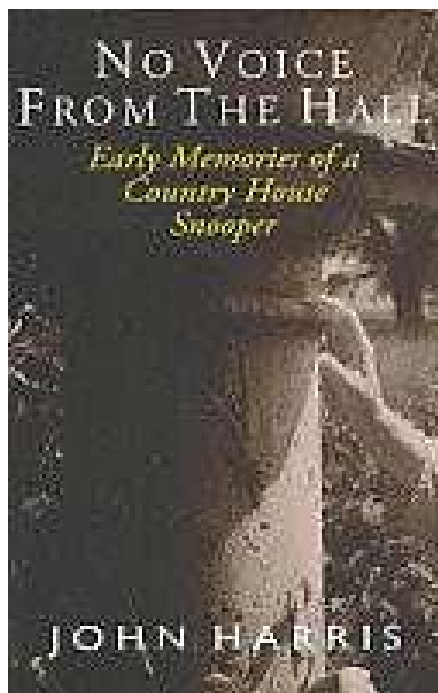
- . Henfaes isaf - another cruck framed hall house for Llangar!
- . From Cynwyd to Cwm Cynllwyd - and beyond
- . Hidden Histories of Cwm Main
- . Once upon a time at Plas yn ddôl
- . Tithe Martyrs and a Poet - from Llangwm to Cynwyd
- . From Gwerclas to New Zealand- a Williams family diaspora
- . To the far reaches of the parish - from Cynwyd to Ddwyryd
- . Tre'r ddôl – the community, its chapel and its school
- . Plas yn ddôl gan Megan Hughes

The book is on sale in aid of DOWH for £5, available from Jenny Lees at leesjenny@gmail.com (1st class postage £2.39 for one book or £3.35 for up to about 5 books; 2nd class postage £1.99 per book or £2.90 for up to 5 copies).

FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

Branch report to March 2022 by Wally and Margaret Barr

Our next branch get-together was to be in January 2022 for a late Christmas lunch and tour of St. Asaph cathedral; however, we sadly had to put this plan on hold because of government guidance in the New Year. New guidance suggests that now things are starting to look up (fingers crossed!) so we are hoping to get some meetings arranged where we can all enjoy each other's company and the fun of having stimulating speakers once again. This will start with a talk by Janice Dale, DOWH representative for the Denbighshire branch, in the springtime. Janice will be telling us about the Fifth Dimension - all will be revealed in due course!



Disappearing Stately Homes - review of John Harris, *No Voice from the Hall* by Margaret Barr

I have just finished reading a book my brother sent me for Christmas. It is '*No Voice from the Hall - Early Memories of a Country House Snooper*' by John Harris.¹ The houses are mainly found in Middlesex, Kent, Hampshire, Nottinghamshire, Buckinghamshire, and Lincolnshire. There is one in Shropshire, and he did manage to gain access to Erddig. In many ways it makes for rather depressing reading to hear of all the wonderful houses that have been lost, but I feel that I have learnt things too and thought I would share these with you.

Harris mostly visited these stately homes in the 1950s and he attempts to explain why matters had come to such a sad state at that point in time in particular. From the 1870s onwards Britain was affected by the great agricultural depression. Many landowners were in debt and the money from agricultural rents failed to cover the interest. Many big houses started to sell their contents.

During the First World War death duties were imposed which hit the landed gentry badly as they often had more than one estate. Houses began to be demolished. Also families were affected as so many sons had been killed in the conflict.

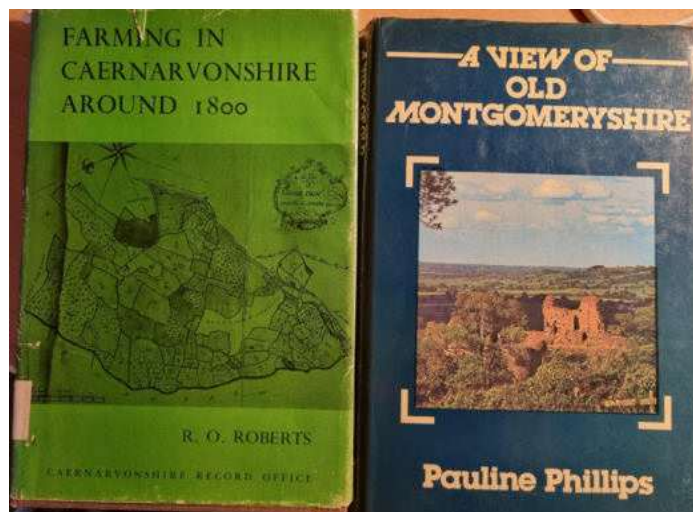
During the interwar period landowners struggled to keep their estates, but the Second World War was the final straw for many. The Dunkirk spirit kicked in and many houses were offered to the military or for hospital use, and other buildings were actually requisitioned. During the war the houses were not well maintained and suffered badly from having multiple occupants for the war effort. Harris makes an interesting point about Erddig not being requisitioned as, without electricity and with a poor water system, it was described as uninhabitable - although the Yorkes still lived there!

The result of all these factors was a huge wave of house sales and demolitions in the 1950s and 1960s. As Harris states "in 1955, one house was demolished every two and a half days."

John Harris's book is very readable although controversial in some of the methods he often used to gain access to the houses. I was also interested to find out that he is very critical of Pevsner (of '*The Buildings of England*' fame). Here is a typical cutting comment about a visit that saw Harris and Nikolaus Pevsner visiting the same house "When Nikolaus's '*Norfolk*' came out in 1962, I saw that he had managed to get most of the facts wrong. So much for clipboards."

I feel that I ought to finish with some degree of positivity. Each chapter is just a couple of pages about a

house with photographs taken in the 1950s. As I read, I have been checking online to see where the houses are on maps and have come across details of the fate of the buildings. But there is some comfort here. Mostly it states that the house was demolished at such and such a date, but at other times it says that the buildings have now been converted into apartments, hotels or even are run by the National Trust. Also I came across several photographs of the buildings now, where the houses look well preserved and cared for - in a much better state than when John Harris visited.



BOOK REVIEWS

From my bookshelf by Janice Dale, Denbighshire Group

With the miserable weather over Christmas I took the opportunity to read a trio of books, two of which have been sitting on my bookshelf for some time. Although not directly relating to Denbighshire or my own parish of Llandrillo, they provide a good background to what else was going on around about. *A View of Old Montgomery*, turned out to be one of the best reads about the general history of Wales I have come across, and at £2.50 was a good buy.

Farming in Caernarvonshire around 1800, turned out to be a survey of part of the Vaynol estate. An enlightening read - anyone looking for properties on the estate should dip into it - it lists many of the holdings leased out by name, lessee and undertenants, the state of the land, and most surprisingly for me was the number of houses with mud walls and thatch and in terrible condition. Many of these houses would have had to be built in subsequent years.

I finally dipped into *The Itinerary in Wales* of John Leland in or about the years 1536-1539, and down-loaded from <https://ia600907.us.archive.org/26/items/itineraryinwales00lelauoft/itineraryinwales00lelauoft.pdf>

¹ Harris J. (2000) *No Voice From The Hall; Early Memories of a Country House Snooper*, John Murray, London.

Not an easy read, but I was thrilled to find this mention of Hendwr

*“Dernion commote the beste woddid of al Merionithshir.
It hath yn the greate valley by De River good corne.
It bredith good horsis
Henetour, i.e. vetus turris. In this commote ys the ruin of
Toure Kenuyn² [nomen viri] now caullid Yr hendwr*

L. Vetis turris means *old tower* which corresponds with W. Hen Twr, i.e. Hendwr. Nomen viri means *man's name*. The name is unfamiliar to me in the context of Hendwr [which was one of the main houses of the Barons of Edeyrnion].

STOP PRESS

We are much saddened to learn of the sudden death of Jenny Carpenter, an active member of our Merioneth branch until she moved to South Wales. We offer our condolences to her daughter Eleanor Carpenter, a Conwy branch member, and to all her family.



Martin Cherry's article for the Merioneth branch

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Martin has supplied this pleasing additional photo of All Saints Church, Llangar, Merioneth which by an oversight was omitted from its proper place in his narrative. He remarks 'quite domestic in scale and appearance. Richard Suggett draws interesting analogies between churches and houses - here, as with medieval houses, the upper end

(chancel) is built into the bank; the bell-ringing (working) area (to the left) corresponds to the lower (service) end of the house, the porch to the cross passage, the large window illuminates the rood screen (as with the screen at the dais end of the hall), dividing the building into communal space (nave/hall) and private or sacred space (chancel/upper end). The rood screen no longer survives at Llangar, but there are remains of medieval wall paintings here.



TESCO Bags of Help





DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



NODDWYR/PATRONS

Syr/Sir Simon Jenkins, FSA, FRSL; Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, MA, PhD

Dathlu Treftadaeth Cymru drwy astudio tai
traddodiadol a bywydau'r bobl oedd yn byw ynddyn nhw.

Celebrating Welsh Heritage through the study of traditional
houses and the lives of the people who lived in them.

CYLCHLYTHYR 41 Mehefin 2022

NEWSLETTER 41 June 2022

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members

FROM THE CHAIR by Richard Cuthbertson

Well, Covid has nearly gone and Summer is nearly here! I see quite a few of our branches are organising interesting events and I hope we can all support these and get back to the 'new normal' as soon as possible. We must constantly remind ourselves not to take for granted the huge number of interesting buildings, histories and strange customs of our forefathers. The more we discover, the more we reveal the rich tapestry of ancient North Wales. Our work really does add to the store of knowledge, and the enjoyment that it can give to all of us is invaluable.

Last year I announced that, with sadness, I was stepping down as Chairman at this year's AGM because I feel strongly it is time to give someone else a chance to bring a fresh approach and renewed energy, particularly as we are entering a new era of 'Post Covid' opportunities. So I am resigning at this year's AGM but have agreed to carry on as a caretaker for a few months until a new appointment is made. I cannot thank you all enough for the support and often hard work that members have given to our group. It has been an honour and a privilege to be part of the effort. I hope I can remain as a Trustee and still make some sort of contribution in the future. Thank you again.



Richard with Margaret Dunn
at Plas Penmynydd

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY by Margaret Dunn



Hazel Agnes Formby 7th January 1932 - 13th April 2022

Wally and Margaret Barr write "It is with sadness that we record the passing of DOWH member Hazel Formby, following a fall at her home in Ysceifiog, Flintshire. Hazel had a long and busy life, being a very active member of numerous local history societies and groups. The list of her published articles and pamphlets on local history is extensive and her impressive memory was frequently called upon by local historians. Hazel will be much missed by members of the many groups to which she contributed. Our thoughts are with her family and friends".

Hazel's known society memberships were with DOWH, Flintshire Historical Society (Excursions Sec and Council Member), the Friends of Clwyd Archives, the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust and Clwyd Family History Society. She was author of several articles in the latter society's journal. Hazel was also actively involved with her local community through Ysceifiog Village Hall committee.

PLEASE NOTE that the **2022 DOWH AGM** will be held at **6.15 p.m.** on **Wednesday 22nd June** on **Zoom**, hosted by Peter Masters. The agenda and key reports will be circulated to all members in late May and joining details soon after that. Should a member wish to nominate any person as a Trustee / Officer, please forward their name, address with a short note of support, their signed permission, together with the name of their proposer and seconder to the Secretary by 2nd June 2022. Please also inform the secretary by 2nd June 2022 of any relevant matters which you wish to be raised.

At **7.00 p.m.** on the same evening the **2022 PUBLIC LECTURE** will be given on **"RUTHIN CASTLE - Medieval ruin reclaimed"** (in English) by **Dr Fiona Gale, MBE**, Chair of the Ruthin Castle Conservation Trust.

The DOWH **WEBSITE** launched in December 2021, continues to grow in popularity and new reports are regularly added, including some, which we have obtained permission to include, on houses researched by other organisations. We gratefully acknowledge this support.

The DOWH **HOUSES DATABASE** continues to add information as it is received.

The **PARISHES PROJECT** has been somewhat restricted during Covid but branches are gradually recommencing systematic research; any interested members should enquire which parishes have not yet been visited by their branch.

Plans for **FUTURE RESEARCH** are currently being discussed by the trustees and local branch members, so please contribute your ideas.

We are delighted that following the lifting of covid restrictions, most **branches are again arranging local events**, either monthly or occasionally. Some have by now held several activities, mainly outside or in spacious settings. It is suggested that masks are still taken to meetings and reasonable social distancing maintained should some members remain cautious. Members can still book on events arranged in any branches. Contact branch secretaries to receive details and book.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

CONWY BRANCH



Six members of the Conwy Branch and three other people visited Llangelynnin Church about 1000 feet above the Conwy Valley on April 21st. The church was originally built in the 12th century and dedicated to St. Celynin, one of the sons of Heilig ap Gannock, *aliter* Helig ap Glannog, whose lands in the early Middle Ages are said to have lain in the cantrefs of Arllechwedd, Creuddyn, Rhos, Rhufoniog and part of Dyffryn Clwyd. It is a local tradition that a seaquake drowned the area off the north coast of Gwynedd from Puffin Island to the Great Orme where his Llys was situated. Heilig believed that this was God's retribution for all his misdeeds and so he sent his sons (he is said to have had twelve) to monasteries to atone for his sins.

The church seems very isolated now, but there was an established community at the time. It was on the pilgrims trail from Basingwerk Abbey to Bardsey Island and was also an important crossing point for farmers, herders and other travellers coming up from Llanrwst to Conwy. There was even an inn outside the churchyard wall so that weary travellers could quench their thirsts. Inside the church, there is a small side chapel which was reputed, either to be for the local men who

would sit separately from the women, or for the drovers whose behaviour, and possibly diseases, the community wanted to keep at bay. On the wall behind the altar, beneath the words 'Fear God and honour the King' there is the Creed and the Ten Commandments all written in Welsh. Also a drawing of a skull to remind people of the inevitability of death.

A holy well sits in a corner of the churchyard. This gained a reputation for having the power to heal sick children and to predict whether the child's health would be restored. The child's clothes were dropped into the well. If they floated, the child would get better. If they sank, it was likely that they would die. *For further information see - Penmaenmawr Museum Fact Sheet 16 St. Celynin's Church.*

Several other churches in North Wales were dedicated to Heilig's sons. Rhychwyn - Llanrhychwyn church above Trefriw, which is supposedly the oldest surviving church structure in Wales; Bodfan - the church at Aber; Brothen - the church in Llanfrothen; Peris - the churches of Llanberis and Nant Peris; and Boda and Gwynin the church at Dwygyfylchi.



Supposed site of *Llys Helig* out in Conwy Bay

ANGLESEY BRANCH

Branch report by Sue Hurst

The Anglesey branch are hoping to hold the following events this summer.

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------------|---|
| Wednesday | June 1st | House visit to 17 th century Cefn Coch, Llanfechell. |
| Wednesday | July 20th | A walk around Penmon. |
| Thursday | September 8th | A walk around Beaumaris. |
| Wednesday | October 12th | A talk about the new DOWH website/databases. |

Plas yn Amlwch - Amlwch's lost Elizabethan house by T.P.T. Willams



"To those who have, will more be given; but from those who have not, even what they have will be taken away"
Luke 19:26

The words might well be applied to the fate of Amlwch's built heritage. Old St Elaeth's church exists today only in a few thumbnail sketches such as that by Lewis Morris from 1740. The superb C17th date-stone from *Madyn Dysw*, illustrated in Newsletter 35, was apparently casually broken and is now lost. But worst of all, in the 1970s the extraordinary C16th survivor *Plas yn Amlwch*, anciently a house of the Bishop of Bangor and his fellow church magnates, was sacrificed

to the construction of a wretched oil pipeline, which within a few years was superfluous to requirements and, along with an obtrusive oil terminal, fell into disuse.

Fortunately the wise officers of the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales were able to secure both ground plan and excellent photographic archive of these in many ways mysterious buildings. The building on the right in Fig.1 was latterly the Plas proper, dated to the late C16th and early C17th, with C18th alterations. That on the left was latterly used as a barn and dated mainly from the C17th. However, the distinctive 'diamond-oblique' chimney visible in the gable end is much earlier, from the beginning of the C16th at least. A few houses with such chimneys survive in Gwynedd and Anglesey, notably at *Tyn Twr*, *Bethesda*, *Gronant*, *Llanfachraeth* and possibly *Cefn Coch*, *Llanfechell*. At the *Plas*, the Royal Commission judged that the entire gable end was of a piece with the chimney and of the same age. The gable can be seen again in Fig.2.

However, that is not the end of the story. Here and there within both buildings, older probably late medieval stonework was identified, re-used from an even more ancient house in a supposed rebuild in the Tudor period. A fine corbel carved in the



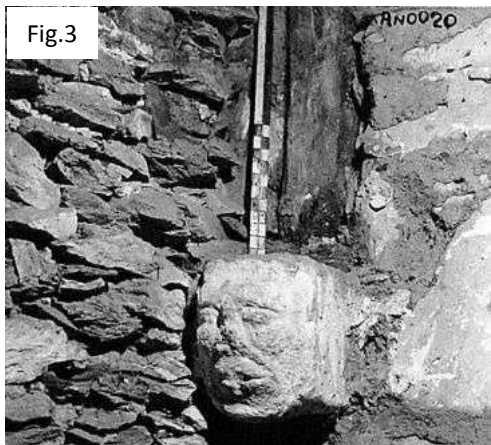


Fig.3

shape of a head is shown in Fig.3. Elsewhere, dressed mullions could be seen such as in Fig.4, whether re-sited or in situ is now unclear. They leave us wondering what kind of house they could once have been part of.

It was long assumed that nothing could be known of this mysterious lost Bishop's house. However, the diligent researches of Amlwch local historians have brought to light a document dating from the reign of Elizabeth 1st, nothing less than a sketch map of the Amlwch coast. As can be seen from Fig.5, its most prominent feature is a front-elevation view of an imposing house. In crabbed script at centre we read 'Ye Byshoppe's Howse Amloughe'. Could we accept the sketch as even an approximately accurate rendering of this extraordinary place, the mullions and corbels seen in the 1970s, re-

used in the *Plas*, may have been among its last surviving relics. What has happened to them? What part if any, did that remarkable cleric Nicholas ap Elis, Rector of Llaneilian and Archdeacon of Anglesey in the last quarter of the C15th, play in its construction? His soaring architectural ambition is clear from the crenellated splendour of Llaneilian church, resembling Clynnog Fawr and Bangor Cathedral.

Whilst the *Plas* itself was completely demolished during construction of the oil terminal, the foundations of the 'barn' building apparently still survive as can be seen from the aerial photograph Fig.6. Is it time to revisit the site to see whether there is still anything left to learn, for instance using modern geophysical survey?



Fig.4

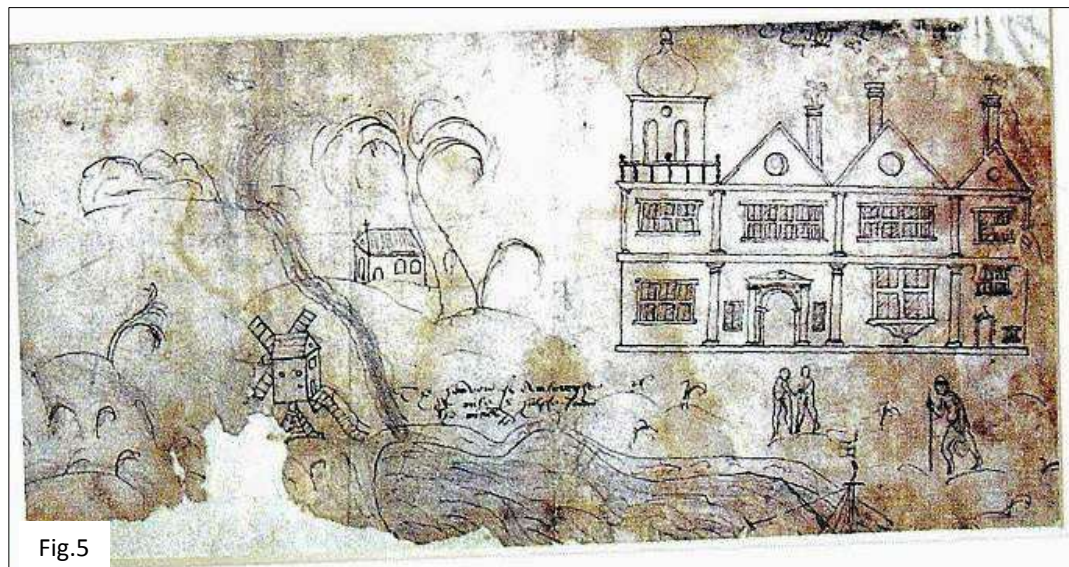


Fig.5



Fig.6

CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

Report by Margaret Dunn

On Wednesday 4th May twelve members attended the guided tour of NANHORON House and walled gardens led by Bettina Harden, M.B.E., M.A., garden historian and owner who gave a fascinating history of the house and its famous owners, many of whose portraits we saw. It was a followed by a tasty tea and was a great success. The photo opposite captures the occasion.





Wednesday 8th June 2.00 p.m. Visit to TY MAWR, NANMOR, Beddgelert, by kind permission of the owners. This restored 16th century hall house is now a bunk-house and is currently not frequently used. **BOOKING is ESSENTIAL by 1st June**. The cost is £3 per head paid on the day, and is due even if you cancel. Bring a picnic. Meet at Beddgelert main car park at 12.15 p.m. or the National Trust Aberglaslyn, Nanmor, car park at 1.30 p.m. to share cars for the remainder of the journey.

Thursday 7th July 2.00 p.m. Guided Walking Tour of Caernarfon, led by Rhys Mwyn, local historian and archaeologist. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL by 30th June**. Cost £5.00 per head excluding refreshments to be paid on

the day, even if you cancel. Meet at Beddgelert main car park at 12.15 p.m. or by the Lloyd George statue in Y Maes, Caernarfon by 2.00 p.m.

Tuesday 6th September 2.00 p.m. Guided Walking Tour of historic PWLLHELI, led by Iwan Edgar, local historian. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL by 30th August**. Cost £5 per head including light refreshments to be paid on the day, even if you cancel. Maximum of 15 people. Meet at Beddgelert main car park at 1.15 p.m. or Y Maes, Pwllheli 2.00 p.m. Organised jointly with Cymdeithas Hanes Beddgelert.

Bookings can be made online through our website, Membership events bookings page https://www.discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/events_booking.htmlpage25.htm or your Branch secretary email caernarfonshire-branch@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk.

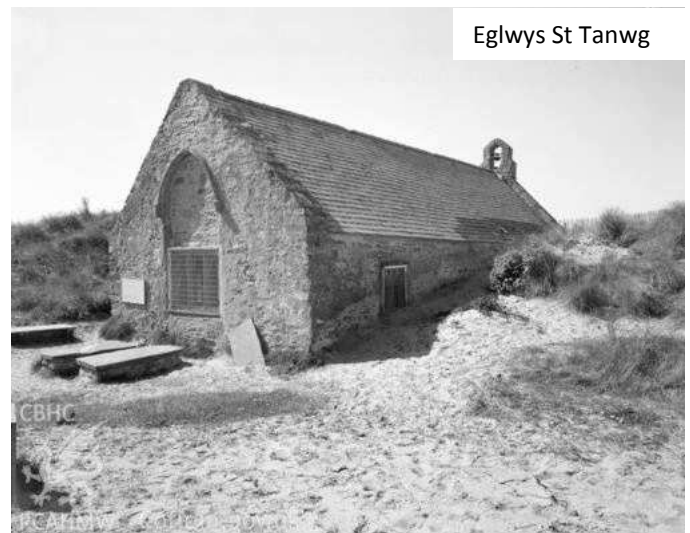
Bookings will be listed in order of their receipt and there will be a waiting list.

MERIONETH BRANCH

The second of the 2022 Merioneth Branch meetings will be a visit on **Thursday 9 June (10.30) to Llwyn Hwlcyn**, a sixteenth-century listed Snowdonia type house with some very curious features, set within a collection of eighteenth and nineteenth-century listed farm buildings. After this we will go to see the early medieval grade I listed church of St Tanwg, set evocatively in the sand dunes that were its undoing! This is owned and maintained by the National Churches Trust. If you're interested in joining us, please let me know well beforehand (by 2 June if possible, please) since numbers may be restricted. martincherry@btinternet.com 07716 993652 Fuller details will be provided later to those who register an interest.

EARLY ALERT! An excellent training opportunity in Historic Buildings Recording

The Vernacular Architecture Group (to which DOWH is affiliated) holds an annual training conference for people interested in developing their historic building recording skills. It's a relatively recent initiative, unfortunately interrupted by covid, but sessions so far, in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, proved very popular. Numbers are kept low, to between around fifteen and twenty. This year DOWH is co-hosting it during the weekend of 1-2 October and it will be held in and around Ruthin. We are lucky to have secured three of the most experienced tutors in the business and the emphasis is practical – looking



closely and thinking in the field about a small but varied selection of buildings, usually three or four, with discussion sessions (usually in the pub) afterwards. There is a modest fee in the region of £25 to cover tutors' expenses and students must find their own accommodation.

A full announcement will be made in due course, but note the date now if you might be interested. For a preliminary chat, contact martincherry@btinternet.com Places are normally allocated on a first-come first-served basis, although a small number of dedicated places for DOWH members will be secured.

Dolgellau Walkaround 12 May 2022 by Martin Cherry

Eight members of the Merioneth Branch met together for the first time since the relaxation of Covid restrictions. We had arranged to meet in December but were rained off: this time the sun shone. The main purpose of the stroll around the central parts of Dolgellau was to try and 'reconstruct' in our minds' eye what the town may have looked like prior to the period of rapid growth in the late eighteenth century and the improvements of the early nineteenth, using what we could see - the layout of the streets and older houses - as our guide.

Dolgellau in the Middle Ages was never formally a borough. During the early Middle Ages, it didn't amount to much at all - the bond township of Nannau had substantially more resident families - but by the fourteenth century it was clearly a busy market town and by the fifteenth something of a local political centre, too. Courts were held here and local gentry visited and, in some cases, had second homes in the town. Substantial families that feature in the work of the court or praise poets had houses nearby, including Nannau, Hengwrt, Dolserau, and Llwyn and added to that we should appropriated as a centre of Lancastrian power).

Unlike towns such as Bala or Machynlleth, Dolgellau was



gravity had shifted a few hundred yards to the east: a picture of about 1800 shows an informal open space for trading (Fig 2), which in and after 1830 was transformed into a proper square, the only part of Dolgellau that could be called 'planned'. The nineteenth century saw

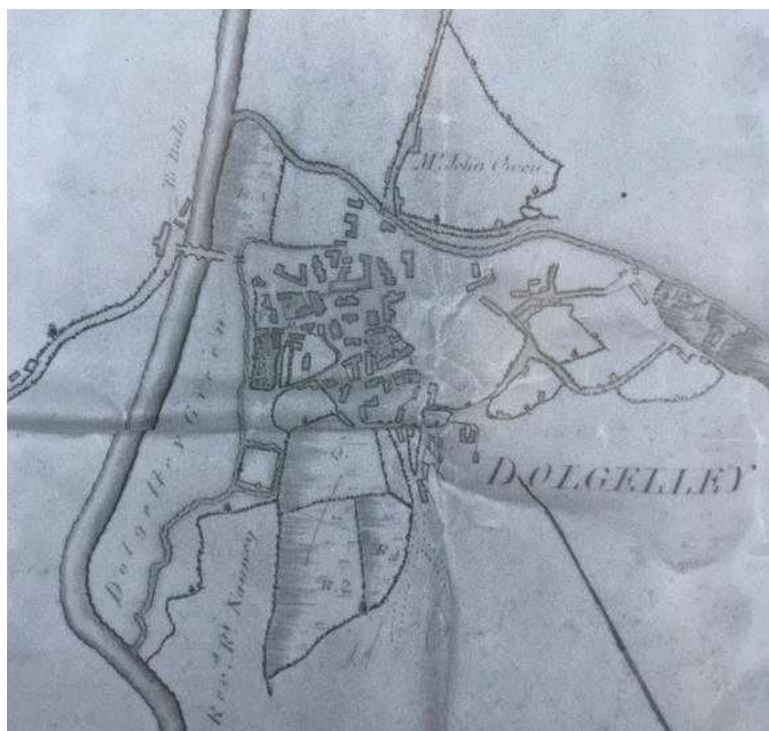


Fig. 1 The earliest surviving map of Dolgellau, dated 1760. It shows the informal street pattern before improvements were made in the early nineteenth century. North is to the left.

of the grid pattern you associate with the 'planted' towns of the thirteenth century, Dolgellau filled the spaces that were already there, following the boundaries of pre-existing landed estates and the old field hedges and ditches (Fig 1). At first, the heart of the little town lay below and to the west of the church, which stands on a bluff overlooking the meadows and the Mawddach estuary, around what is now called Y Lawnt. In fact, the name Dolgellau is made up of two elements, *dol* (meadow) and *cellau* (merchant or trading stalls) - so, the market by the fields where the sheep and cattle graze - and animals were grazed, stalled and slaughtered in this part of the town down to the nineteenth century.

As regional trade grew Dolgellau was well placed to facilitate it, on or close to four river valleys, many roads and the estuary carrying small ships to Barmouth. By the late seventeenth century (possibly before), the town's centre of

Fig 2 The irregular open market space tidied up and improved in 1830 by Sir R. W. Vaughan of Nannau, what is now Eldon Square, named after the Lord Chancellor and a friend of Vaughan's. Some of the older buildings survived including Plas Newydd, the canted west wing of which is visible at the far end

much change - a new shire hall and court house (1825), municipal gas works, market hall (1870-1), inns, shops, factories and warehouses and much new housing. Despite all this development, the character of the town is still determined by the street patterns that preceded it, and many of the earlier houses, dating probably in the main from the eighteenth century, are notable for their seemingly haphazard alignment with odd corners and a jumble of courts and rear yards. Around a dozen houses retain their distinctive half-hipped dormers. All these early houses use massive blocks of stone that in many cases had to be reared by cranes specially constructed on each site for the purpose. Victorian buildings can be distinguished by their mechanically worked sneaked masonry.

DOWH and Treftadaeth Dolgellau Heritage are considering working up a community project to identify and record the early houses of the town. It's still early days, but if you would like to join us, contact me at martincherry@btinternet.com



Fig 3 Plas Newydd. Behind this frontage lies a much older range, perhaps a sixteenth or seventeenth century town house, we do not know for sure. Although the tree-ring samples contained over 50 rings, they did not match master chronologies: according to the tree-ring dating expert this was probably because the trees grew in an area with a very distinct microclimate.



Fig 4 Four houses have been tree-ring sampled but three did not date and the one that did is no longer in Dolgellau: pictured here shortly before its removal by special train to Newtown, Cwrt Plas yn Dre was an up-market aisled gentry town house built for the Owen family between 1512 and 1542. It originally occupied a prominent position close to the marketplace.

DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH

Branch report by Janice Dale

The following events are planned.

June 17th 2pm. Walk up Nant y Pandy, Glyndyfrdwy. Tea afterwards at the Berwyn Arms

July 20th 2pm. Ruthin Walkabout with Fiona Gale. Tea afterwards at Ruthin Castle

FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

Branch report to June 2022 by Wally and Margaret Barr

Since our last report the Flintshire branch have met on two occasions. The first of these, in early March, was held in the 15th century house Nantclwyd y Dre in Ruthin. At this meeting Janice Dale, representative of the Denbighshire branch of DOWH, gave an interesting presentation about the 'Fifth Dimension', including the art, portraiture, poetry and literature that can inspire our house histories. The next

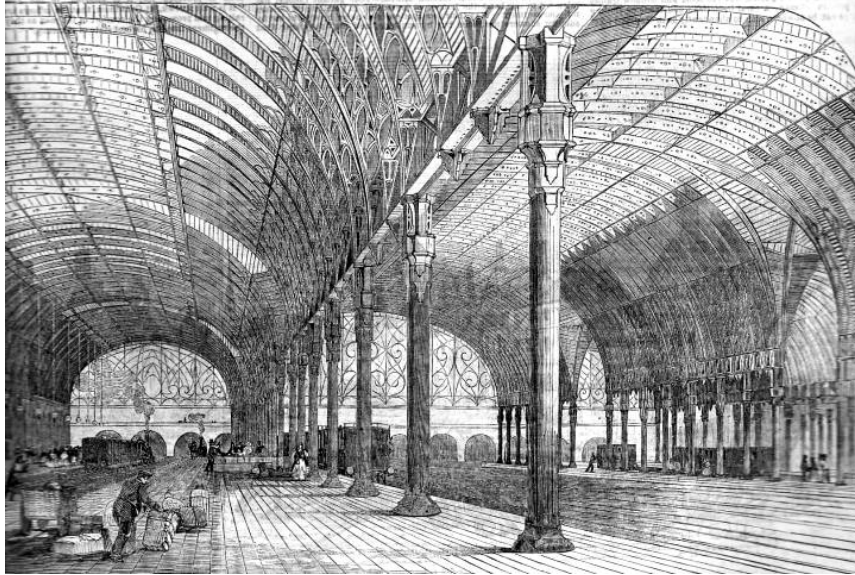


Fig 5 A house at the entrance to the old town close to the bridge over the Arran. It is a well-preserved example of a house type of which several survive, with an off-centre doorway and distinctive half-hipped dormers. These houses would deserve further study: they may well be early eighteenth century.

branch meeting, towards the end of April, began with a tour of St Asaph Cathedral with its anomalies in the stained glass, famous graffiti in the choir stalls and the story of William Morgan's Bible. The afternoon concluded with refreshments in the cathedral tearooms.

Journey of Joseph Iron (age 35) through South Wales in 1843 by Tim Biddle

My three times great uncle was born at Bury St Edmunds. He was a man of 'independent means' and wrote copious diaries. Having returned from 2 years in Paris where he attended the Sorbonne he caught the train from Paddington on Brunel's Great Western Railway, recently completed in 1841. He travelled to Swindon, connecting to Cirencester whence he travelled into Wales by coach via Cheltenham and Gloucester. The following entries give a flavour of his impressions - not all entirely p.c!



Brunel's Great Western Terminus at Paddington.
Print from *Illustrated London News* 1854

Wednesday April 19 - With mind full of misgivings of what would be the result of my journey, left kind friends and was driven by brother to station at Paddington and after some delay found myself comfortably seated in a carriage en route to Cirencester.

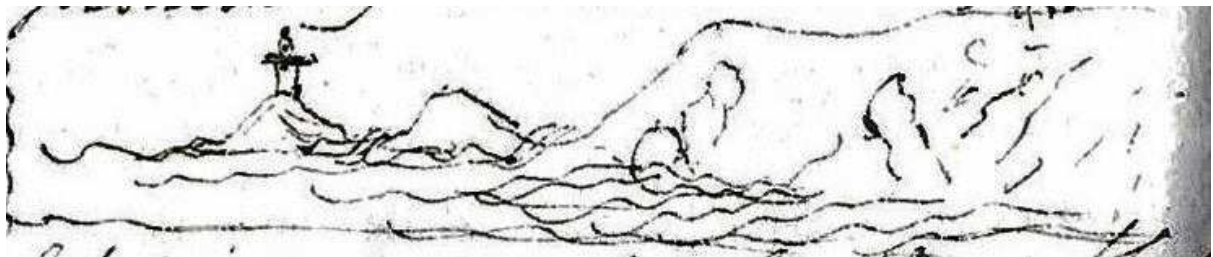
Coach to Cheltenham, surprised to find it so pretty a town- quite a London en petit. Passing a churchyard with graves covered with flowers on Palm Sunday so religiously observed by the poorer classes that they would expend their last farthing to purchase flowers.

Monmouth nothing remarkable, scenery picturesque and mountainous. Breakfast at the Royal Hotel a favourite retreat of Queen Victoria.

Carmarthen apparently pleasant town, nothing remarkable - both boys and girls without any shoes or stockings other than those provided by nature-namely a coating of mud. Yet how happy and jocund they appear, the proof that at all events neither a shoemaker or hosier is necessary for happiness. At S's heard report of pistol and found the servant had had a very narrow escape with her life. S. had foolishly left 2 loaded pistols by the bedside, and the maid in making it had accidentally thrown one down. It went off and the ball passed through her clothes but fortunately without injuring her.

The taste of the peasant women in their hats seem to me exceedingly outré - I suppose prejudice - Yet they seem very proud of their conspicuous chapeaux and twirl them about often very significantly. Occasionally a trio of old women discussing their neighbours' concerns have much reminded me of the witches of Macbeth.

Swansea is seated in a valley surrounded by lofty hills, with a beautiful capacious bay. Strolled to the Mumbles. Sat awhile to watch advancing and receding waves - found myself surrounded by waters and could only liberate myself by climbing up formidable looking rock which otherwise I would not have dared to adventure - thought of shipwrecked seamen - four men drowned very near a short time previously



Sketch by JI of rough seas at the Mumbles with the lighthouse.

Walked towards copper works, at extremity of upper town. Seen long before approach the dense cloud of smoke in which a thousand vomitories pour forth in continuous streams. Rolling on its course it creeps slowly up the hills, destroying vegetation wherever its pernicious presence is felt .

Admire the dexterity which the shoeless girls carry their well posed pails and pitchers full of water on their heads without touching them with their hands. The arms of the market women are at liberty pour un enfant.

Sunday. April 30 - Morning to St. Anne's, where thoughts almost dissevered from prayer by twang and discordant delivery of minister. Strolled to pier, commanding fine view of Mumbles. Vessel about to leave for Chile and on passing entrance, crew collected and gave three hearty valedictory cheers to their friends of whom many were assembled to have last look.

Stepped on board the 'Bristol' steamer and soon ploughed our course through the noble bay. Scarcely two knots from starting place ere qualms not of mind but body began to seize me reminding me never to resort to sea again. I had no remedy but the expected calmness of the Severn which I looked for anxiously - Avon narrow - walls of stone on either side - walked through Bristol - apparently fine town - canals in streets - similar I imagine to Dutch. Reached station at other extremity of town - Deluging rain.

I presume he returned by rail to Paddington where he was met by his bother Nathaniel. With apologies for any offence caused to the people of Carmarthen !



TESCO Bags of Help





DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



NODDWYR/PATRONS

Syr/Sir Simon Jenkins, FSA, FRSL; Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, MA, PhD

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CYLCHLYTHYR 42 Medi 2022

NEWSLETTER 42 September 2022

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members

FROM THE CHAIR by Janice Dale

A new chair - well perhaps not so new, but this is where I will be, as your new chairman for future zoom meetings and talks, consigned to my garden shed/office as I outgrew the office in the house with 30 years of local history of Llandrillo, and an ever expanding library of reference books.

Following our move to Wales, and with no internet resources available at that time, I became immersed in the history of my adopted village - a project I guess I will never truly finish, and I never dreamt that after hearing Margaret Dunn's talk some ten years ago, and thought how well it fitted in with my interests, I would end up leading the group

I would like to thank Richard Cuthbertson for all his hard work and leadership during his time in office. My fellow trustees are an extremely knowledgeable and dedicated bunch and with their help I hope we can thrive in the foreseeable future.

I still go out to work, as I have the best job in the world working for Lord Newborough at Rhug, but I would like to say to all our members that if there is anything I can help you with, do not hesitate to contact - I might not be the quickest at responding because of work, but I will do my utmost to reply and help in any way I can.

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY by Margaret Dunn

Thank you to Richard and Welcome to Janice



Richard Cuthbertson

As most of you will already know, Richard Cuthbertson has decided to step down from his role as Chair of Discovering Old Welsh Houses in September, when Janice Dale will take over. I have known Richard for over forty years, sharing many joint interests in Welsh history, archaeology and especially old buildings. His enthusiasm is catching and his knowledge seems boundless. Richard was involved right at the start of the journey over twenty years ago, which has grown into the Discovering Old Welsh Houses Group. His expertise in building construction has been of great benefit to us and to the various householders seeking guidance in maintaining and restoring their ancient homes. He seems to have been involved at one time or another with most heritage organizations in Wales and has always given wise suggestions regarding whom to contact or what approach to take as DOWH considered new ideas. Richard has always freely and willingly shared his expertise - and his Plas Penmynydd home - opening it to

members of the Group and to the public more widely on many occasions. We will miss him in his role as a wise and supportive chair, but understand his decision to step down, to make more time to enjoy his other interests. As DOWH explores new ideas and approaches as we move into the future, we are delighted that he will remain as an active and wise DOWH trustee. To Richard we say a huge THANK YOU for all you have done with and for DOWH over so many years.

Most of you will know Janice, who is also a longstanding and very active member of the group, having been secretary of the Denbighshire branch since it was set up. She works part-time in a senior role on the Rhug estate and enjoys a wide network of contacts and much valuable expertise. We warmly welcome her to the post of Chair.

RICHARD SUGGETT will be very well known to you as a long-term member of DOWH from its early years and, as a senior investigator with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monument of Wales, a very active partner in our work, not least as co-author of *Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia*. Richard has recently retired from the Commission where he made an enormous contribution to the understanding of historic buildings (both houses and churches) and the social history that lies behind them. We wish him the very best for the future - and are heartened to know that he intends to remain active in the field and we hope as a DOWH member.



Richard Suggett

OBITUARIES We are sad to report the passing of three members, DAVID DIXON, PATRICK BILLINGTON and JENNY CARPENTER and we send our condolences to their families and friends. Obituaries appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

BRANCH EVENTS It has been great to hear that most branches have been able to arrange one or more events since Easter 2022 and these are noted later in this newsletter, along with branch programmes for the coming autumn. We hope that members are now feeling more confident about participating in meetings and events. Members may book to attend events held in any branch area.

EVENT for ALL Following the June AGM and annual Lecture on the Restoration of Ruthin Castle by Fiona Gale, many thanks are due to Fiona for leading a much appreciated July guided walk around parts of old Ruthin.

The **DOWH WEBSITE** continues to grow as members complete additional House Histories. Almost 30 Tree-Ring Dating reports from the early years of DOWH have been collated by Martin Cherry and recently added to the website under Caernarfonshire and Merioneth. Do pass any completed reports to your branch secretary for forwarding to Peter Masters and adding to the website.

PARISHES PROJECT We are still looking for someone to help coordinate this project. Please contact the secretary or John Townsend if you would like further details about taking on this role for two years. Branches are developing their detailed parish by parish search for pre mid1700s houses in various ways. Some are collating on line documentary evidence only; others include visits to ascertain whether the property is still inhabited and take external photographs; others are concentrating on one parish at a time and noting which might be suitable for Tree Ring Dating or House History research. It is all very useful and should assist selection of priorities when Tree Ring Dating / Building Recording may be again undertaken. Thank you to all involved in this important project.

The **DOWH HOUSES DATABASE** continues to add information as it is received from Branch secretaries whenever fresh houses are visited. It is hoped to arrange meetings with branches when Jane Parry-Evans will explain how the database can be used.

DOWH MONTHLY ZOOM TALKS for autumn 2022: Details are included later in this Newsletter. Thank you to Martin Cherry for arranging the programme and to Peter Masters for hosting the meetings.

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING Further details will soon be circulated about a practical training conference organized by VAG and DOWH on 1st and 2nd October based in the Ruthin area. For details contact martincherry@btinternet.com.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

DOWH Lecture Series Autumn/Winter 2022

All talks (except 7 December 2022) will be held on the second Wednesday in each month and will all start at 7 p.m. They will be given in English. Reminders and Zoom invites will be sent by email to all members nearer the time. Fuller details about the 2023 programme will appear later in the year. Please note that your microphone will be muted when you enter. Please leave it muted until the end of the talk, when there will be an opportunity for questions. It would also be helpful if you would turn your video off as this helps the quality of the presentation.

Wednesday 12 October 2022

Michael Freeman, Curator, Ceredigion Museums 1991-2012; Honorary Research Fellow at the National Museum of Wales. 'Welsh homes, 1770-1840: tourists descriptions and illustrations'

This talk will look at the nature of the evidence for homes in north Wales recorded by hundreds of tourists and artists during their visits between 1770 and 1840. 'Picturesque' cottages and other buildings might have formed attractive features in the landscape for artists but do their illustrations and written descriptions reflect reality, or did they just conform to a generalised perception of Welsh homes during those decades?

Wednesday 9 November 2022

Dr Frances Richardson, University of Oxford, Department of Continuing Education. 'Shops and shopkeepers in early nineteenth-century Wales'

Frances has been involved with Discovering Old Welsh Houses for many years and contributed a major chapter to *Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia*. Her latest research investigates the number and distribution of shops and shopkeepers in early nineteenth-century Wales. Questions include whether shops were mainly concentrated in market towns or how far they had spread to rural areas, and what goods different types of shop sold. How important were older methods of selling through markets, fairs, chapmen or direct from producers? In addition to the obvious shopkeepers - grocers, drapers, milliners, ironmongers, druggists and general shopkeepers - how many craftsmen and women such as shoemakers, tailors and dressmakers keep shop, and what proportion were owned by women? And why was the proportion of shops per inhabitant lower in Wales than England at this period?

Wednesday 7 December 2020 (NOTE the date)

Andy Hyde, DOWH Member, furniture maker and carpenter. 'How to think like a carpenter'

Andy's talk will look at how carpentry is more than sawing timber and cutting joints. A structure must be conceived before it can be built. Raising a frame is first a mental act before it is a physical one. Thinking like a carpenter is a cultural act.

CAN YOU HELP?

One of our members who writes out her research longhand has recently completed an interesting House History on another Merioneth house and is asking if any member situated anywhere could possibly undertake the typing over the next few months. The author lives near Harlech. If you are interested in knowing more about this project, please contact secretary@discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP

Fiona Gale will be contacting anyone with incorrect or overdue subscription, or with Gift Aid queries; she can be contacted by email at membership@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

CONWY BRANCH

George Owen's Survey of Wales 1602 by Jill Jones

This early, little known survey published in 1823 in *The Gentleman's Magazine* Vol.93 Part 2 p.512 was carried out by George Owen of Henllys (1552-1613), well known Welsh historian and naturalist, author of *Description of Pembrokeshire*. He was educated in law at the Inns of Court in London. During his life he collected antiquarian information about Wales, including its heraldry, genealogy and historical buildings and structures. He notes the following houses in Denbighshire and Flintshire. It would be interesting to compare these names with those in Edward Lhuyd's *Parochialia* from about a century after Owen's time.

Denbighshire

Generosi

Johannes Salisbury,
Richard Trevor, Miles
John Lloyd, Miles
Robert Salisbury
Edward Conway
Edward Thelwall
Richard Leighton
David Holland
Wm. Middleton
William Wynn
Hy. ap. Jevan Lloyd
Thomas ap Howel
Edw. Lloyd
John Edwards
Owen Brereton
Robert Tunbridge
Peter Mytton
Gryff Wynn
Geo. Cure
Richard Parry
Gilbert Gerard
Morgan Broughton
Kinwrig Eyton
Tulk (*Foulk*) Lloyd jun.
Thos. Price
John Wynn Decka
John Puleston
John Puleston
Edw. Eyton
Edward Billet

Mansions

Miles Llywenn (*Lleweni*)
Trevalyn (*Rossett*)
Bodildris (*Llandegla*)
Rûg
Bryneuryn (*Rhos on Sea*)
Plasyward (*Rhewel*)
Marchwiall
Yvardre (*Y Fardre*)
Gwaynynog (*Henllan*)
Lanvair
Soflwyn
Horseley
Llysvasey (*Ruthin*)
Chirck
Burras (*Wrexham*)
Caeryvallen (*Ruthin*)
Glaenclwyd (*St.Asaph*)
Y Berth ddw (*Llanrwst*)
Cadwgan (*Esclusham*) Soro
Foysoy (*Tywysog, Henllan*)
Pantyskir
Yscoed (*Holt*)
Eyton (*Wrexham*)
Toxhill (*Foxhall*)
Plasgellin (*Plas Iolyn*)
Royton (*Bangor is y Coed*)
Berse (*nr. Wrexham*)
Llwyn y Knottie(*Wrexham*)
Rywabon
Greysford

uxores

Ursula fil. com. Derby
Catherine d'Robt. Puleston
Margt. Fil. John Salisbury
fil. H.Bagnol, militis
fil. John Puleston, militis
fil. Tydyr ap Robert
fil. Wm.Morton
Helena fil. John Owen (*incorrect - Dorothy d/o Jenkyn Lloyd of Berthllwyd*)
fil. John Conway
f. John Salusbury, Militis
Jane f. et haer Roger ap Howell Rees

Soror Wm.Gerard, Milit.

fil. Salisbury de Canrwst
Edw.Brereton
Blanch fil. Edw.Thelwal
fil. Wm.Almer
fil. Hy.Percy

Anna Conway
fil. William de Caernarvon

Katherine fil. Edw.Wynn ap Howell
fil. Gravener de Eton bote



Memorial to George Owen in Nevern Church

Evan Lloyd Jeffry
Richard Clough

Eglwysvagh
The Green

Margaret fil. Et haeres Morris, Jo. Ap Ellis ...

Flintshire

Thomas Mostyn
Thos. Hanmer, Miles
Roger Puleston
John Conway, Miles
Wm. Hanmer
Piers Mostyn
Thos. Ravenscroft
Edward Morgan
Robert Davids
John Lloyd, Regist.
Wm. Dymoch
Roger Mostyn
John Moseton
Thos. Evans
Peter Pennant
John Conway
George Hope
Robert Salisbury
Wm. Lloyd
Roger Brereton
Wm. Thomas Griffith

Mostyn
Hanmere
Emrall (*Worthenbury*)
Penrythan (*Bodrhydden*)
Fennes (*Bronington*)
Talceray (*Talacre*)
Brecton
Goldgreve (*Golden Grove*)
Gwanney
St.Asaph
Wellington

Bangor
Northoppe

Guven Egran
Broughton
Leude Brooke
Houghton
Howton
Pantylungdy

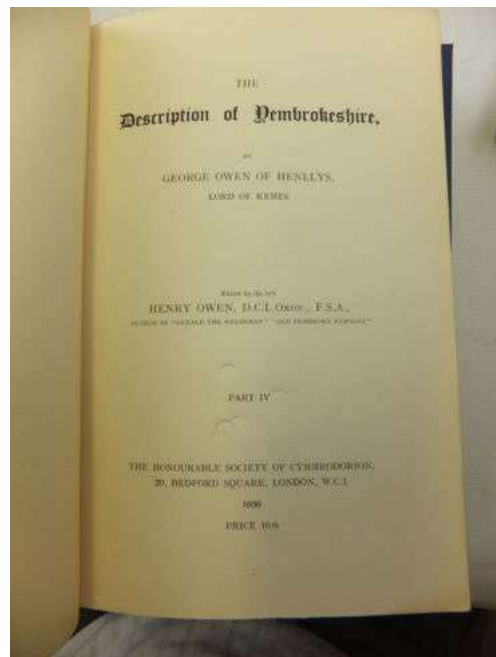
fil. Petri Mostyn
fil. John Salisbury, Milit.
fil. Geo. Bromley, Milit.
fil. Edward Morgan
fil. Dimocke de Wellington
Lowrey Conway
fil. Roger Brereton de Halton
fil. Johannis Davids
soror Thos. Ravenscroft Vannol

soror Wm. Hanmer de Fennes

Jane fil. Jo. Edwards de Chircke

Jana fil. Doct. Elice Price

Maria fil. Jo. Edward de Chircke



Title page of George Owen's *Description of Pembrokeshire*

generosus = noble, *high-born*, *uxor* = wife, *miles, militis* = soldier, *soror* = sister, *filia/ fil.* = daughter

ANGLESEY BRANCH



Cefn Coch visit June 2022

DOWH Anglesey Branch visit to Cefn Coch, Llanfechell on 1st June 2022 by Margaret Dunn

At last we are able to restart our local visits and meetings! Fourteen of us met on a sunny afternoon to see and learn about this very interesting farmhouse. Mrs Heulwen Williams gave us a warm welcome and Terry Williams spoke about many of the intriguing features of the house and its inhabitants, giving us an informative handout. The farm had belonged to the Bodorgan estate and at present relatively few documents are available for research. We enjoyed a sumptuous tea and were shown round inside the house in small groups. Numerous documents about Cefn Coch had been laid out for us to look at. Very little seems to have been recorded about this large house, probably built by the sixteenth century with a possibly earlier phase. The branch

discussed researching it together as a group, probably in the autumn, using as a basis the research already undertaken by Terry, Heulwen and Sue Hurst. We hope to revisit soon to assess whether any original timber is suitable for tree-ring dating. We are very grateful to Charles and Heulwen Williams for their hospitality.

Coming events

Wednesday 31st August

2 p.m. Rearranged visit to Penmon led by Andrew Davidson, Chief Archaeologist, GAT. Cost £4, car parking £3 which includes access to the road leading to the

Thursday	September 8th	Point. Andrew will show us around the main site and then move on to the Point. The cafe will be open if anyone wishes to visit after the walk. 2 p.m. <i>Guided tour of Beaumaris</i> , led by Margaret Dunn and Terry Williams. The walk may include entry to some of the buildings which have previously allowed entry to visiting parties. Cost £3, numbers limited to 12, so as not to block pavements etc.
Wednesday	October 12 th	2 p.m. <i>How to get the best out of the DOWH website</i> , by Peter Masters, probably at the Archives, Llangefni. TBC.
November	Date to be confirmed	<i>How to use the DOWH Database</i> , by Jane Parry-Evans probably at the Archives, Llangefni, TBC .
December	Date to be confirmed	Lunchtime meal / social; venue t.b.c also.

For further details and booking contact Sue Hurst at bootlanesue@sky.com

CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

Visit to Tŷ Mawr June 8th 2022 by Peter Masters



Several intrepid members of the Caernarfon branch ventured to the northern limits of the old county of Meirionnydd to visit Tŷ Mawr . The assembly point was the car park at Aberglaslyn from where we then proceeded in convoy by a circuitous route up into the remote foothills where Tŷ Mawr sits atop a knoll . This interesting Hall House was restored in the 1980s.

Marshalled up after parking, Margaret Dunn gave us a brief introduction to the house and some "Crib Sheets" with some house history and general information including the dendro dating results of several timbers within the house. Re-assembling inside the house, we

were given a broad and detailed overview by Margret on how to "read" a house and how to look for important details and try to understand the property's place in the landscape and the role it played in the wider community. There were several discussions about the trusses and windbraces.

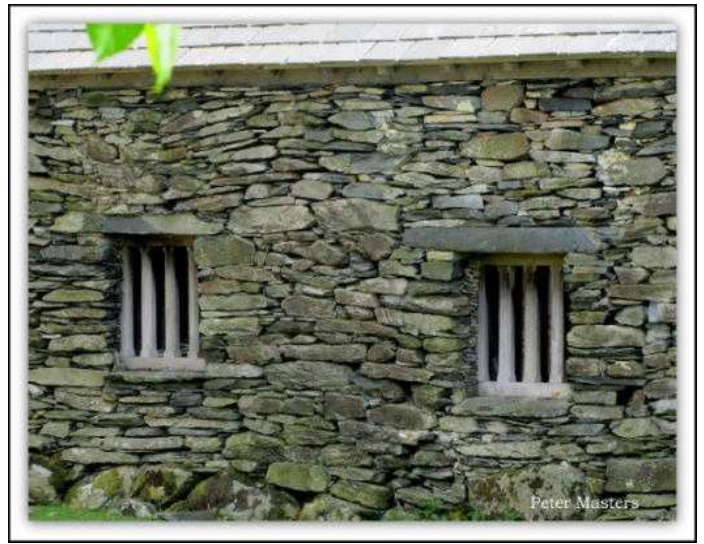
The house was built c.1530 and smoke blackened rafters would suggest that the original house had a central hearth open to the roof, although in its early life a fireplace was inserted adjacent to the

arch-braced truss. Armed with a list of questions we set about

exploring the building. The first point of interest was the fact that the building was "rubble" built in a dry-stone style without mortar. The cross-passage doorways were both vousoir in style and there were wooden mullioned windows - but were these modern reproductions an accurate representation of the original?

As the weather was a little unsettled, we had a hurried picnic before returning whence we came. Altogether a very enjoyable afternoon ! As ever we are grateful to the owners for allowing free access to their remarkable house and especial thanks to Margaret for her expert guidance.





Caernarfon guided walk 7th July 2022 by Peter Masters

This was led by Rhys Mwyn, the well-known local archaeologist and historian. He led ten of us around the Slate Quay and then upstream near the Seiont, pointing out many scarcely known aspects of the town's history, personalities and culture, finishing up by the old Grammar School and *Hen Waliau*, the Roman "storage depot".

Pwllheli guided walk 6th September led by Iwan Edgar, Local historian.

Some places are still available. Book online at

https://www.discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/events_booking.html

Spotting building phases in an old building by Margaret Dunn

Many times it is not possible to study the interiors of buildings during the Parishes Project or other research visits. However it is surprising how much can often be spotted from an exterior view, especially in winter. I have known this currently unused small farmhouse / holiday home since the 1950s but only recently stood and looked carefully at the gable end. *Gerynt*, (NGR SH 634486) lies with its gable end tucked into the mountainside alongside an upland single track lane currently in Beddgelert parish. It was formerly in Merioneth and is listed in a 1624 Rental of James 1st. The accompanying image reveals several changes in the roof line, a multi-phase rear extension, a gable end blocked window, large foundation stones and other alterations. The main fireplace is in the upper gable end. A detailed house history has not yet been undertaken, so the dates of various phases have not been identified.

Houses mentioned in recent research by Dr Tom David

Dr David writes in response to our plea for information about



Gerynt

what members have been researching: "Here's an article - I wonder if DOWH members might be interested. It's discursive and unillustrated, neither of which is particularly helpful! (And they've embedded a video, which is a bit annoying.)

https://www.newyorker.com/science/elements/making-new-climate-data-from-old-timber?utm_source=Nature+Briefing&utm_campaign=58af189f3e-briefing-dy-20220509&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c9dfd39373-58af189f3e-45825362"

Contact details if you would like further information: tom@david4.plus.com

MERIONETH BRANCH

Jenny Carpenter

John Townsend writes 'It is with great sadness that we report the death earlier this year of Jenny Carpenter, one of our longest serving members of Merioneth Branch. Jenny was a very active member - she was a joint author of our Cwm Maethlon booklet and helped manage its launch in Aberdyfi in 2018. She was an enthusiastic and knowledgeable contributor to the Parishes Project for Llwyngwrl and the surrounding area. Jenny also spent much time researching her family history and her home at Bodwylan, Llwyngwrl which has several interesting features both in the house and outside. Jenny hosted two very enjoyable and well attended summer afternoon get-togethers for Merioneth members at Bodwylan. In 2020 Jenny moved to be nearer her son in Pembrokeshire - not least because the mile journey from Llwyngwrl to her home was mostly via a very bumpy and muddy farm track! Although being some distance away, she continued to keep in touch with friends and colleagues and was always keen to know what was going on in Merioneth. We will remember her for her hard work and knowledge of Merioneth, her cooking skills - especially cakes and biscuits - and her friendship.'



Report by Martin Cherry



Llwyn Hwlcynd end elevation with the small window that lights the stone spiral mural stair which survives intact.

Just one group visit to report since the last Newsletter - to Llwyn Hwlcynd, not far from Harlech. The 16th or 17th-century house is listed, along with some attractive 18th and 19th century farm buildings, but is not well described: the house turns out to be much more interesting than the listing description would lead one to expect, with a 'Snowdonian' plan comprising two rooms with fine framed ceilings, a spiral mural stair and a splendid very well preserved roof structure. We hope to return and make a proper record of the building later in the year. Planning for the autumn season is advancing and details will follow in due course.

Sorting out the houses at the top of Cwm Mynach - a Merioneth mystery resolved?

by John Townsend, Ross Cook and Martin Cherry

A tree-ring date of spring 1573 and a bond drawn up in May of the same year requiring that a house be built within twelve months, all in the same part of the same valley. Too good to be true? After checks and double checks, we think we've nailed it. This short paper is a small tribute to Peter Thompson who first recognised the importance of the dating evidence and was working on the houses of Llanaber when he died in 2021.



Llwyn Hwlcyn spiral staircase

1630s. Further down the valley is Cwm Mynach Canol, the main subject of this paper. Last (for our present purposes) is Cwm Mynach Isaf sited further to the west of the river but which is now no more than a pile of stones next to a modern house of the same name.

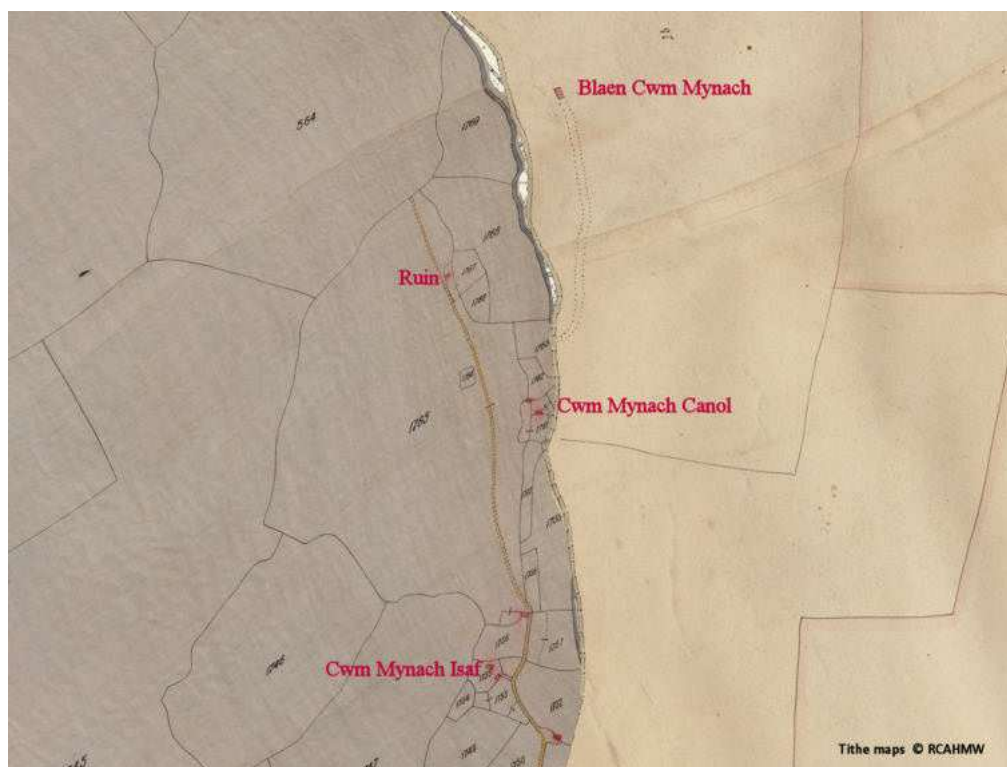
We are fortunate in the survival of a cache of documents that was brought together to provide evidence about the transfers of lands in Cwm Mynach from 1538 to their acquisition in 1637 by Thomas Meyrick of Tan y Bwlch (now in the Merioneth archives). The most interesting for us is a bond dated May 1573 (Z/DV/301). At this time Hoell ap Hoell and Jevan ap Hoell, presumably his son, lived together in the mansion house of a tenement called 'kwm menech'. An agreement between them divided the property and secured for Jevan the lower part of the tenement that ran towards land belonging to their neighbour Lewes ap Jevan ap David (more of this in a moment). Jevan had the right to gather wood growing on Hoell's portion (for fire and building) as well as to take his beasts and cattle through Hoell's half to get to the mountains. There is also a clause relating to the enclosure of land. Of particular interest is the obligation on the part of Hoell to build a mansion or dwelling house on his own lands, yield it up to Jevan by the following May, and guarantee him 'quiet possession' of it.



Map 1 Map showing the position of Cwm Mynach.

Between Llanelltyd and Bontddu is a small valley called Cwm Mynach. It runs from the Mawddach estuary north for just over four miles, after which it merges into the rough grazing lands of the Rhinog mountains. There is a small cluster of houses called Tai cynhaeaf at the bottom of the valley; otherwise, the character of the settlement is one of scattered farmsteads. We have been interested in houses at the top of the valley ever since one of them (Cwm Mynach Canol) was dendro-dated to 1573.

First, let's look at the surviving houses as they are at present. Blaen Cwm Mynach occupies an imposing position at the head of the valley as befits one of the houses singled out by Edward Lhuyd in his *Parochialia* (compiled towards the end of the 17th century). Although it is now a stone-built late-Georgian house with gable chimney and a central passage, it contains a massive re-used bressummer (mantel beam) that may have been from the previous house on or near the site. None of the former farm buildings contain anything pre-1800. Blaen Cwm Mynach is in Llanelltyd Parish - the other houses are in Llanaber, something that caused us a bit of a headache at first as we shall see. Close by is an un-named ruin on a high ridge on the west side of the valley. Peter Smith recorded it as an end-chimney house with a cross passage - its dimensions and location at the hub of a series of sheepfolds and closes suggest it was the house of a livestock keeper rather than an independent yeoman farmer, possibly an employee of the Meyrick family after they acquired estates in the valley in the



Map 2 Houses referred to as shown on the tithe map of 1842

Blaen Cwm Mynach was the principal mansion house on the tenement (where both father and son were living in May 1573), then the house Hoell built for Jevan is what is now known as Cwm Mynach Canol - that is, between Hoell's house and Cwm Mynach Isa.

The clinching evidence is provided by the tree-ring dating of Cwm Mynach Canol. What presents itself to the modern visitor is a late-17th century house with queen-post trusses characteristic of that period, extended in the 19th. But, now hidden away from view, is the fragment of a cruck truss that belonged to the original building. This has a felling date of Spring 1573 as does a re-used purlin. It is generally assumed that building followed on from the felling of the timber within a year or two, that is before the wood got too hard to handle easily. Evidently, Hoell was preparing for the building in good time: timber for a cross-beam was felled in Winter 1571 and the bressummer (or mantel beam) over the fireplace between 1563-5. Massive mantel beams needed to be hard and resilient, rather than green and pliable, and tended to be ear-marked and felled a good few years before use. The tree-ring analysis suggests that the 1570s timbers were harvested from the same woodland and the bressummer from another source, although not necessarily far away.

Up until the Dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s, the entire valley formed part of the Llanelltyd grange of Cymer Abbey. Although the consensus among historians is that by 1535 'virtually the whole of the abbey's lands had been leased', there is no hard evidence for leases in Cwm Mynach, but the strong likelihood is that the farms here would have been tenanted at least from the opening decades of the 16th century if not earlier. After the Dissolution, security of tenure might have been difficult to secure at first. When the king's commissioners came to check on the situation on the former monastic estate of Cymer, thirty individuals asserted that they held a lease but could not provide written evidence (indentures) to prove it when required to do so. When the freehold of the estates passed to the crown, clarity was not necessarily achieved, especially when responsibility for collecting rents was farmed out to individuals and institutions like the borough of Harlech. But by the 1570s and '80s, some relative stability was established and farming families felt emboldened to erect new houses and enclose new fields. The building of Cwm Mynach Canol should be seen in this context

There are some complications about identifying the new house in question. Hoell promises to build a house for his son on his own land. The detailed description of the site - from 'avon kwm menech' to a place called 'y fyches newyth' and thence to a rock 'as the ditch ledeth' - does not help us locate it on either large-scale maps or within the present landscape, but the property of Lewes ap Jevan ap David can safely be matched with Cwm Mynach Isa (downstream from Hoell's and Jevan's land). The fact that Blaen Cwm Mynach was in Llanelltyd and the site of the new house in Llanaber threw us at first, but there is no reason to doubt that Hoell's tenement straddled the parish boundary. And in any case, the

future possession of the former was not at issue. If, as seems plausible,



Fig 1 Cwm Mynach Canol as it is today. The 1570s house was situated between the two chimney stacks.

- and the evidence of tree-ring dating is tending to confirm something of a 'great rebuilding' during these years, in South Merioneth and more widely. More firm dates from documents and scientific dating should help us test this theory.

The details of the tree-ring dating report will be published in *Vernacular Architecture* and a fuller version will appear on our website in due course.



Fig 2 Cwm Mynach Canol - the in-situ stub of a cruck blade (now concealed) that was felled in the spring of 1573 @ Ross Cook, *ArchaeoDomus*

Timely reminder by Martin Cherry

Some of you may be interested in taking advantage of a great training opportunity - the Vernacular Architecture Group annual building recording course is being held this year in N.E.Wales (in collaboration with DOWH). VAG members are given priority but since DOWH is an affiliated society, a small number of places will be available to DOWH members. Numbers are restricted and not all applicants are lucky, but feel free to apply to Rebecca Lane if you are interested (see below). If you wish to chat informally about what the course entails, contact Martin on martincherry@btinternet.com or on 0771 6993652.

Introduction to Vernacular Architecture course (training conference) North Wales 1st-2nd October 2022 by Rebecca Lane

The Vernacular Architecture Group is intending to again offer a short weekend conference aimed at those who are new to looking at vernacular buildings and/or would like the opportunity to learn more. The format is intended to be along the same lines as the two previous weekend conferences (and on the general system

of the VAG Spring conference) - that is based on visits to buildings rather than papers. There will be an emphasis on introducing people to examining buildings, covering basic vocabulary, some of the typical forms of vernacular buildings and how we go about investigating them.

The dates have been confirmed as the 1st and 2nd October. The conference will focus on buildings in North East Wales, in the area where the main spring conference was held in 2018, but focusing on Denbighshire. There will be some material sent out prior to the conference, to help introduce people to the basic concepts, and plan forms, that will help with what we will see. This might be particularly useful for those with no previous experience of looking at historic buildings.

We will visit two or three properties in the area over the course of the weekend, to look at a range of features. On Saturday evening there will be an opportunity for discussion about personal interests and ways to access training and other learning opportunities, via the Vernacular Architecture Group, the county recording groups and other organisations, as well as a chance to get to know other VAG members. As in previous years accommodation and food will need to be organised on an individual basis, although opportunities to purchase food etc will be factored into the schedule. Lifts to and from buildings will be organised on arrival on Saturday morning.

At present the likely schedule is for a 10.30am start on Saturday morning, and we will aim to finish by 4pm on Sunday. We hope that will allow most people to book only one night's accommodation to help keep costs down for everyone. Please feel free to contact me on the details below if you would like to express an interest in attending, and I will send out the booking form when it is available. We will also look to advertise the course beyond the existing VAG membership, if space allows. Contact Rebecca.Lane@HistoricEngland.org.uk Telephone 01793 414775



Don't forget to use our website, recently re-designed and upgraded by our brilliant webmaster, Peter Masters, at <https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk>. All our newsletters are available there together with a range of booklets written by branch members, viewable as e-books (click on Newsletters / Booklets). In between Newsletters it's worth checking into 'Events' to see what's coming up. And, over the last few months we've updated our reports and incorporated all the tree-ring dating reports published over the last few years including those commissioned by bodies other than DOWH. The early tree-ring reports that we commissioned ourselves were quite sparse on general information so we've enhanced these to make them more useful. At present you will find 160 house histories, 85 historic building reports and 136 tree-ring dating reports - an archive of 381 reports, all easily accessible via the 'Reports' page (just follow the on-screen instructions), a great research resource! And new ones are being added all the time.

DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH

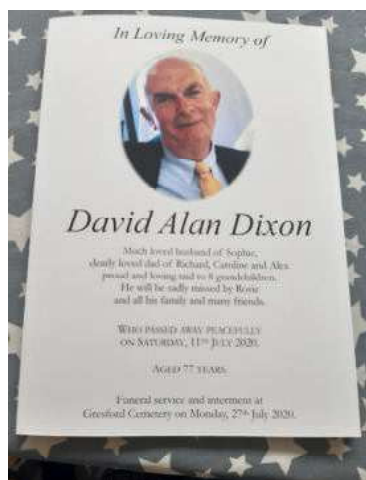
Patrick Billington

We are sad to announce the recent death of Patrick Billington and we extend our sympathy to Rita, his wife of 63 years, and his family. Patrick and Rita were very active members of the DOWH Denbighshire branch from its early days until they moved to Glyn Ceiriog about four years ago. They lived at Ucheldref, a fascinating house near the Rhug farmshop (see house details on the DOWH website) for 35 years and frequently gave hospitality to branch meetings in their large farmhouse kitchen. We miss their contributions and all they both brought to DOWH. The following are extracts from the funeral eulogy given by his son Stephen.

"He was a warm, friendly, peaceful man in so many ways, from his eccentric lifestyle, his philosophising, his love of music, his commitment to ecology and wildlife, and interests in engineering and computing. He had a vibrant personality and he was always a captivating person to talk to, even if it was sometimes a struggle to follow his thinking. He had strong values but equally a rather dismissive view of politics and the wider bureaucratic state.

Patrick had a very dry sense of humour, laughed a lot and was very easy going. He loved being with young life, including children and birds with a particular nurturing instinct that led you to believe that both birds and children were being fed the same things! Whilst highly intelligent, with a tremendous memory for the most random facts, he could easily forget what he had been sent to a shop for and come back with something totally different, much to Mum's patient despair. He would often forget where he had put things, including glasses and wallets which would sometimes take a while to track down; mugs of tea which were sometimes left in the garden and turned up months later.

He enrolled on the world-famous degree course in Forestry at UCNW Bangor in 1958, motivated by the significance of forestation and climate change, a view that was only just emerging! He taught and then lectured at Hatfield Polytechnic before the draw of Wales brought them back to start up a Field Studies Centre. Running a business was never a strong point and Dad soon settled into an idyllic life surrounded by books, trees and nature!"



David Dixon

We have recently heard of the death of David Dixon and extend our condolences to his family and friends. He was an early north east Wales member of DOWH even though not able to attend many meetings. His memorial card reads *In loving memory of David Alan Dixon who passed away peacefully on Saturday 11th July 2020, aged 77 years.*



Patrick Billington

Visit to Nant y Pandy, Glyndyfrdwy in June

On one of the hottest afternoon's in June, we finally managed a branch event. Not exactly to do with old houses, but the chance to see how an industry changed the area from an entirely, poor rural area into a 'new' village. In 1850 there were just 78 houses, but with the coming of the railway and the demand for slate, a quarry and slate mine were developed, and of course the processing needed a whole infrastructure - hence the development of Nant y Pandy. The industry was to last for about 100 years, but now nature is reclaiming all the old buildings.



Nant y Pandy visit



Ruthin visit

Visit to Ruthin in July

Another fine afternoon for our July meeting. Following on from Fiona Gale's zoom presentation on Ruthin Castle, Fiona led a walk in Ruthin. We were also joined by Neil Redfern, the director of the Council for British Archaeology. We had a quick look St Peter's church founded in 1310 and the restored old court house before moving on to the castle. Seeing the remains of the castle brought home the enormity of the project being undertaken by the Ruthin Castle Conservation Trust. From the money collected from members for this event, a donation has been given to the trust. For those who couldn't join us you missed a fascinating afternoon and an excellent cream tea.

Welcome to Jenny Lees as new Branch Secretary

As I have taken on the role of Chair for the Group, I am handing over the Denbighshire Branch to Jenny Lees - thank you Jenny for taking this on.

FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

Report to September 2022 by Margaret and Wally Barr

In June ten members of the branch met together at Gladstone's Library in Hawarden. The meeting heard a talk given by Margaret Barr and Gina Skyner on their research into the fifteenth century house Terfyn, near Cwm (available from the DOWH library at

https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20182_HH_35_Terfyn%20History%20Final.pdf

The name Terfyn means 'end or boundary' and indeed the house sits on the border between Trelawnyd and Cwm parishes. On the 1st July the same talk about the history of Terfyn was given to the Rhuddlan History Society by Margaret and Gina. The next branch meeting will be held at 2pm on Monday September 19th at St Winefrides, Gwespyr, the home of Wally and Margaret Barr. St Winefrides (listed as a Grade 2* building) is one wing of what was built as a school in the mid-nineteenth century by the Mostyn family. This meeting will include the opportunity to visit both the original living quarters

of school staff (St Winefrides) and the adjoining school hall, now renovated into a comfortable family home for neighbours of the Barrs.

In October the branch will meet jointly with Caerwys Historical Society for a talk on Flintshire place-names. The speaker will be Hywel Wyn Owen, co-author of *Place-Names of Flintshire* and will be held in the Town Hall in Caerwys on the evening of Thursday 20th October.

It is planned that the speaker at our November meeting will be Jane Parry-Evans, who will describe the extensive and valuable DOWH database she has been working on from numerous elements of data provided by members of DOWH. The date and time of this meeting is yet to be confirmed. December is a time for a social gathering. Venues, dates and times are to be confirmed.

Crow-stepped gables in North Wales by Irene Brightmer



Plas Mawr Conwy

there are many others, including lesser old farmhouses to be found 'hiding off the beaten track'. It is always a delight to come across another one, a reminder that our region had far-reaching connections in centuries past. In his comprehensive 1975 book on "Houses in the Welsh Countryside" the author Peter Smith mapped 48 examples, which showed a marked concentration in Clwyd and Conwy.

Perhaps you have your own favourites and can collect your own list as you visit old houses with your branch of DOWH? And it may be that the Parishes Project will eventually reveal more than Peter Smith's count, as branch members review the old buildings in our region parish by parish. I shall be interested to discover which parish has the highest number of these striking picturesque features.

Although this distinctive and decorative roof feature is often associated with Scotland and eastern England, it is also common in parts of North Wales, and was introduced into our region as early as Elizabethan times. The feature is a stair-shaped design usually at the top of a triangular gable end of a building. But it may also be used on facades or even form false fronts of buildings without gable ends. Crow-stepped gables probably originated in Flanders where the oldest examples date from the 12th century, and the style subsequently spread throughout northern Europe.

Sir Richard Clough (1530–70) from Denbigh, a wealthy and highly influential merchant, and an agent of Queen Elizabeth, was responsible for bringing the style to North Wales. He lived in Antwerp and when he returned to Denbighshire in 1567 he built two houses which still survive: Plas Clough his main house, and Bach y Graig in Tremeirchion, possibly built as a warehouse and office, only part of which still stands. They are both important as the first brick-built houses in Wales. The architect was from Flanders and it is likely that the bricks were imported.

The typical Flemish crow-stepped gable was used at Plas Clough and was subsequently copied widely in the grand houses and substantial farmhouses then being built in our region. The best-known and most easily visited are probably Plas Mawr (1576-85) in Conwy and Faenol Fawr (1597) now a hotel in Bodelwyddan.



Faenol Fawr Bodelwyddan



Pwll Halog Cwm



Golden Grove Llanasa

FROM THE WEBMASTER by Peter Masters

Following a successful season of Zoom meetings with many distinguished Speakers several of whom were from our own membership, a portfolio of recordings of these talks has been created and can be viewed online via Youtube by following the links on our website These speakers include Richard Suggett RCAHWW, Dr Martin Bridge Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory Oxford, our own Richard Cuthbertson, John Townsend and recently Fiona Gale.

Eight recordings in all so far on a wide range of historical topics are available online on our website in the Membership section /Zoom Talks <https://www.discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/page24.html>. A new programme of speakers for the autumn season is being arranged and details will be available on the website soon; see the Events page.

The website redesign is proving popular and all the available reports for Tree Ring [Dendro] Dating, House Histories and Building Recording are being reviewed, updated and have had a new front cover added to give them a uniform house style. All the Newsletters are also available on the website via the Newsletter link. Also available through the Newsletter page are several Publications, which although not necessarily House Histories are nonetheless important works of research into social history relevant to our project. These excellent Publications are produced by some of our Members and include Cwm Maethlon, Cynwyd, Plas Penmynydd and Llanddulas.

With the lifting of restrictions, Branches are venturing out again to visit Houses and sites of interest. As spaces are often limited it is again possible to book online; this facility opens up the events to members who are not necessarily from the organising branch and helps the organisers keep track of the bookings. Keep watch on the website Membership/Events Bookings page.

FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Due to an unfortunate error in assembling the various contributions to NL41 from their many original and disparate formats, a part of a sentence of the penultimate paragraph of Martin Cherry's article on Dolgellau for the Merioneth Branch was omitted (bottom p.6 to top p.7). The sentence should read

'By the late seventeenth century (possibly before), the town's centre of gravity had shifted a few hundred yards to the east: a picture of about 1800 shows an informal open space for trading (Fig 2), which in and after 1830 was transformed into a proper square, the only part of Dolgellau that could be called 'planned'. The nineteenth century saw much change...'

Profuse apologies to Martin.



New Chair Janice Dale sends this charming sepia tinted photograph of a fine house taken in 1903. Can anyone identify this house? Janice is Estate Administrator for the Rhug Estate and can be contacted at JaniceDale@Rhug.co.uk or Rhug Estate Office, Corwen, Denbighshire, North Wales, LL21 0EH Tel: 01490 413 000 Ext 2.



TESCO Bags of Help



MARC FITCH



DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



NODDWYR/PATRONS

Syr/Sir Simon Jenkins, FSA, FRSL; Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, MA, PhD

Dathlu Treftadaeth Cymru drwy astudio tai
traddodiadol a bywydau'r bobl oedd yn byw ynddyn nhw.

Celebrating Welsh Heritage through the study of traditional
houses and the lives of the people who lived in them.

CYLCHLYTHYR 43 Rhagfyr 2022

NEWSLETTER 43 December 2022

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members

FROM THE CHAIR by Janice Dale

December already, with frosts for the first time this week after what has been the warmest year on record, so no doubt like me you will be driven indoors - a chance to catch up with some house histories! I am currently looking at the parish of Derwen in Denbighshire following an invitation to *Tai Teg Canol* - one of three houses in a farm complex. Researching is proving tricky as records don't differentiate between the houses. Looking at the Tithe, I think Derwen is unusual in having so many independent owners rather than finding the majority of properties owned by one of the large estates, I think this is going to take some time to unravel.

It is good to know that branches are getting out and about now, complemented by interesting zoom lectures covering a wide range of subjects; big thank you to Martin for arranging and Peter for sorting out all the techy bits. Our winter programme started with Michael Freeman on tourists impressions of Wales; we forget, today with our easy forms of transport and getting about, how adventurous these early tourists were.

It was a pleasure to see Frances Richardson who gave a lecture on the early shops and shopkeepers of 19th C Wales - I still remember the first lecture she gave the group many years ago on Penmachno. Looking at the work she has done over the years I am sure there might be possibly more talks from Frances.

Our third lecture will be Andy Hyde, and by the time you read this, no doubt we will have enjoyed it. Some years in Llansilin, he gave us a practical session on the work of early carpenters, which gave an insight into the skill of these men - I am always in awe of the abilities of the men who built the houses which are the focus of our group.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.



Derwen churchyard cross

NEWS UPDATE FROM THE SECRETARY by Margaret Dunn

Membership Fiona Gale and branch secretaries will be contacting branch members with incorrect or overdue subscriptions or with Gift Aid queries. She can be contacted by email on membership@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk.

DOWH Insurance Branch secretaries have the details of our insurance cover. The personal accident cover decreases for those aged over 75. Some members may select to independently provide their own personal insurance cover.

COVID-19 Members may wear masks at any meetings. Notice will be given should hosts or organisers request that masks be worn.

Parishes Project co-ordinator We are delighted to welcome Gareth Davies as he starts in this role, working closely with Jane Parry Evans. We thank John Townsend for the immense amount of work he undertook to initiate the project, much of

it with Peter Masters. Unfortunately Covid-19 halted all but the armchair research aspect of this important project. Hopefully, in the New Year Gareth will be able to liaise with branches and assist / advise on initial research on so far untouched parishes as well as widen the scope of research in those parishes where work has been started.

CAN YOU HELP? One of our members who writes out her research longhand has recently completed an interesting House History on another Merioneth house and is asking if any member could possibly undertake the typing over the next few months. The author lives near Harlech. If you are interested in knowing more about this project, please contact secretary@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk.

Gwynedd Family History Society Resources Centre This is located in the same building as the Caernarfon Library, Pavilion Hill, Caernarfon LL55 1AS. Google maps link - <https://goo.gl/maps/jP7NhCJW1esBhJ8X8>. The centre is open to GFHS members and visitors on every third Saturday afternoon between 2 and 5 p.m. Experienced volunteers are there to offer help and general advice on researching family trees. For more information please see: <https://www.chtgwyneddfhs.cymru/en/resources>.

Dr Eurwyn Williams' Presidential Address to the CAA, 2021

Dr Eurwyn Wilam was elected President of the Cambrian Archaeological Association for 2021-2022. His presidential address, given in July 2021, was printed in the 2022 volume 172 of Archaeologia Cambrensis. The title is '**Let use be preferred to uniformity': the study of vernacular architecture in Wales**' and it covers a very enlightening personal view on this topic. He is much appreciated as one of our DOWH patrons and the address includes several comments on our work over the years. It is available on YouTube. The URL address is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RXdkliiNZY>

OBITUARIES



Eryl Rothwell Hughes pictured left

We are very sad to report the death in September 2022 of the very well known Anglesey branch member Mr Eryl Rothwell Hughes, aged 87. Eryl had been a physics teacher prior to working in Continuing & Adult Education where his gifts as a charismatic speaker and brilliant photographer led to his evening classes on all aspects of Welsh history and archaeology being very popular. He was much sought after as a speaker at field events such as the former annual Criccieth Festival and numerous local history society meetings. In the 1980s he introduced me to many early houses in the Abergele hinterland where he had many relations and we also crawled around roof spaces at Egryn, Merioneth in the 1990s, now run by the National Trust, and together explored many other old properties. He was an adviser to the infant DOWH and willingly shared his considerable expertise. Even after his eyesight deteriorated, his outstanding memory and determination enabled him, with the assistance of his wife, Esperanza, to continue to deliver well-attended illustrated lectures, especially on Anglesey where he had lived for most of his life. He must have introduced hundreds of people to the joys of studying houses - both vernacular and greater mansions.

Ann Rhydderch-Dart

We are very sad to report the death in August 2021, aged 70, of Ann Rhydderch-Dart, a distinguished Caernarfonshire branch member. Many will have known her during her time as the Dolgellau Record Office archivist and then as the senior archivist for Gwynedd based in Caernarfon. Her great depth of knowledge of North Wales was readily shared with all who requested information. She was also a trustee for the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. Ann became a DOWH trustee in 2009 having earlier been a member of the DOWH Advisory Group of professionals who worked alongside the volunteers. Her calm wisdom and clear-sighted approach were a great asset and we will miss her. We send our deep condolences to her husband and son.

Mr Dewi Williams

We are very sad to hear of the recent death of Dewi Williams of Penmorfa, Caernarfonshire Branch. He was one of the earliest local Welsh people involved with the first project in the Beddgelert and Snowdon area and also undertook house histories. He was a very well known local historian and history teacher in Pwllheli and was very humble about his extensive knowledge of the area. He will be greatly missed.

Mr Peter Rock of Porthmadog and Mrs Dorothy Parry of Maentwrog

We also report with much regret, the passing of two more active local historians who attended activities in the Caernarfonshire and other branches. We will miss their company and their insights into many aspects of local history.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

CONWY BRANCH

Glossary of terms used in land deeds and other legal documents by Gill Jones (Part One)

Patronymics

Patronymics describes the process of giving a child the father's given, or forename, as a surname. This means that a family's name changes in successive generations. The Welsh patronymic system describes family trees in terms of the male line only and records the family association in the 'ap' or 'ab' prefix ('ap' is a contraction of the Welsh word *mab*, which means son). For example, Rhys ap Dafydd translates as 'Rhys, son of David'. Modern Welsh surnames such as Powell, Price and Prichard are the result of this contraction and a progressive tendency to Anglicise Welsh names: under the patronymic system they would have been ap Hywel, ap Rhys and ap Richard.

Girls were sometimes *verch* or *ferch* meaning 'daughter of' and abbreviated to 'vch' or 'vz'. Traditionally women kept their maiden names when they married as there was no surname for them to adopt. This practice continued up until the early 1800s in some areas, with rural areas clinging to the patronymic system longer than urban areas. Areas where English influence was strong abandoned patronymics earlier as did town families and the wealthy.

diem clausit extremum

The phrase *diem clausit extremum* means 'he closed his last day', that is, he had died. After the death of a *tenant in capite* (tenant in chief who held directly from the crown), a writ of **diem clausit extremum** would usually be issued by the heirs to the local escheator, the official responsible for taking possession of the dead tenant's estate on behalf of the king who was the *ultimus haeres* (last heir). A jury would be convened and an Inquisition Post Mortem held.

Inquisition Post Mortem

The extent of the crown's rights was determined by the holding of the *Inquisition Post Mortem*. The resultant outcome gave details of the lands/properties held by the deceased tenant *in capite*, the date of his death and the name and age of his heir. If there was a rightful heir, he paid relief (a sum of money) to the crown in order to take possession of the estate; if he was under age, the crown had the right of wardship and marriage. i.e. it was entitled to the revenue of the estate, and to select the heir's bride. This information was sent to the Court of Chancery. N.B. If the land was part of a Lordship e.g. Denbigh, Conwy, Caernarvon the 'Lord' held the right of wardship and received the relief rather than the Crown.

The Court of Wards and Liveries

Lands held of the king in chief were subject to wardship if they fell by inheritance into the hands of a minor. The king was entitled to the profits of the estate during the minority; He had the right to choose the ward's marriage partner and to enter his inheritance. In practice, the king usually sold these rights to the highest bidder. The Court of Wards and Liveries was established in the early 1540s, to take over the administration of wardship from the Court of Chancery.

Medieval Welsh Land Division - Cantref

Land was divided into *cantrefi*, which were themselves divided into smaller *cymydau* (commotes). The name *cantref* is derived from *Cant* ("a hundred") and *tref* (town in modern Welsh but formerly used for much smaller settlements). The *cantref* is thought to be the original unit, with the commotes being a later division. *Cantrefi* could vary considerably in size; most were divided into two or three commotes.

Medieval Welsh Land Division - Commote

Welsh *cwmwd*, sometimes spelt in older documents as *cymwd*, plural *cymydau*). A secular division of land in medieval Wales.

Demesne

Those parts of the land and rights of a manor that the lord retained for himself, as distinct from those used by his tenants. What might now be called the 'home farm'.

Gavelkind

In Wales there was a custom of inheritance similar to that of gavelkind in England which, in Welsh, was known as *cyfran*. Under Welsh common law on a landowner's death the land would be divided equally among all his sons, including illegitimate sons.

Gwele (+ person's name)

The land of that person

Inheritance of property/estates

Heirs only had a life interest in the estate/property; they could not sell the freehold.

Settlements

Most big landed estates in England and Wales were settled in order to preserve the estate intact for future generations and to make provision for family members. 'Strict settlement' was the most usual form of settlement from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. It had the following benefits: It put obstacles in the way of selling the land. The landowner was given only a life interest in the property. He was designated the 'tenant for life' or the 'tenant in possession'. He could not sell the estate without the agreement of various heirs and trustees. It put limitations on who could inherit the estate. It was usual for a new entail (see below) to be created with each new generation. The new entail would name the person who would inherit the estate, usually the eldest son of the tenant for life. He was designated the 'tenant in tail'. A strict entail in tail male would avoid the estate descending to more distant relatives such as cousins. It spelt out the amount of land or money which was available to support younger sons and female members of the family.

Settlements could not be broken (except by Act of Parliament) until the tenant in tail came of age and was able to agree to any changes. Until then, his estate was guaranteed by trustees. Technically, the trustees were the owners of the landed estate on behalf of the family. They were responsible for ensuring that all receipts and payments from the estate were paid to the various members of the family who were entitled to them.

Entails

These enabled landowners to ensure that family land remained in the hands of the family. Freehold estates could descend (be passed on) in one of two ways:

'Fee simple'. Freehold ownership. There were no limitations on this estate. It could pass to any descendent (sons, daughters or grandchildren), or to collateral relatives (brothers, sisters or cousins).

'Fee tail'. Estates in fee tail were deliberately limited to descend only to specified people. They were 'entailed'. The most usual fee tail was 'tail male'. This limited the descent to the legitimate male heirs 'of the body' of the owner, i.e. sons and grandsons of the owner's marriage. 'Tail general' was similar, but included females. In tail male meant that males would take precedence over females. i.e. A younger son would inherit before an elder daughter. Entails ceased to be effective in 1833.

Disentail (disentail)

To release an estate from an entail i.e. when there are no direct heirs.

Uses

The terms of settlements and entails were guaranteed by having trustees involved. These were usually lawyers or family friends. The word 'use' is another word for 'trust'.

Annuities or yearly rent

Family members could be provided for by annuities i.e. annual payments out of the estate. The annuitants could be widows of the landowner, heirs who had not yet inherited, unmarried female relatives etc. If this money is paid out of lands it is called a rent charge. If it is paid out of properties it is known as an annuity.

Moiety

Half, one of two parts into which an estate or inheritance is to be divided.

Abstract of Title

The written evidence of ownership that followed the public act of transferring land. It usually shows a detailed list of deeds showing descent of property to the present owner.

Hereditaments

Any kind of property which can be inherited. e.g. land, property, titles, coats of arms etc ... but not moveable property (i.e. goods and chattels).

Indenture

Legal agreement between 2 parties that reflects a debt or purchase obligation.

Land Transactions - Freehold Land

Gift (12th-15th centuries)

Feoffment (12th-19th centuries)

Quitclaim (12th-19th centuries)

Letters Patent (13th-19th centuries)

Bargain and Sale (16th-19th centuries) Lease and Release (16th-19th centuries)

Final Concord (12th century-1833)

Common Recovery (15th century-1833)

Deed of Covenant for the production of title deeds (18th-19th centuries)

Grant or Conveyance (1845-1925)

Land Transactions - Gifts

This was the most common deed recording the sale of land in the medieval period. Despite the name, a deed of gift was not a means of giving something for free. Gifts were generally replaced by feoffments around the 15th century. These nearly always left some rights to the giver. Often this meant that the property could only be inherited by heirs of a certain class, in particular by receiver's ancestors.

Land Transactions - Feoffment

A feoffment is similar to a deed of gift, recording the sale of real property (land or buildings) from one party to another, for a monetary consideration. The amount of money involved is not usually specified until around the sixteenth century. It developed in the Middle Ages. The actual transfer of property took place through a ceremony of 'livery of seisin'. The feoffment merely confirmed the seisin.

Land Transactions - Livery of Seizin

Legal possession i.e. 'the son and heir of ... has obtained seisin of his inheritance'. It applied only to freehold tenures which were inheritable.

Land Transactions - Quitclaim

This was a formal renunciation of any claim to property which is not in the possession of the person making the quitclaim.

Land Transactions - Bond for quiet possession

These were usually connected with other deeds, especially conveyances or leases. They strengthened the warranty clause in the deed.

Land Transactions - Letters Patent

Grants of land or rights from the monarch to a private individual were made by letters patent. These documents are very impressive, written on big sheets of parchment. They are often illuminated at the top with enormous initial letters, decorations, and a portrait of the King or Queen. The Great Seal was attached at the bottom of the deed.

Land Transactions - Bargain and Sale

Purpose - Sale of real property (land or buildings) from one party to another, for a monetary consideration. This form of conveyance had existed since the fifteenth century, but came into its own in 1535 under the Statute of Enrolments, as an alternative to the feoffment. Bargain and sales of freehold property were supposed to be enrolled (registered) in one of the royal courts at Westminster, or in a county court.

A memorandum of enrolment almost always appears on the back of the deed - headed 'Irotulatur' in Latin. Some deeds from the sixteenth century onwards were hybrid documents combining elements of the feoffment with elements from a deed of bargain and sale. These are described in archival catalogues variously as 'feoffment', 'bargain and sale with feoffment', or 'bargain and sale with livery of seizin'. They use the form of words from a bargain and sale, but lack an enrolment. Instead, they include a memorandum of livery of seizin.

Lease and Release

This was a method of conveyancing intended to avoid 'livery of seizin or enrolment on a court roll. The purchaser first took a one year lease of the property; the vendor, on the following day, granted the reversion of the lease to the purchaser. The purpose of Lease and Release agreements was:-

1. Sale of real property (land or buildings) for a monetary consideration.
2. Mortgage of a real property in order to raise money.
3. Settlement of a real property from owners to trustees in order to limit descent to specified people.

To be continued

ANGLESEY BRANCH

Future events by Susan Hurst

The following programme has now been arranged for early 2023.

Tues Jan 10th 2pm. Joint Zoom meeting with the Caernarfonshire branch. Jane Parry-Evans will talk about the Society's Houses Database.

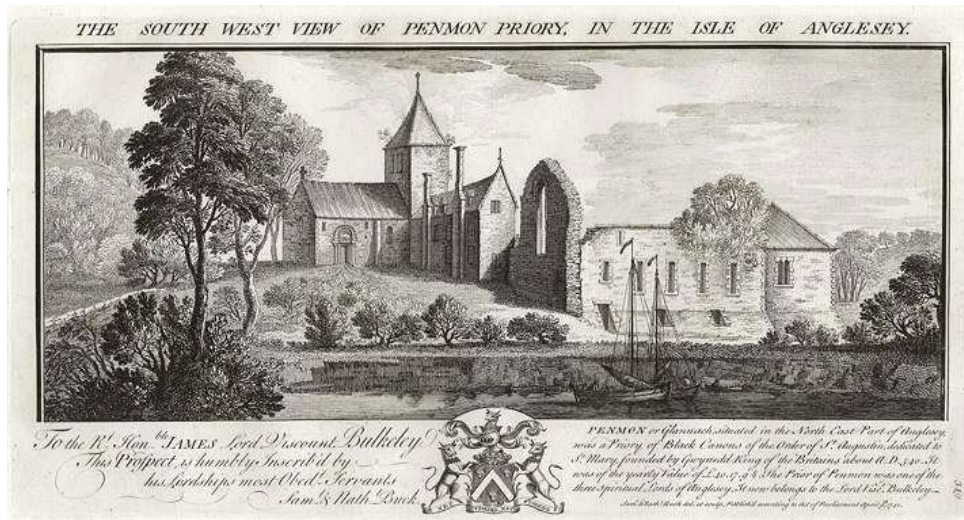
Tues Feb 28th 2pm. Church visit to either Llanbabo/Llantrisant or Llangristiolus with Andrew Davidson chief archaeologist at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. Cost £3.

Thurs March 30th 2pm at the Archives in Llangefni. Terry Williams will give an informal slideshow with commentary on some 'Lost Houses of Anglesey'. Light refreshments available. Cost £3.

Wed April 26 2pm. A visit to Plas Bodafon with the kind permission of Mrs Olwen Green. Light refreshments available. Cost £3.

Details of Zoom talks will be announced when known. For the





period May - Sept 2023 (no meeting in Aug) a couple of walks, with Andrew Davidson and Rhys Mwyn, and a couple of house visits are in the pipeline.

Branch outdoor meetings by Margaret Dunn

Penmon Priory

On August 31st, a lovely sunny day, twenty members and guests met to be led around the Penmon site by Andrew Davidson, Chief Archaeologist of the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. We first visited the oldest part of the church and

the remains of the priory, the former containing two crosses and decorated font which pre-date the church, and the latter having a fine example of a thirteenth century window. We then moved on to the later built dovecote, which has a very fine corbelled roof, and then on to St. Seiriol's Well passing the fish pond on the way. The afternoon was completed by travelling along the toll road to Penmon Point where we looked briefly at the Lighthouse Keepers' Cottages, the Trwyn Du lighthouse and Puffin Island. It was a most enjoyable and informative afternoon.

Beaumaris Urban

Seven of us met in Beaumaris on 8th September 2022 for a guided walk along Castle Street and Church Street led by Margaret Dunn. It is likely that many of the houses fronting Castle Street contain remnants of early timber framed houses. We thank the owners for access to The Tudor Rose (front wing dated to 1485-6; first floor to 1549), the Red Boat (roof timbers dated to 1482-3, first floor to 1709); The Gate House (dated to c.1625 and from where we saw the town walls); external view of 60 Castle Street (dated to 1496 and 1516); and the George and Dragon, Church Street (ground floor dated to 1540; lateral chimney and jetted first storey). A leaflet was circulated giving details of these and other early Beaumaris buildings.



Tudor Rose, Castle St. Beaumaris

CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

Reports on autumn activities by Margaret Dunn

Pwllheli 6th September 2022



Thirteen of us gathered in the **Penlan Fawr Inn, Pwllheli**, for a guided walk of some of the now hidden historical sites of the town. Iwan Edgar, a well-known local historian first outlined the history of the Inn as a townhouse of the Vaughan family of Llwyndwrys and Corsygedol, near Barmouth. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to obtain a tree felling date for the building, but it was a Snowdonia-plan house of the late 1500 – early 1600s, with a large inglenook fireplace and a spiral stair, now removed. (See the DOWH website). A 1630s storeyed porch has RV incised into it indicating Richard Vaughan of Corsygedol. Mathan House, another similar building along Penlan Street was also undated. These are probably the oldest surviving Pwllheli houses following the devastation during the wars of Owain Glyndwr, from which Pwllheli was slow in

recovering.

Iwan Edgar summarized the earlier layout of Pwllheli which was greatly altered in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by the cobs and sluice gates. Formerly the ancient church of Deneio, inland and uphill, was the centre of the community. The Welsh Princes established Y Gadlys on the higher ground opposite the old cinema, now a car park and an ideal spot for future excavation. We walked there from Penlan Fawr and then went downhill to the present site of Asda where a small stream once entered this low-lying area forming the salt pool at high tide, giving the name to modern Pwllheli. At the end of Kings Head Street we saw the site of the Market Cross. We then walked to Penmount Chapel and saw the remains of the motte and bailey castle in a back garden. Finally, we walked alongside the twentieth century last section of the railway to the 1909 station and back to Penlan Fawr for refreshment and discussion. Our donation to our speaker will be used towards the 2023 Eisteddfod being held near Pwllheli. This was the last of the four summer meetings, some arranged jointly with Cymdeithas Hanes Beddgelert.



House visit to Hafod Ruffydd Uchaf, Beddgelert 28th November



Ten members visited **Hafod Ruffydd Uchaf, Beddgelert**, by kind permission of the owners. It is an early Snowdonia-type house, probably a transitional style of building, erected 1531 - 1546, before the traditional Snowdonia-type house became very popular. We looked at the original timbers in the house and outbuilding and discussed the information given about the house in the 2014 publication "Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia" (pp. 154-158). We also discussed the house history (see the website) which traces the history of the mountain land holding from when it was part of the Augustinian priory at Beddgelert. A repeat visit has been arranged in January 2023 to enable additional members visit this unusual house.

Future events

- Dec 13th **Christmas Social** with two illustrated talks: "**The first houses visited in the area**" and "**What's new on the DOWH website**". 2 p.m. in Beddgelert Village Hall; bring and share refreshments. £3 per head. Open to all.
- Jan 23rd: Repeat House visit to **Hafod Ruffydd Uchaf, Beddgelert** Dated 1531-46; an early transitional Snowdonia house. 2 p.m. £3. Max: 10.
- Jan 10th **Exploring the Houses Database** with Jane Parry Evans. 2 p.m. Zoom meeting for members.

Feb 9th House visit to **Rhos, Minffordd** (Dated 1572). 2 p.m. £3. Max 10.

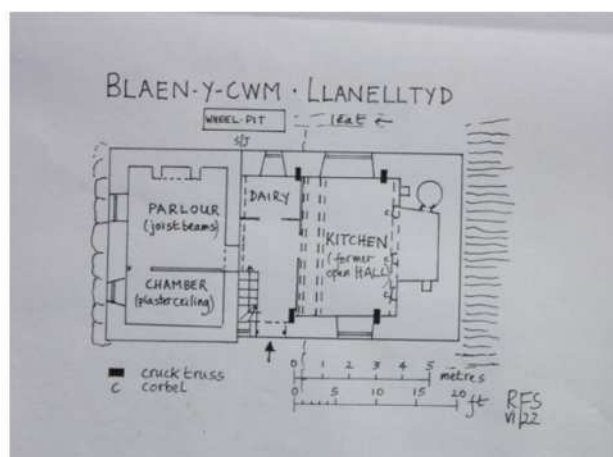
Mar tbc **Caernarfonshire Parishes Project: where we are and what to do next.** Details later.

Apr 27th House visit to **Ty Mawr, Criccieth** Snowdonia house, dated post 1527. 2 p.m. £3. Max: 12.

May 17th Introductory visit about **Using the Gwynedd Record Office, Caernarfon**, led by Archive staff. Details later.

Jun 12th House visit to **Ffridd Isaf, Rhyd Ddu** (Dated 1599 - 1600). A Snowdonia house with water wheel and barns. 2 p.m. £3. Max: 12.

MERIONETH BRANCH



Top left: the downward-sloping cruck range to the left and the Victorian modernisation to the right; bottom left: the hall, originally open, with cruck blade visible to the right, with integral fireplace and inserted hall ceiling; top right: plan (Crown Copyright, RCAHMW); bottom right: the apex carpentry of the cruck between the hall and the cross passage.

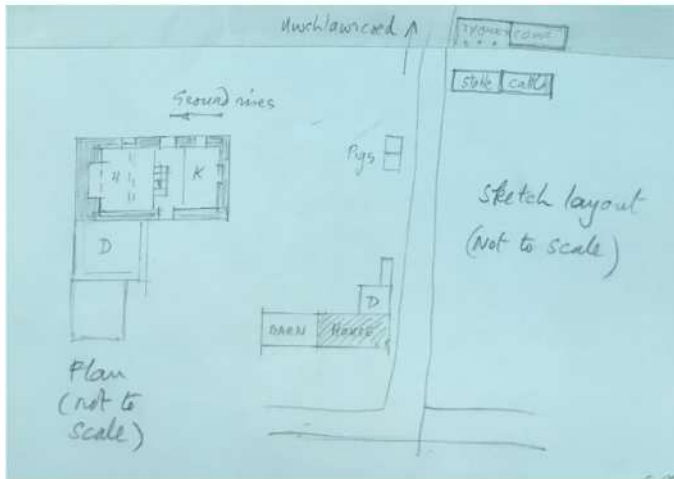
Report of House Visits Autumn 2022 by Martin Cherry

About a dozen members visited two houses this autumn: one (Blaen-y-cwm in a remote part of Llanelltyd parish) is an 'unknown' sixteenth-century cruck-framed house, probably dating from around 1550 - unlisted and not on Coflein - brought to our attention of our member, Richard Suggett, by the owner; the other (Tyddyn Lliidiart, deep in the hill country of Llanenddwyn parish), probably seventeenth century that at first glance looks straightforward but turns out not to be! We're very grateful, as ever, to the owners for allowing us access to their homes.

The earliest documentary reference to Blaen-y-cwm is in Edward Lhuyd's *Parochialia* of c. 1696. A Victorian addition faces down the valley and it isn't until one gets quite close that the low rear cruck range comes into view. Its siting is instructive:

the older house has the downslope siting characteristic of medieval houses. It is sited on the edge of the *ffridd* for the exploitation of the upland pasture but overlooks the enclosed fields of the farm. Two full cruck-trusses survive in the former hall which was open to the roof and always heated by the substantial end chimney. In a second phase a ceiling was inserted into the open hall, c. 1700. The 'new' ceiling beam, set on corbels above the fireplace, appears to be the re-used former head beam of the partition that originally divided the open hall from the cross passage. The addition of a parlour at the lower end was a characteristic Victorian development. The passage area was replanned with the addition of a new stair, and a dairy was partitioned off at the far end of the passage. The pit for the dairy wheel is visible on the outside along with the former course of the leat. The plan was drawn by Richard Suggett and Dinah Pickard is compiling a house history.

Tyddyn Llidiart appears on the Ardudwy Crown Rental of 1623 as being held by William Vaughan, esquire (*armiger*) at a rent of 1s. 9d. This was William Vaughan of Corsygedol who held widespread estates in the parish and elsewhere as did his



Sketch plan drawn by Peter Smith (Crown copyright, RCAHMW) with the house as now: the roof line of the original house can be seen on the gable end facing the road. The old eaves level of the house is roughly the same as the present eaves level of the shippon (to left).

son, Richard who succeeded to the estate in 1638. At the time of the tithe assessment in 1842 it comprised just over 65 acres, mainly pasture (72%), with some arable (21%) and pasture (17%). Peter Smith's sketch plan (below) reinforces the impression that this was primarily a livestock farm, with a dairy, cattle and cow houses as well as a barn and pigsty. The OS map (below) suggests that the suffix (*Llidiart*) may indicate a house or holding at the gateway to rough pastures (originally on the boundary between cultivated land and rough grazing).

The development of the house is not as simple as it appears at first sight and some queries will only be answered when we measure it up. So, here is a possible sequence of events:

- . A farmstead on the edge of the cultivated and waste land. It may have been a longhouse (the land slopes slightly away from the heated hall and the eaves line of the former house and the shippon carry through quite closely).
- . The roof of this house (later raised) may originally have been of queen-strut type.
- . The earliest surviving features look later-seventeenth century (the stops on the bressummer) but this might have been an adaptation of something earlier which involved changing the roof configuration. By the 18th century (probably before this) the farmer was of yeoman status.
- . Modernisation in the nineteenth century involved raising the roof (using the principal timbers but with new purlins) making it into a fully-storeyed house. A centrally-sited stair replaced a ladder stair that might have been in the hall.
- . By this time there was a complex of farm buildings, including a barn (marked 'cows' on the site plan) that looks eighteenth century; the other buildings look Victorian although the Dutch-style barn is known to date from the 1920s.

The two houses show how much there is still to be discovered and explained in the remote countryside of west Merioneth.

Gill Jones's very useful note and transcription of the Denbighshire and Flintshire entries in George Owen's *Survey of Wales* 1602, published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1823 prompted me to see if he had covered other counties, too. He did and I hoped to repeat Gill's exercise for Anglesey, Caernarfonshire and Merioneth but ran out of time. But the relevant pages can be easily downloaded at:

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433081131462&view=1up&seq=634&skin=2021>

Unfortunately the source needs to be treated carefully since, according to the Dictionary of National Biography entry for Owen, the *Gentleman's Magazine* material was based on an 'inaccurate transcript' and various errors have crept in. But it's a useful list to compare with Lhuyd's lists in *Parochialia*.

Accurate or not, Owen's views on the characteristics of the local people are worthy of record: Anglesey was very populous, the people 'not very personable; quiet and civil' with 'little or no theft'. Both Caernarfonshire and Merioneth natives appeared to him to be 'tall and personable', the counties 'well governed' with 'little or no theft' - rather surprising for Merioneth which had been considered by many to have been unruly, violent and ungovernable in the sixteenth century. The state of rural Denbighshire goes unrecorded but the towns are interestingly graded: Denbigh 'a good town but much given to quarrelling and suits at law' and Ruthin 'not much inferior in goodness'; Wrexham was 'a good town, and civilly governed, yet no corporation'. Last, but clearly not least, Flintshire folk were 'tall, personable and withall very civil'. Owen was a very experienced and astute judge of social behaviour and norms but whether he was particularly short in stature (and easily intimidated by the lofty inhabitants of Flint) I know not.

DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH



Post-and-panel *dais* partition at Henfaes isaf: Courtesy Moyra James

Report by Jenny Lees

Adopting the role of Branch Secretary from September has been very rewarding, especially now that DOWH members can once again enjoy 'live' the results of our research! In October the owners of *Henfaes isaf*, Cynwyd, kindly hosted our local group and proved excellent 'tour guides' for the outstanding architectural features assessed by our DOWH historians in 2021. Our full house history is pending publication, as dendrochronology samples failed to date and we await hopeful isotope dating, as *Henfaes isaf* is of special architectural interest.

Although now externally resembling a C19th farmhouse of 'central-entry' type, internally *Henfaes isaf* retains beautifully preserved evidence of

originally being a cruck-framed four bay medieval 'peasant' hall-house¹ of around 1500. From about early C17th it became a 'Snowdonian' end-chimney type house, with stone mostly replacing timber walls but crucks remaining, and a fireplace inserted in the wide passage bay between an original downslope 'cow bay' and an upper hall. This hall would have been arranged like a smaller version of a gentry 'great hall', with raised '*dais* bench' at the upper end. Skilled restoration by the owners' family from 1961 onwards has preserved not only original crucks, but also the splendid oak 'post-and-panel' *dais* partition, with even the mortices into which the bench ends once slotted still visible! Exciting documentary references exist from as early as 1470 onwards, when Margaret verch Grono ap David ap Plethyn leased to Jevan ap Madog ap David a tenement at *Henvaes* on the 'Vigil of St. Michael the Archangel'.²

A tenement named *tiddyn yr henvaes alias tiddyn Gruffith ap Jollyn* was gifted by Dominus [Reverend or Sir] David ap Jevan ap Gruffith in 1521, at which time the Barons of Edeirnion descended from Madog ap Maredudd, the last Welsh

¹ For crucks, see R. Suggett, '*Crucks in Wales*', and Martin Cherry and P. Thompson, '*The Afterlife of Cruck Houses: Modernisation and Obsolescence in North Wales*'; in '*Cruck Building: A Survey*' (2019).

² Bangor University Archives (GB 222 MN/193).

Prince ruling the whole of ancient Powys, were still prominent landowners in the area.³ As they once held a court at Cynwyd, with court hearings apparently sometimes moving between gentry houses, it is interesting that two *Henfaes isaf* fields were once called *Cae'r ustus ucha* and *Cae'r ustus isaf*; upper and lower fields of the magistrate or judge. A short history of *Henfaes isaf* is already available.⁴

Less than two miles along the fertile valley of *Afon Dyfrdwy* from *Henfaes isaf* are two more cruck hall-houses dating from a similar period and lying just fields away from each other; *Hendre* dendro-dated to 1502-03 and *Llanerch* to 1501-03. These may have once been inhabited by tenants of another branch of the Barons of Edeirnia who once owned 'grander' properties such as *Hendwr*, *Crogen* and *Branas*, and in late October our group was invited to *Branas uchaf*,⁵ where we received another very warm welcome and fascinating tour!



Branas uchaf, front of main range. Image Jenny Lees, courtesy of present occupant.

Robert ap Rheinallt, born about 1470, is believed to have built *Branas Uchaf* as a hall house in 1508-9, possibly on the site of an earlier house,⁶ and as he was closely related to the Barons of Cymer who built the mediaeval hall house of *Plas Uchaf*,⁷ dated 1435-6, it is interesting that these buildings share some similar features. Such homes were not only centres of power but also places for feasting and entertainment, whose owners became patrons of bards praising the hosts and their lineages in their poetry. A book of C15th-17th Welsh poetry⁸ includes poems by bards visiting both *Branas* and *Gwerclas*; the garden of which our group visited in September. The Barons of Cymer had moved from *Plas Uchaf* to *Gwerclas* by around 1600, and poems praising its hosts and their garden are translated in our DOWH house history.⁹

Our branch also held three research meetings; one kindly hosted by *Bryn Berllan* where members were amazed by its magnificent timbers. Unlike most other local surviving timber-framed houses, *Bryn Berllan* was already a two storey house with 'box-framed' construction when first built in around 1553, and its decorative framing and 'close studding' are said to denote a building of some status.¹⁰ A house history of *Bryn Berllan* is featured in *Cynwyd Scrapbook Three*, downloadable from: <https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/page13.html>

Two research meetings were also held at *Hafod y calch*, situated within half a mile of both *Plas uchaf* and *Gwerclas*. In November members much appreciated the free expert tuition from DOWH member Pam Buttrey on negotiating the updated websites so essential to our research. In addition to a planned training session with an archivist at Denbighshire archives [date to be arranged], these meetings provide a chance to 'network' together in a relaxed informal setting; sharing research findings and 'alerting' each other to new possibly ancient dwellings to consider. A programme of further house visits is also being arranged for the

³ A. D. Carr, 'The Barons of Edeyrnia, 1282-1485, Part One', Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society, (JMHRs) Vol.4, 1963, pp.187-93; see also Jenny Lees, 'A Quest for Cymer in Edeyrnia and its Barons. Part I: c.1200-c.1700', JMHRs, Vol. XV111 (II), 2019, pp.129-40.

⁴ https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Publications/Cynwyd_Scrapbook-4.pdf

⁵ <https://www.peoplescollection.wales/content/branas-ucha-%E2%80%93-house-history>, and https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20007_HH_17_Branas-Uchaf.pdf

⁶ R. Suggett and Margaret Dunn, 'Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia', 2014, pp.96-100.

⁷ https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20023_HH_32_Plas_Uchaf.pdf

⁸ Glenys Davies, 1974, 'Nodwyr Beirdd ym Meirion'.

⁹ https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20110_HH_27_Gwerclas-2019.pdf

¹⁰ https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/ABR/den%20027_ABR_19_Bryn%20Berllan.pdf



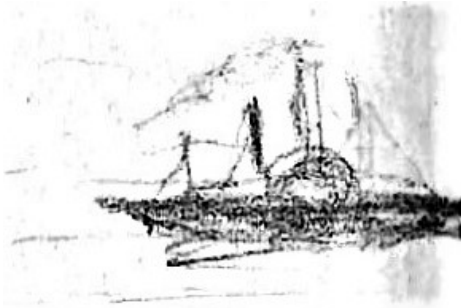
Beside the Georgian 'banqueting hall' at Gwerclas garden: Image courtesy of Janice Dale.

FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

Journey to Paris, October 1841 to June 1842 - Extracts from the journal of Joseph Iron, aged 33 by Tim Biddle

Joseph Iron devised his own version of the Grand Tour of Europe without the opulence of the nobility. His family, my relatives, from Bury St. Edmunds were tradesmen yet he describes himself in the 1861 census as an author. He was clearly well educated and keen to expand his learning. This journey, the longest account from his many journals, included an extensive stay in Paris where he attended numerous lectures at the Sorbonne and several other institutions. He also documents his daily life, personal impressions and prejudices along with detailed records of his studies in philosophy, poetry literature, history and science. The words and sketches are his own.

Departure



Thumbnail sketch of steamer Margaret by the author

We at length reached the wharf at London Bridge, and almost before we could alight, our luggage was seized and borne away by an attendant porter. Stepping on board the Margaret steamer we followed the porter between what appeared to be immense bales of merchandise, but on nearer approach I was startled at coming in contact with one of the many horses heads which on either side projected from the covering, apparently in very social contemplation of each other's frontispieces. I had no apprehension of being gobbled up, yet in the obscurity which prevailed I did not feel quite so certain of being secure from a kick and felt no regret when we had wound our way to the depository of our luggage. We saw it descend and that half a dozen horses heads overtopped the entrance and felt assured that if watchful eyes were sufficient to protect our property here it was safe.

New Year and will include a daytime visit to *Berain* on 20th March. Please contact me on leesjenny@gmail.com for further details if you would like to register an interest- or to possibly host a Denbighshire branch visit to your own historic residence?

Finally, I must make a request for possible help with DOWH Parishes Project research for houses in the more northern parts of Denbighshire. Most of our current branch researchers, living in what was once part of Merionethshire, are more familiar with that area than with the further reaches of our 'own' county (for recording purposes), and the number of our branch members in a position to continue research is greatly reduced by new caring responsibilities and several sad deaths. So, if you would like to contribute current information on pre-1750 but still extant Denbighshire dwellings known to you in the areas north of Ruthin, please email me and I can add it to our proformas for the relevant Parish.

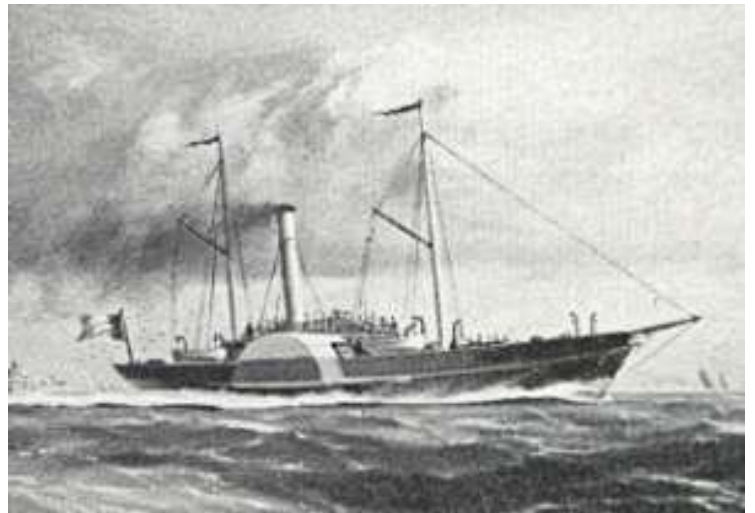


Llangar church, with Hafod y calch beyond Afon Dyfrdwy and Gwerclas fields to the left

During our silent course down the river, I also felt an inclination to make one of the drowsy group (below deck) and threw myself on the little mattress beside me. Sleep however was out of the question as though a sort of general stillness prevailed, yet the minor noises of our slumbering company forbade it. At one time the stentorian breathing of an apparently Italian officer, the long-drawn sigh of some dismal dreamer, and anon the cough of some asthmatic sufferer.

At length the barking of the steward's dog, alarmed by the motion of someone as little able to slumber as myself, aroused the entire company from their sleep, and with a 'Sacre!' or two a few rose to promenade on deck., to witness the first streaks of the opening dawn as morning was dawning; the others seemed less inclined to quit their pillow. At six however nearly all were on deck, and, by half past seven the temporary bedsteads were converted into a well-furnished breakfast table. To this ample justice was

done for no 'mal de mer' could at present be dreamt of, so extremely placid was the face of Father Thames. This calmness was continued so long and was so contrary to what I had expected that I could not help remarking to one of the sailors my satisfaction at the pleasantness of the voyage to Boulogne for the season of the year. 'Yes, Sir' was the laconic reply, 'at present but we are not there yet'. 'You apprehend rough weather still then?' '----'Assuredly' he replied 'I see it in the distance.' And thus my hopes were somewhat dampened. The sea on our rounding the Foreland had gradually become less calm, and I was standing pleasantly chatting with a Frenchman half protected by the recess in the paddle box, when dark came an impetuous wave over and wetted us half through, covering the entire deck with spray. The undulations now became considerable for me to withdraw. I just managed to reel into the cabin, and there remained indifferent to everything, excepting that twice such a thundering was made above that I imagined some of quadruped passengers, 21 in number must have broken their fastenings. They were all kept secure however and I remained in my temporary illness quite insensible to all around me until told that we had arrived in Calais! 'Calais!' thought I 'tis Boulogne I want.



This is *Chermin-de-Fer* in 1846, the first Belgium steam Packet on the Channel run. The *Margaret* will have been similar. By Gordon Ellis (detail) 1949



Thomas Rowlandson's "The Paris Diligence." The French diligence coach was the Frenchman's main public conveyance

Journey to Paris

The luggage at last arrived, and after paying the commissaire his charge of 3 frcs 78, for my portion of his trouble, we seated ourselves in the long waiting Berline - a very comfortable carriage for four and were soon en route to Boulogne. I am proceeding however very slowly with my narrative, almost as slow as my progress to Boulogne, the 21 miles from Calais thither occupying from 5½ to 11.

(Next day.) And now on entering the coachyard was first presented to my view the cumbrous machine called a Diligence - so termed I imagine by the rule of contrariety, its diligence being displayed in the extraordinary rate of or six

miles an hour. So heavy and lumbering a machine must be seen to be imagined, and it ought certainly to be called an omnibus. As the passengers began to arrive it was found necessary to keep off the 'oi polloi' crowding around. I now witnessed two men kissing and embracing each other previously to separation, a practice quite common in France. Crack went the whip and the ponderous mass was put into motion.

Our course hitherto tho' slow had been safe, but a few miles beyond Beauvais, the 'ever terror of our way' was fated to meet with an interruption. The rain had been considerable, and we were slowly progressing up an inconsiderable hill when suddenly our course was arrested. The wheels had become set fair in the mud, and notwithstanding the 'sacre' maledictions whipping and warmth of the conductor and driver, persisted in remaining in the soft bed they had found. Every exertion of men and horses being unavailing the only course that remained was to lighten the vehicle; and in a drenching rain at midnight we were compelled to alight from our warm and comfortable corners. To me it was of little importance, but for the gentler portion of our company it must have been no trifling matter, in these luxurious times, to be compelled to remain upwards for an hour in a muddy road during a heavy rain to witness the ineffectual efforts to release the massive machine.

Unfortunately in jumping out my foot became entangled in some of the endless rope trappings of our steers, and falling on my umbrella in the mire, broke it. And thus we were deprived of this shelter also. How long we might have continued in this quandary I know not, as we had almost begun to despair when fortunately at this juncture the tinkling of the bells of another Diligence, with which the horses heads are furnished, was heard in the distance. When it approached, was stopped, and an embargo laid on the horses, and after much exertion of the united equestrian and animal strength of the two Diligences, ours slowly yielded to the increased power, and we were once more permitted to resume our seats now miserably wet and continued our journey.



'Arrivée de la diligence dans la cour de la Messagerie, rue Notre-Dame des Victoires (1803)'. *Painting by Louis Léopold Boilly.*

Our journey terminated at the Messageries Royales, rue De Notre Dame des Victoires. I thus at last found myself in the centre of the city which for so long a period had drawn upon itself the attention of the world - the capital of that ambitious conqueror whose who insatiate desire whole hecatombs of victims could not satisfy in spite of the lapse of time. It is to Bonaparte and to the eventful period of the Revolution and his reign that the thoughts of an English visitor will constantly revert, when viewing for the first time this theatre of incidents once of such high import to our own country.

I proposed engaging a fiacre to convey my luggage, but an officious porter would take no denial, threw the trunk and bag on his shoulder, and

whilst I stopped for an instant to remonstrate the man in whose charge they had been deposited, turned a corner and was out of sight. I pursued as I thought the way he had taken but looked in vain for my property. Seriously alarmed at my indiscretion in thus entrusting it to a strange man I almost began to despair of my luggage and returned to the office. They sent a man with me to follow the porter and find him which after some time was accomplished and I recovered my biens and my composure.

Life in Paris

Attempting to widen his circle of acquaintances Joseph frequently moved from hotel to pension sometimes experiencing great loneliness: Many people sitting outside the cafes in the open-air eating ice creams and - ladies as well as gentlemen, and who, while reading the newspapers, laughing, enjoying the pleasure of the moment - Oh how I envy the light spirit that I see on the face of the carefree crowd that surrounds me! Lord please help me!

He also had strong religious opinions: Fine morning thought would go to Notre Dame - shops nearly all open as usual and workmen pursuing their employment - how revolting does this desecration of the Sabbath seem to me! - I trust I shall not get accustomed to regard it with indifference, my attention drawn by a sort of apple stall in the very portal, but instead of apples an old woman was disposing of rosaries, crosses, bijouterie, books, etc. All these things may have appertained to the Catholic religion, but how revolting that a traffic in these should be conducted at the doors, and at the very time appropriated to Divine worship.

Despite such harsh judgements he delighted in new experiences: What a heart sickening sight have I witnessed today and yet how many women and children were regarding it with indifference! My casual acquaintance Dr --- conducted me to the morgue where were two corpses extended on marble slabs - both of females - one quite black in face from decomposition, having doubtless been some time in water - the other with features fixed in the agonies of death - clothes hanging around them - and this is one of the sights of the Parisians.

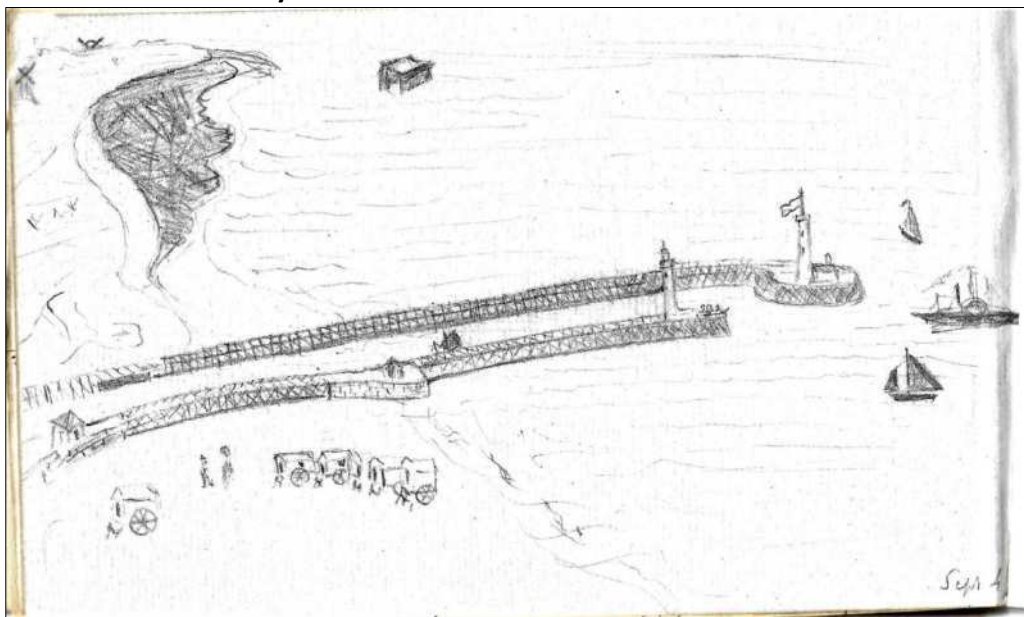
Went to see the procession of boef gras at the Pont Neuf started in 1711. The procession was held with a huge bull's head pushed along on wheels by 16 men, followed by a real bull, draped in white and signalling the coming Lenten meat fast. This commemorated Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday). After traversing two or three streets arrived in the courtyard of the Tuileries at the Place du Carrousel, and here agreeably surprised to find that the boeuf gras was about to receive the hour of a presentation to Royalty itself. The King was not tardy in presenting himself and advanced hat in hand to receive the salutation of his 'loving' subjects - and of the bull. He was accompanied by Queen, Dukes and the Duchess of Orleans, and also the Queen of Spain. King Louis Philippe is a fine portly robust looking personage: excellent view being close under balcony.

In my opinion the picturesque beauty of Pere la Chaise (cemetery) will decrease every year, because of the great increase in the monuments which, too close, hide much of their interest and beauty. Finally I find some of these places look very similar to our churchyards. - Last words like 'Dying so young and so happy (Inscriptions) touch us when we read them - I wanted to copy several of the most touching but left it until now as I have no more time. Then t the heights of Montmartre, near the windmills. Here we have a very beautiful view of all Paris.

Homeward bound

His adventures concluded on 2nd June: We leave Paris by the Barriere de Route which I have never previously crossed, running parallel with the Champs Elysée - Quite a pleasant route but nothing special - the middle of the road paved, with dirt on both sides kicked up on every bump particularly when following another diligence which we could not pass. Crossed a bridge through quite a large wood. Went through two or three pretty miserable villages and in the evening were stopped by two armed men who climbed up onto the vehicle to go to a place where an unfortunate had fallen from his cart and sustained head a body injuries. Soon we arrived and in truth the mysterious corpse was resting exactly in the middle of the road as it happened. The diligence stopped immediately - the armed men stepped down along with the conductor to satisfy their curiosity with a closer examination - thus having seen some terrible things in Paris, on the eve of my departure I encounter another - a final tableau of death exceeding all the scenes I have encountered - 'What a miserable death!' - In one hour we arrive at Rouen which seemed a beautiful town particularly the harbour but the darkness prevented a complete view - We crossed the place where Joan d'Orleans was burned. From Rouen to Le Havre the country is much more varied, interesting and offers beautiful views - around six o'clock we arrive at Harfleur and in three hours or more there is Le Havre (where he boarded a steamboat and disembarked at Greenwich).

Back in the old country



Sketch by the author presumaby intended to be his port of embarkation for England

Having been away for so long, listening once again to the English language I must adjust from French to my mother tongue. I don't want to completely leave the French language behind but without occasion to speak it what can I do? True I can speak to myself but such a monologue would be very tedious. No I must seek French conversation having lived so long with the French particularly a Parisian like M.. enabling me to speak naturally, purely and elegantly. While I am able to continue to write in French, I fear writing alone will not stop my facility for speaking French from declining. But I think I should be

able to carry on thinking in French, shouldn't it? I doubt it because the thoughts which now come to me in French will little by little revert to those in English. All in good time. I have found the language very useful in France and if it is of no use here then nothing is lost. Beside I am not the first person who has taken a lot of trouble for nothing.

FROM THE WEBMASTER by Peter Masters



Creating Pictures out of numbers

One of the many interesting things about having a large collection of information, gathered over the past twenty years is the ability to filter some of that information into a meaningful visualisation.

In order to find and identify houses suitable for dendrochronology many houses have been selected and visited across north Wales. These visits and outcomes such as their suitability for tree-ring dating or the existence of significant features along the results of any surveys are all embedded in the database. But a row of tables can look bland and does not give any perspective of what has been achieved, which is where data interrogation and modern programmes come to the fore to provide a picture of events. Map references become GPS coordinate's, these in turn can be added to maps and they can then create a picture of that data.

When we look at the map of North Wales overlain with pins denoting the locations of the houses visited, we can see the enormity of the task undertaken. Not just the size of the area covered but the density of coverage as well. Over one thousand properties identified, checked, visited and "dendro'd" where possible, House histories written, Building surveyed. Reports compiled, filed and put on a website. A considerable achievement by a largely amateur voluntary group of dedicated people who value their heritage and history,

Formatting Zoom talks

One of the drawbacks of recording our zoom talks is being able to present them in a format without drastic editing detracting from the content, but to create a more professional look to the recordings to enhance the video and put our logo or "Brand" in a prominent position at the opening and closing of our recorded talks.

To achieve this, a template has been created which provides a solid colour background. Our Logo. The title, Discovering Old Welsh Houses appears superimposed in moveable script, with a subtle musical background. This is followed by an

introductory Title and description of the talk and the name of the speaker. This is then repeated as a fade out at the end of video

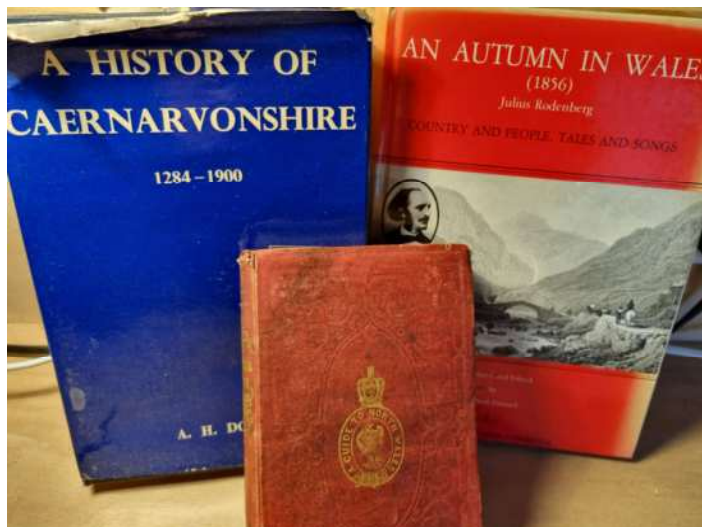
The actual recorded talks have been “trimmed” to remove the chit chat around the beginning and end. The Video images have had the black bars removed and resized to fit the screen and the final output converted to 16: 9 ratio at 720p and compressed to a smaller file size suitable for export/import into *Youtube*. This will ensure that the video is of a good quality, can be viewed via the browsers without the need for separate video players and allowing for those with low broadband speeds.

The website: membership/zoom talks page where all the Talks are available have had the links reset to the revised *Youtube* videos. It is not necessary to view all the videos as they are about an hour long ! just skip through sections to get a feel for it [unless you have the time to spare].

ON MY BOOKSHELF by Janice Dale

Back in October, following the lecture by Michael Freeman and his talk on early tourists, we went to Barmouth - the weather being showery, one very heavy shower coincided with us finding ourselves outside the Walter Lloyd Jones saleroom - not that I needed much persuasion to call in - they have a great selection of old books. I came out with just three, the first being *A History of Caernarvonshire* by Professor A.H. Dodd, a book I have borrowed and read previously and an immensely easy read.

The other two books were inspired by Michael Freeman's talk. *An Autumn in Wales 1856* by Julius Rodenberg, translated into English. Rodenberg came to Wales to study



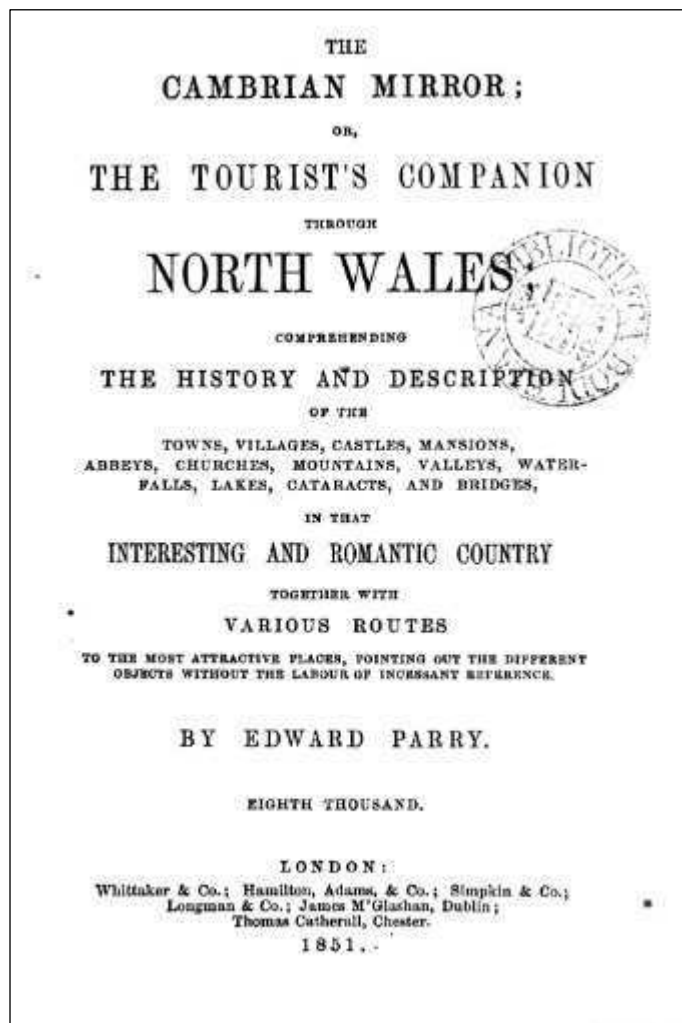
the country and its people, staying with a farming family, travelling around by rail, stagecoach and on foot. He makes illuminating and entertaining observations on Welsh customs and traditions. He also includes a collection of over sixty Welsh fairy stories.

The third book is *The Cambrian Mirror - The Tourist's Companion through North Wales*, dated 1851. The author promotes his book as a condensed, accurate, amusing and pocket sized volume. He suggests six excursions ranging from 3 to 18 days and assures his readers he has, with very few exceptions visited every town, village and place mentioned and being acquainted with the language, manners and habits of his countrymen he has been able to draw his observations from sources inaccessible to a mere compiler. I particularly liked his modes of transport giving prices of a one horse car which could hold four people, and cost one shilling a mile, or a two horse car at eighteen pence a mile - no doubt this means of travelling must have restricted it to those of some considerable means. I also like his reference to the new road from Llanberis to Capel Curig - next time you drive that route just imagine what it must have been like then. This small book certainly gives an insight to our North Wales of 170 years ago.

STOP PRESS

Queen Anne's Bounty - 1704 by Gill Jones Conwy Branch

This was a scheme established to augment the incomes of the poorer clergy of the Church of England whose income amounted



to less than £50 a year. From the 13th century onwards, 'first fruits' or 'annates' were the first year profits taken by the Pope in the year after a benefice was newly filled. Tenth's were an ecclesiastical tax originally destined to fund expeditions to recover the Holy Land. This system lasted until the Reformation. Afterwards, Henry VIII annexed the money to the Crown. This continued until 1704 when a series of Acts empowered Queen Anne to establish a corporation in which the revenues of 'first fruits' and 'tenth's' would be invested. This became known as Queen Anne's Bounty. It enabled the governors of the Bounty to receive the money previously paid to the Crown to be used for the benefit of poor clergy. At first it was not paid directly to incumbents, but instead it was used to purchase land, the income of which augmented the living. Later, the purchase money was held by the Bounty rather than being used to purchase land and invested so that the governors could pay a guaranteed rate of interest to the recipients. Evidence of this fund being used in Cerrigydrudion appears in records of the Rural Dean's Report in 1729. Further references to the scheme have been found in other documents but unfortunately none of the properties in the village are named.

In 1729, the Rhos Rural Dean's report records that, the Rector at the time was Mr. John Wynne, and his resident curate was Mr. Maurice Anwyl who received £30 a year, £15 in cash and the rest in surplice fees. It also recorded that there was a parsonage house which was occupied by John Roberts who rented most of the glebe land for which he paid £20 per annum to the church. There were three more dwellings with their respective outhouses in the village that belonged to the Parson. One house was inhabited by John Lawrence, an alehouse keeper, who paid, "for his house & two fields of ye Glebe land, three pounds fourteen shillings per annum." Gwen Jones, a widow, who sold ale, rented two houses and one little quillet, for which she paid yearly two pounds ten shillings. An under-tenant lived in one of the houses. John Jones had a quillet of Glebeland and paid five shilling per year for it.

"All ye Houses & outhouses in this village belonging to the parson consist of twenty bays of building, which are all in tenantable repair excepting one little hovel in ye holding of Gwen Jones widdow (*sic*), which wants some repair."

In the Rural Dean's report of 1749, one of the church houses was occupied by Robert Robert, a victualler and blacksmith, and Robert Williams, also a victualler lived in another and had a yard for turning horses; and the curate lived in the third one.

Margaret Dunn has supplied two more illustrations from Anglesey excursions.



Left: roof timbers from 34 Castle St. Beaumaris. Above: party at Penmon Priory





DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



NODDWYR/PATRONS

Syr/Sir Simon Jenkins, FSA, FRSL; Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, MA, PhD

Dathlu Treftadaeth Cymru drwy astudio tai
traddodiadol a bywydau'r bobl oedd yn byw ynddyn nhw.

Celebrating Welsh Heritage through the study of traditional
houses and the lives of the people who lived in them.

CYLCHLYTHYR 44 Mawrth 2023

NEWSLETTER 44 March 2023

GWEFAN: <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> yw prif sianel cyfathrebu'r Grŵp. Ewch i'r wefan i weld ein llyfrgell sy'n tyfu a nodweddion eraill. Fel arfer mae'n cynnwys manylion digwyddiadau diweddar a digwyddiadau sydd ar y gweill. Cyhoeddir fersiynau Cymraeg a Saesneg y Cylchlythyr hwn ar wahân ond anfonir y ddwy fersiwn i bob aelod

OUR WEBSITE <http://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk> is the Group's main channel of communication. Please visit it to look at our growing library and other features. Normally it contains details of recent and forthcoming events. The Welsh and English versions of this Newsletter are printed separately but both are circulated to all members

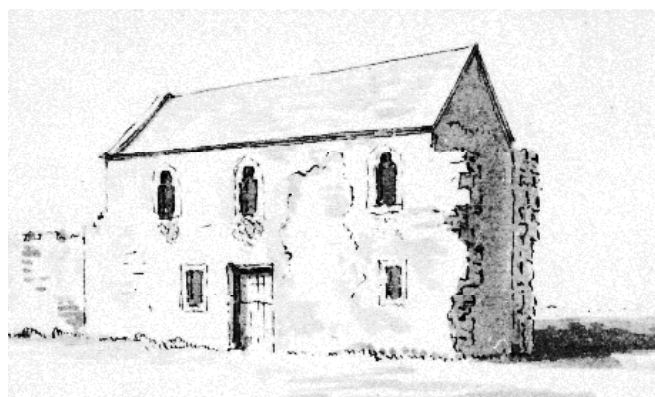
FROM THE CHAIR by Janice Dale

How quickly the years fly by and we are now in the 12th year of producing the Newsletter - thanks to all the editors over those years. We now find ourselves in need of editor and officers. This year we are seeing a number of long standing members retiring from roles they have held for many years. These important roles, will, we hope, soon be in new hands and our thanks go out to all those retirees who have contributed so much over the years; Terry Williams NL editor; Ann Morgan and Gill Jones Conwy Branch Co-ordinators, Sue Hurst the Anglesey Co-ordinator, Peter Masters the Caernarfonshire Co-ordinator and of course Margaret Dunn who is stepping down as secretary from the AGM in June - our deepfelt thanks to all these members. Margaret, Peter and Gill are going to remain as trustees with Peter still maintaining his role of Webmaster.

On a brighter note spring is here, or was, although as I write this it is chucking it down with snow and blowing a gale, but it is so heartening to see lighter evenings, and no doubt we will all be tempted to get out and start on the garden, but it also gives us encouragement to get out and look for houses that can be added to our Parish Project - so keep your eyes peeled everyone.



become involved with: the ongoing project on 'Deep Mapping' estate archives (if it attracts further funding), a prospective project with GAT on the medieval site at Bodychen on Anglesey and developing thinking on an ambitious project concerning the use of trees and woodland on historic estates - all of which we would like to become involved with. So, exciting times ahead.



Above and below left *Llys Bodychen* in 1770 and today

There are some exciting projects on the horizon, apart from the next phase of the ongoing series of volunteer-generated house histories and the tree-ring dating in the Vale of Clwyd, managed by the Ruthin Local History Society in association with DOWHG.

We are looking forward to the start of a project to look at the vernacular houses of Edeirnion, the tenure, and typicality of surviving building types, with help from Swansea University to use isotope testing. All this is possible following a grant from the Wood Tiger charity and we hope that further funding from the VAG will be successful and add funds to this project - thanks to Martin for doing this application.

And following a meeting with Shaun of ISWE, Bangor University have three projects - all of which we would like to

Membership

Fiona Gale and branch secretaries will be contacting branch members with incorrect or overdue subscriptions or with Gift Aid queries. She can be contacted by email on membership@discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk. 1st April is the annual subscription date.

COVID-19

Members may wear masks at any meetings. Notice will be given in the website under Events should hosts or organisers request that masks be worn.

Gwynedd Family History Society Resources Centre

This is located in the same building as the Caernarfon Library, Pavilion Hill, Caernarfon LL55 1AS. Google maps link - <https://goo.gl/maps/jP7NhCJW1esBhJ8X8>. The centre is open to GFHS members and visitors on every third Saturday afternoon between 2 and 5 p.m. Experienced volunteers are there to offer help and general advice on researching family trees. For more information please see <https://www.chtgwyneddfhs.cymru/en/resources>.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY DOWH Lecture Series Spring 2023.

All talks will be held on the second Wednesday in each month and will all start at 7 p.m. They will be given in English. Reminders and Zoom invites will be sent by email to all members nearer the time. Please note your microphone will be muted when you enter. Please leave it muted until the end of the talk, when there will be an opportunity for questions. It is also helpful if you would turn your video off as this helps the quality of the presentation.

Wednesday 19 April 2023 Meinir Moncrieffe, Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates, University of Bangor. **"Where I mean to make my utmost court": The Early Modern Development of Image and Status at Gwydir.**

Sir John Wynn (1553-1627) of Gwydir straddled the divide between Welsh and English cultural ideals. For the Uchelwyr demonstrating status was a constant balancing act between the Welsh tradition of associating generations of prestigious occupancy, and the Renaissance vocabulary of architectural display and embellishment.

Gwydir Castle was a country house built with the intent of displaying such status whilst functioning as a comfortable family home, seat of operations, and arena of hospitality. The house was, as for many such landed gentry families, an ancestral proclamation to be handed down the ages with each head of the household putting his mark on the building. As a result, country houses like all dwellings are subject to change and modernisation, this can lead to problems when interpreting the surviving architecture. This paper relies on family correspondences, eyewitness accounts and traditional praise poetry to bring the seat of Sir John's estate at Gwydir to life.

Wednesday 10 May 2023 Dr Sadie Jarrett, Career Development Fellow in Early Modern History, The Queen's College, University of Oxford. **'A splendid woman of great wisdom': Gentlewomen in early modern Wales**

Early modern gentlewomen often exist in the archives of landed estates only as names on marriage settlements. Wales, like other early modern European societies, was intensely patriarchal. Women were subordinate to the male head of the household, which might be their son or younger brother. I find, however, that gentlewomen understood how to navigate the restrictions of Welsh society to their advantage. In this talk, I will examine the role of gentlewomen as wives and widows and their importance to the family houses and estates. I will reconstruct the experiences of gentlewomen in early modern Wales and demonstrate that they were crucial to the success of a Welsh gentry family.

Wednesday 21 June 2023 The annual lecture that follows this year's Discovering Old Welsh Houses AGM will be given at 7 pm and will be given in English via Zoom by Dr Eurwyn Wiliam, Patron of Discovering Old Welsh Houses, President of the Cambrian Archaeological Society and former Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and Director of Collections at the National Museum of Wales. **'Three giants: Iorwerth Peate, Cyril Fox and Peter Smith, and the study of vernacular architecture in Wales'**

'Vernacular architecture studies did not develop so early in Wales as they did in England, but the contributions of three men who worked in the field in Wales have become recognised as of international significance. All three are each

associated in particular with one book, Peate with The Welsh House, Fox with Monmouthshire Houses and Smith with Houses of the Welsh Countryside. But which of the three can we say made the greatest impact?

The AGM starts at 6.30 p.m. AGM papers will be circulated to members beforehand. Please sign in and leave at end of the AGM. Then please sign in again for the Annual Lecture.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

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CONWY BRANCH

The Conwy Branch Report was received too late for inclusion here and appears below under stop press.

Glossary of terms used in land deeds and other legal documents (Part Two concluding) by Gill Jones

Final Concords (or Feet of Fines)

These were a means of officially recording the transfer of land. They were the end result of a fictitious dispute in the Court of Common Pleas between a querent or plaintiff and the deforciant or current owner. The conveyance took the form of the record of a fictitious lawsuit, compromised or terminated by the acknowledgment of the existing owner (known as the deforciant or tenant, depending on the original writ used to levy the fine) that the land in question was the rightful property of the claimant (the plaintiff or querent). In reality, the deforciant had already agreed to sell the land, and the plaintiff to buy it: the suit was, in other words, a collusive action between the two parties.

Deed to Lead Uses

This refers to a deed made before a fine or common recovery. The purpose of such a deed is to show the object of the fine. A deed to lead the uses of a fine or recovery is not a conveyance in and of itself. It has no individual or immediate operation on the estate. The deed, when the fine is levied, will operate as a part of the same assurance. Under the deed to lead use, no estate will pass until the fine is levied or recovery is suffered.

Common Recovery

Purpose - Transfer of real property (freehold or copyhold land) by judgement of a court. The main purpose was to bar entails, remainders and reversions. Like a final concord, a common recovery looks impressive and important, but does not really provide much useful information. It was the product of a 'collusive action' - a fake legal procedure in the courts. The court was usually the Court of Common Pleas, but manorial courts could also deal with common recoveries. Common recoveries were used to break entails (conditions stipulated in wills or settlements which limited the descent of freehold land to certain individuals) and transfer land. Once the common recovery had been achieved ('suffered' in legal language), the land reverted to fee simple. This enabled it to be sold to somebody else, mortgaged, or settled in a new way. Common recoveries were abolished by the Fines and Recoveries Act 1833. After that date, a simple deed of disentailment was all that was required to break an entail.

Deed of Covenant

When a large estate was broken into smaller landholdings and sold off piece by piece, a question arose as to who should retain the older title deeds relating to the whole estate, which were needed in order to prove title. The solution usually adopted was that the seller retained the original deed bundle, but made a covenant (agreement) with the purchaser. Should there ever be a need to prove title, the seller would produce copies of the title deeds for the lawyers to look at, and would also keep the originals safe and be able to produce them if required.

Grant or Conveyance

Purpose: Sale of real property (land or buildings) from one party to another, for a monetary consideration. Up to the 1830s there were a number of methods which could be used to transfer land. Final Concords and common recoveries were abolished by the Fines and Recoveries Act of 1833. The Conveyance by Release Act of 1841 replaced the lease and release with just a statutory release. Then in 1845 the Real Property Act abolished releases and feoffments, allowing freehold land to be conveyed by a simple grant only. By the later nineteenth century, this deed was generally referred to as a conveyance.

Fee Farm

This is a type of tenure, where land is held of another in perpetuity at a yearly rent, without fealty, homage, or other services than such as are specially comprised in the feoffment.

Mortgaged Land

A mortgage is a temporary transfer of property in order to secure a loan of money. The person who owns the land is the 'mortgagor'. The person lending the money is the 'mortgagee'. Although the wording of some mortgage deeds might suggest that the mortgagee took possession of the property until the money was repaid, this was not usually the case in reality. In the seventeenth century it was established in law that the mortgagor would remain living in the property or administering the mortgaged estate. It was normally only if the mortgagor failed to pay the annual interest that the mortgagee could begin to take action to recover the debt. It was also accepted that the mortgagor retained a right to redeem the property whenever he paid the money, even after the period of time when the mortgagee had foreclosed and begun to take possession. This was called the mortgagor's 'equity of redemption' and shows that a mortgage was primarily a way of raising money (for the mortgagor) and investing money at interest (for the mortgagee), rather than a means of gaining possession of land.

Appurtenances

The rights and duties attached to a piece of land.

Messuages

Dwelling houses; messuages with appurtenances - the houses, all the outbuildings associated with it, and also its curtilage (gardens and orchards) and the 'close' or land it is built on.

Tenement

Originally referred to tenancy and therefore to any rented accommodation.

People and their jobs/titles

Tenants at will

These were men who had no tenancy rights at all. They had nothing in writing and could be evicted without any notice at the will of the Lord of the Manor.

Free tenants

These were men who could own their own land or lease it from the Lord of the Manor or directly from the Crown. They also had legal rights at the King's Court and owed no service to the Lord of the Manor although they would have to attend the manor court. Their rents were generally less than the 'at will' tenants.

Burgess

An inhabitant of a town or borough with full rights of citizenship. i.e. a freeman

Yeoman farmers

They were substantial tenant farmers between the 16th and 19th centuries. In social status they were one step down from the Gentry but above Husbandmen. The amount of land owned and the wealth of the yeomen farmers varied from place to place but yeomen would not normally have less than 100 acres. Many were prosperous and employed servants or labourers. Some mixed with the minor gentry and even rented land to gentlemen landowners. Often it was hard to distinguish minor gentry from the wealthier yeomen farmers. The main difference was that gentlemen farmers did not labour with their hands.

The Reeve:

This was a tax collector who would collect revenue (the fee farm) for the king and also uphold the king's prerogatives. The reeve would have been appointed by the king or the county sheriff and existed before 1155. (possibly England only)

The Sheriff

From 'Shire-Reeve'. The chief administrative and judicial officer of a shire. He collected taxes and forwarded them on to the Exchequer, and was also responsible for making sure that the King's table was well stocked.

The Bailiff

This was a new name for the reeve which appears in a charter of 1255. The burgesses were allowed to appoint two bailiffs.

The Coroner

This officer first appears in 1230. The coroner had a wider remit than today. His duties included enquiring about murder, rape, treasure trove, wrecks, deaths in prison, outlaws and deodands (a person or object instrumental in killing someone)

The Mayor

This was a new officer appointed in 1284 who was superior to the bailiffs and became the focus of the town's administration. He was elected for a year from the burgesses at Michaelmas (29 September). He presided over the Borough Court, and may have had his own exchequer.

The Recorder

Established in 1399, this officer was a man of law involved in the Borough Court.

The Justices of the Peace

From 1399 six JPs were required to be appointed for each borough. One was to be the mayor; another was the recorder, and the remaining four were appointed by the mayor. They were involved in the Borough Court.

The Aldermen

From 1449 seven aldermen were to be appointed for each borough and would act as new Justices of the Peace for the Court of Quarter Sessions. From their number was elected the mayor. Other officers included **chamberlains** who collected money from corporation property and used it for public works; **bridgemasters** who collected money and used it for the maintenance of bridges; **town clerks**; and the **mayor's sergeant**, who would have served writs or court summons.

Armiger - person entitled to bear heraldic arms.

Commissioner of Array

The issuing of commissions of array was a medieval method of raising troops, originally introduced during the reign of Edward I, by which the King could grant the lords-lieutenant of counties powers to raise military forces in times of emergency. **Steward** The chief servant of a landed estate.

Seneschal

Senior steward

Charter of Incorporation

This conferred the right of self governance on a Lordship and the right to elect its own officers. The Lord was also able to grant privileges to the Burgesses ie. freedom from servile dues.

Servile dues - in addition to duties on the landlord's demesne and public roads there were other rents and fines

Toll - general names for a tax

Stallage - money paid on trading booths or stalls at markets and fairs

Pannage - tax levied for the right to let pigs forage in the woods

Payage - tax levied for pasturage

Murage - a tax paid for a feudal landowner to a Lord in lieu of service

Postage - cost of sending commercial or private mail via messengers

Passage - a tax levied for passage or way lease

References

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections>

several online legal and other dictionaries.

ANGLESEY BRANCH

Summer program by Sue Hurst

Tues May 23	Llangadwaladr church with Andrew D.
June, no date yet,	Plas Berw
Sat July 15, prov.,	Plas Penmynydd
Tues Sept 12	Hafoty/Castell Aberlleiniog



CAERNARFONSHIRE BRANCH

Branch Report by Margaret Dunn

Unfortunately, our Christmas Social with two illustrated mini-talks, and our January house visit had to be cancelled. However, in January an interesting afternoon on Zoom was led by Jane Parry-Evans on Exploring the Houses Database and was well attended by members from Anglesey and Conwy as well as Caernarfonshire.

In February, ten Caernarfonshire members strayed over the border into

Merioneth to visit Rhos. It was a fascinating visit, seeing and hearing about the architecture and house history researched by Nan Griffiths when she lived here. Many thanks to the new owners for their hospitality; they clearly already love the place. Later in March we look forward to a repeat of an autumn house visit which was oversubscribed.



Two views of Rhos House



Tyddyn Mawr - a fresh Merioneth house

Detectives at Work by Margaret Dunn

1. I-SPY while driving

Do you ever get opportunities to glance around while driving (safely) around North Wales? While doing so recently one of our members noticed an amazing timber framed building under-going some building work. Fortunately, he was able to let us know the location and the house has been traced back to at least 1577/78, and another unrecognized house will soon be researched for

posterity. So do let us know of any houses you see, especially while the leaves are off the trees.

2. Looking through Estate Agents images.

Do you ever sit at home and look through Estate Agents adverts and claims about houses from the 15th or 16th centuries? Over the years our members have spotted cruck timbers in bedrooms and other key features. Not long ago a member spotted mural stairs in a Snowdonia plan house and arranged to visit and we had found yet another unknown house for the Parishes Project. So again, do let the secretary have details of any such houses of interest.

Zoom Recordings by Peter Masters



One of the benefits of the Covid situation has been the opportunity to meet friends and family via video calling with the likes of Skype, FaceTime, and WhatsApp and whilst many of these facilities have been available for a long time, they have not provided the flexibility to host more than a few family members or friends. A new kid on the block, Zoom, has given the opportunity for organisations like ours to arrange meetings online, not only for the benefit of committee meetings but also to be able to bring a series of monthly talks directly into the comfort of your own home and to share that with multiple members simultaneously, in many cases in excess of 50 people. Another of the

benefits of Zoom has been the ability to record the talks as they have been given. We have had over a dozen talks which comprise a wide range of interests from mediaeval wall paintings, shops and shopkeepers to dendrochronology and many other topics between. These talks comprise in excess of 20 hours of recordings with an average of 53 minutes per Video.

After some minor editing and trimming these recorded talks have been uploaded to YouTube where they are now available via an exclusive link from our website for our members to view. They can be found in the membership section /Zoom Talks page

GEORGE OWEN (c. 1552 - 1613) *The Description of Wales* by Tom David

This Section is about Caernarvonshire: notes on gentlemen, their seats and their wives, as printed in *The Gentleman’s Magazine* for 1823 (reproduced at the end). It complements the notes prepared by Gill Jones for Denbighshire and Flintshire in Newsletter NL 42. This portion has been collated by Tom David. Maybe others might collate other portions for future newsletters. This table compares Owen’s list with J.E. Griffith *Pedigrees*. In some cases it is hard to reconcile the two sources of information. Owen’s text seems to be dated 1602, but contains information from a few years earlier.

<i>Generosi.</i>	<i>Mansiones.</i>	<i>Uxores.</i>	<i>Griffith Ped. page</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Piers Griffith.	Penrhyn.	Fil. Thos. Moston, militis.	185	Penrhyn, Llandegai. Margaret, d. of Sir Thomas Mostyn.
Wm. Morice, miles.	Cynnoney.	Fil. John Lake de Chirck.	218	Clenennau. Sir William Maurice’s first wife was Margaret, d. of John Wyn Lacon of Llangollen (? = John Lake) but she had died in 1571/2.
Wm. Thomas, miles.	Carnarvon.	Fil. Wm. Morice, militis.	202	Aber / Coed Helen. Gaynor, d. of Sir William Maurice.
Richard Gwynn.	Carnarvon.	Fil. Wm. Griffiths.	?25	?Hirdrefaig. Sir Richard Wynn/Gwynn married (1) Elin, d. of Wm Griffith of Caernarfon. ?HSC 1593.
John Glyn.	Gwyder.	Fil. Wm Gerard, militis.	281	Presumably John Wynn, created Bt 1611. He married Sidney, d. of Sir Wm. Gerrard.
Wm. Williams.	Cockwillan.	Soror Dni Lumney.	186	Cochwillan. M (2) Barbara, d. of George Lumley.

John Griffiths.	Carnarvon.	Fil. Ric'i Thomas.	?125	?Plas Mawr Caernarfon. ?MPC. See https://biography.wales/article/s-GRIF-JOH-1548 . That man married Margaret, daughter of Rhys Thomas of Coed Helen.
Roland Pulston.	Ditto.	Fil. Roland Griffiths.	?275	A Rowland Puleston of Caernarfon was HSC 1574.
Thomas Bodville.	Bodville.	Fil. Thomas Glynn Llanlliffon.	171	Thomas Bodvel HSC 1609 married (2) Lowry, d. of Thomas Glynn of Glynllifon.
Robert Mandryn.	Mandryn.	Fil. Griffin Jo. Griff.	242	Robert Madryn HSC 1604-5 married (2) Mary, d. of Griffith John Griffith, Cefnamwlch.
Robert Wynbrinker.	Brinker.	Fil. Moris ap Elis.	251	Bryncir. Robert Wynn HSC 1594 married Ann, d. of Morris ap Eliza, Clenennau.
Robert Vychan.	Enisnethe.	Fil. Hy. ap Robert Vychan.	?179	?Talhenbont / Plas Hen ('Enisnethe' does not look much like any place-names near there, or indeed anywhere in the county, as far as I can see). A Robert Vaughan (d.1599) of that place married Margaret, d. of Henry ap Robert Vaughan ap Gruffydd ap Howel ap Madog.
Robert Wynn.	Conway.	∫ Fil. Wm. Cerard, militis ∫ Fil. Dymocke de Wellington.	360	Plas Mawr. Robert Wynne married (1) Dorothy, d. of Sir Wm. Griffith of Penrhyn; (2) Dorothy, d. of Edward Dymocke of Wellington.
Edw. Holland.	Ditto.	Judith Johnson.	341	Edward Holland (d. 1601) married Judith, d. of Richard Johnson of Beaumaris.
G ap Jo. Griffith.	Llyn.	Fil. Rich. Bulkeley, militis.	169	Cefnamwlch. Griffith John Griffith (d. 1599) married Catherine, d. of Sir Richard Bulkeley of Beaumaris.
Hugo Gwin Pennarth.	Pennarth.	Fil. Owen ap Hugh.	273	Hugh Gwyn HSC 1599-1600 married Jane, d. of Owen ap Hugh of Bodeon.
Wm Thos. Wynn.	Vaynol.	Fil. Wm. Wms. de Cockwillan.	190	Sir William Williams (unstable surname) married (1) Ellen, d. of William Williams of Cochwillan.
Wm. Glynn.	Glynlyffon.		172	Sir William Glynn married twice.
Wm. Glyn, Serjeant.	Llear.	Fil. Jo. Wynn ap Robert.	270	Lleuar. William Glynn (living 1588) married Lowry, d. of John Wynne ap Robert of Maesog and Bachwen.
Thomas Vychan.	Pantglass.	∫ Fil. Maurici Gwyder. ∫ Fil. Fowler.	44	Pant Glas, Ysbyty Ifan. Griffith shows only one marriage, to Margaret, d. of William Fowler.
John Hookes.	Conway.	Fil. Gr. Vychan Corsygedol.	279, 293	Griffith has a William Hookes who married Margaret, d. of Richard Vaughan or John Griffith Vaughan of Corsygedol, and a John Hookes who married Margaret, daughter of Griffith Vaughan of Corsygedol, but the two trees do not seem to be consistent.
Robert ap Richard.	Ditto.	Gaynor Hookes.	?293	The only Gaynor on Griffith's Hookes tree married a Robert Salusbury (no further details).
Hugo Stodart.	Deganway.	Jane fil. Hugonis Holland.	341	A Hugh Stodart of Conway married Jane, d. of Hugh Gwyn Holland, and Jane's brother Hugh married a daughter of Hugh Stodart of Deganwy.
Edw. Williams.	Llechwedisal.		?340	There are two Williamses of Llechwedd Issa (Caerhun, Llangelynin, and Llanbedr-y-Cennin-but is there a house of this name?) on Griffith's tree, but of later dates.
Evan ap Hugh ap Mad.	Llanaelhayarn.	Fil. Robti Pritchard.	?175	Elernion is one of the principal houses of Llanaelhaearn, and Griffith shows a Hugh ap Madog on that tree, but without children.
John Stodart.	Boditha.	Elizab. fil. Lud. Lloyd.	?	Bodidda, Henryd does not appear in Griffith's index. Another house may be meant.
Hugo Bodwrthan.	Bodwrthan.	Fil. Gr. Gwinn de Llanwroit.	168	Hugh Bodwrdda married Elizabeth, d. of Griffith Wynn of Berthddu, Creuddyn.
Griff. Hughes.	Keven Llanvair.	Fil. Ric'i Gwin de Mesoglan.	224	Griffith Hughes of Cefn Llanfair married Jane, d. of Rhys Wynn of Maesoglan, Llangeinwen.

Wm. Vychan.	Llwyn dyris niegwyl.	Anne Vychan.	279, ?231	Neigwl Plas, Llandegwning and Llwyndyrus, Abererch belonged to William Vaughan of Corsygedol, who married Ann, d. of Richard Vaughan of Talhenbont. See Gresham <i>TCHS</i> 37, 40-41.
Hugo Roland.	Boltrern.	Anne Madryn.		I can't identify Boltrern.
John Wyn.	Penleck.	Fil. Wm. Glynn Llaer.	272	John Wynn of Penllech married (1) Jane, d. of William Glynne of Lleuar.
Robt. Wyn.	Sarhan.	Katherine fil. Rice Wynn.	249	Robert Wynn of Saethon, Llangian married Catherine, d. of Rhys Wynn of Maesoglan.
Robt. Owen.	Bodsilin.	Fil. Wil. Coytmore.	136	Robert Owen of Bodsilin, Caerns (formerly Bodscalyn) married (2) Lowry, d. of William Coetmor.
Thos. Wyn ap Edmund.	Dwygysychi.			A Thomas Wyn ap Edmund bought Tythyn Bryn y Bettws, t. Castell in 1575 (GAS XD/19/160).
Evan Carreg.	Carreg.	Fil. Jo. ap Hugh Prichard.	181, 168	Evan Carreg married Elin, d. of John Wyn ap Hugh ap Richard of Bodwrdda.
Robert Pure.	Penrhyn.	Fil. Rich. Bulkeley, milit.	42, 372	Robert Pugh of Penrhyn, Creuddyn married Jane, d. of Sir Richard Bulkeley of Beaumaris.
Richard Griffith.	Castelmarch.	Margaretta Hch Thomas.	191	Sir William Jones seems to have owned Castellmarch around 1600. Not clear who Richard Griffith and Margaret ach Thomas were. Perhaps another house is meant.
Meredith Thomas.	Dyphryn.	Fil. Rich. Madryn.	?243	If this is Nyffryn, Llandudwen, a Meredydd ap Thomas married (3) Margaret, d. of David Lloyd ap Hugh ap John Madryn, but the date may be quite wrong.

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433081131462andview=1upandseq=634andskin=2021andsize=125>

CARNARVONSHIRE.

Hundreds, 10.—Castles, 5.—Parish Churches, 68.—Fairs in the Year, 18.
Chief Lordship, 1.—Ynis Henllyss.

Market Towns, 3.—Carnarvon, Conway, Pulkeley.

Ports and Havens, 10.—Pulkely, Carnarvon, Conway, Bardsey, Traeth-Maur, Sludwalls, Abersoch, Portvillian, Kernig Gwyrinion, Aber Cyver.

Chief Mountains and Hills, 6.—Snowden Hill, Moelly's Habett, Rivill, Yr Yra Hills, Carnwadrin, Mynyddriw.

Chief Rivers, 9.—Conway, Saint, Garway, Gwely, Mawr, Llyfon, Llyfni, Kirck.

Bishop's See, Bangor.—Monasteries, 2.—Bardsey and Conway.

Priory, 1.—Bodkeleers.—Frieries and Nunneries, None.

John Wyn.
 Robt. Wyn.
 Robt. Owen.
 Thos. Wyn ap Edmund.
 Evan Carreg.
 Robert Pure.
 Richard Griffith.
 Meredith Thomas.

Penleck.
 Sarhan.
 Bodsilin.
 Dwygysychi.
 Carreg.
 Penrhyn.
 Castelmarch.
 Dyphryn.

Fil. Wm. Glynn Llaer.
 Katherine fil. Rice Wynn.
 Fil. Will. Coytmore.
 Fil. Jo. ap. Hugh Prichard.
 Fil. Rich. Bulkeley, milit.
 Margaretta Hch Thomas.
 Fil. Rich. Madryn.

PATRIA.—The Soil. The greatest part of the shire is mountainous, the rest in-different good ground.—*The People.* Tall and personable for so many; the country well governed, and little or no theft.

Towns.—Carnarvon, a fine little town, and good.—*Conway,* little inferior to Carnarvon.

Carnarvonshire containeth square miles, 327.

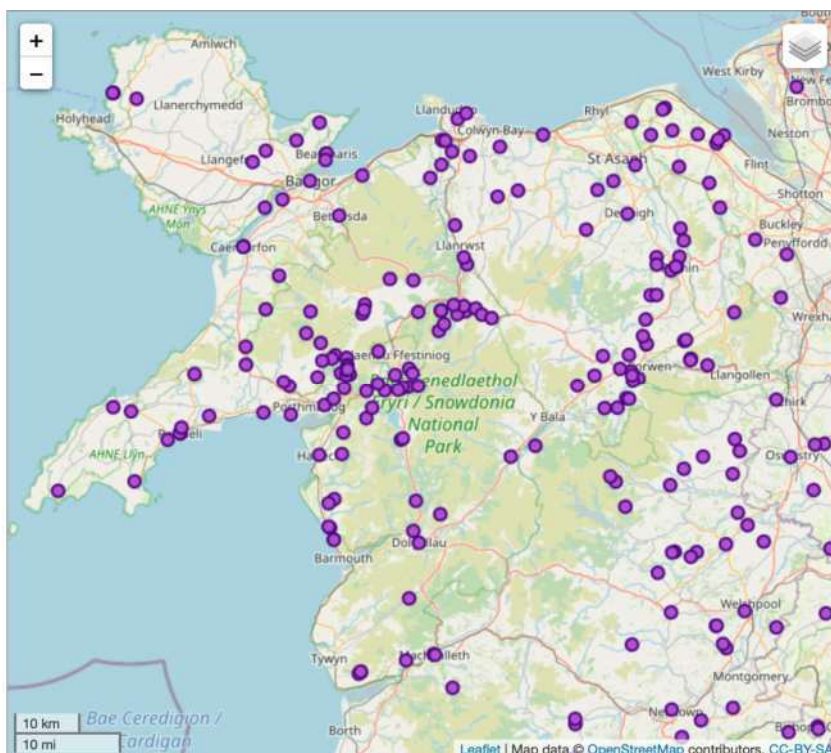
<i>Generosi.</i>	<i>Mansiones.</i>	<i>Uxores.</i>
Piers Griffith.	Penrhyn.	Fil. Thos. Moston, militis.
Wm. Morice, miles.	Cynonney.	Fil. John Lake de Chirck.
Wm. Thomas, miles.	Carnarvon.	Fil. Wm. Morice, militis.

PART II.] Account of Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire in 1602. 599

<i>Generosi.</i>	<i>Mansiones.</i>	<i>Uxores.</i>
Wm. Glynn.	Glyalyffon.	Fil. Jo. Wynn ap Robert.
Wm. Glyn, Serjeant.	Lleear.	{ Fil. Maurici Gwyder.
Thomas Vychan.	Pantglass.	{ Fil. Fowler.
John Hookes.	Conway.	Fil. Gr. Vychan Corsyedol.
Robert ap Richard.	Ditto.	Gaynor Hookes.
Hugo Stodart.	Deganway.	Jane fil. Hugonis Holland.
Edw. Williams.	Lleowedisa.	
Evan ap Hugh ap Mad.	Llanafhayarn.	Fil. Robti Pritchard.
John Stodart.	Beditha.	Elizab. fil. Lud. Lloyd.
Hugo Bodwrthana.	Bodwrthan.	Fil. Gr. Guinn de Llanwroit.
Griff. Hughes.	Keven Llanvair.	Fil. Ric'i Gwin de Mesoglan.
Wm. Vychan.	Llwyn dyris niegwyl.	Anne Vychan.
Hugo Roland.	Beltrera.	Anne Madryn.

Richard Gwynn.	Carnarvon.	Fil. Wm. Griffiths.
John Glyn.	Gwyder.	Fil. Wm. Gerard, militis.
Wm. Williams.	Cockwillan.	Soror Dni Lumney.
John Griffiths.	Carnarvon.	Fil. Ric'i Thomas.
Roland Pulston.	Ditto.	Fil. Roland Griffiths.
Thomas Bodville.	Bodville.	Fil. Thomas Glynn Llanlliffon.
Robert Mandryn.	Mandryn.	Fil. Griffin Jo. Griff.
Robert Wynbrinker.	Brinker.	Fil. Morris ap Elis.
Robert Vychan.	Enisnethe.	Fil. Hy. ap Robert Vychan.
Robert Wynn.	Conway.	{ Fil. Wm. Cerard, militis.
Edw. Holland.	Ditto.	{ Fil. Dymocke de Wellington.
G ap Jo. Griffith.	Llyn.	Judith Johnson.
Hugo Gwin Pennarth.	Pennarth.	Fil. Rich. Bulkeley, militis.
Wm. Thos. Wynn.	Vaynol.	Fil. Owen ap Hugh.
		Fil. Wm. Wms. de Cockwillan.

Discovering Old Welsh Houses and Research - taking stock and looking forward by Martin Cherry



Distribution of tree-ring dated buildings in North Wales. © Archaeology Data Service and Vernacular Architecture Group, updated 2021

Now that the Covid pandemic is well behind us, members are getting out and about again-visiting houses, attending local meetings and getting back in the swim of using libraries and archives. This is a good moment to take stock of where we are and where we might go in the future. It never fails to amaze me how much the group has achieved - or rather individual members, beaver away on house histories and providing access and support for specialists when we commission them to provide building or tree-ring dating reports. These reports - all 392 of them(!) - are on the Group's website (recently upgraded and enhanced by Peter Masters <https://discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk>), easily accessible and a fantastic mine of information and interpretation. While Covid kept us indoors, we were able to develop our 'houses database'. Made possible with a generous grant from the Marc Fitch Fund, this is a management tool that allows us to see precisely which houses have been visited over the years, when and by whom, and alerts us to any assessments made on those visits that give us a solid basis for deciding whether or not to follow-up with further calls and action. There are currently around one thousand buildings on the database. The data has been input and finessed by Jane Parry-Evans based on information furnished largely by Margaret Dunn, who 'discovered' and visited most of them! Over time, new houses will be added, including new discoveries emerging from the parishes project. This project has made headway, faster in some areas than others, and several lists of houses that were in existence in c.1750 have been created by members according to a template devised by John Townsend. Some parishes have mustered totals of one or two hundred, so pruning these down to those that survive in something like their early form and then visiting on a selective basis, is a challenge as doors are being opened to us again. Plenty to do!

North Wales is a large area and research reflects in part the availability and enthusiasm of volunteers in the localities. Our lead publication, *Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia*, grew out of such a geographically focused project - the 'N W Wales Dendrochronology Project' - although it did spread the net wider to take in new discoveries in other parts of the region. This activity is reflected on the map below that shows the concentration of tree-ring dates secured as part of that project in the Blaenau, Beddgelert and Penmachno areas. There are comparable tree-ring dating clusters in the swathe of territory reaching from east of Bala to north of Ruthin, the lower Conwy Valley and north Flintshire. These tree-ring dates largely emerged from the 3-year N E Wales Dendro-Project, which was made possible by generous grants from a number of public and private bodies, underpinned by active research by our volunteers, largely in the form of house histories. Many have been commissioned by DOWH (and its predecessors), hence the concentrations in the

Blaenau/Penmachno and the Cynwyd/Corwen/Ruthin areas reflecting the Snowdonia Houses (N W Wales) and the N E Wales projects for which we were able to secure considerable external funding.

Other pockets of research activity exist, too. One exciting project has grown out of such activity, centred on the Corwen/Cynwyd area in what is now South Denbighshire - take a look at the Denbighshire Branch 'Cynwyd Scrapbooks' on our web site (<https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/page13.html>). What was once the lordship of Edeirnion occupies the fertile middle stretch of the Dee Valley and adjacent uplands. Its status within the former territory of the Welsh princes in North Wales was unique in that the 'Barons of Edeirnion' retained their special jurisdiction from the fourteenth until well into the sixteenth centuries. It was one of the power bases of Owain Glyndŵr. There are some amazing houses here that *look* to be fifteenth century but, as Professor Carr observed in his work on the medieval gentry in North Wales, the barons were very conservative and were reluctant to jettison partible inheritance at a time when English succession practices prevailed during the early Tudor period. So, maybe they're not as old as they look. Only scientific tree-ring dating will get to



Two recently tree-ring dated buildings (commissioned by DOWH) make significant contributions to the chronology of medieval buildings in North Wales. The roof over Tŷ Gwyn (left), near Bryneglwys, Denbighshire, with its oddly shaped king-post looks late but dates from 1447 (the principal cruck trusses came from a tree that was already 250 years old when it was felled): it may have been part of the estate of the Iâl (Yale) family - a barn at the neighbouring farm, originally the house, has an identical king-post. Rhydywernen (right), not far away in Cwm Main, is an early Tudor yeoman's farmhouse: the original cruck-framed building was dated to 1531 and we asked our specialists to re-visit a year or two later and were able to confirm that the original open hall received its inserted floor in around 1595-8

the truth of the matter but many of the structural timbers are fast grown, which means that they are not normally amenable to conventional tree-ring width analysis. Consequently, we are immensely grateful to The Woodtiger Fund for providing a substantial grant to take advantage of the innovative new method of stable isotope tree-ring dating, being pioneered at Swansea University: isotopes *love* wide tree rings! Watch this space! One other encouraging development to note is that others are working in the field, too: a recent project to date houses in and around Ruthin (independent of DOWH but with which we are associated) has identified some very early buildings, dating to the post-Glyndŵr reconstruction of the town in the mid-fifteenth century, and the second phase of this project is extending into the Vale of Clwyd.

DENBIGHSHIRE BRANCH

Branch report by Jenny Lees

Following a rewarding autumn of branch 'field' visits, our time from December to February has been devoted to mostly 'armchair' Parishes Project research before resuming house visits in March. In December we concentrated on *Dyffryn Clwyd*, as DOWH was working in partnership with the Ruthin Dendrochronology project to identify suitable rural houses, and from Christmas we have prioritised finding pre 1750 houses in Edeirnion, in view of DOWH's newly funded 'Edeirnion' project. Starting with house names from *Parochialia* (1699), we researched sites including Coflein, <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/wales> and <https://historicplacenames.rcahmw.gov.uk/> before looking for current online references to similarly named dwellings. It was very encouraging to find 19 of around 20 *Llandderfel* parish houses with names from *Parochialia* still extant (some originally in *Llanfor* parish), but only 6 of them (including one 'derelict') were already identified on our DOWH database. So now our exciting but perhaps challenging task will be discovering whether any others retain significant historic features, and among those not yet on the database, our online search has revealed 3

advertised as holiday lets; 5 with contact details as farms; 1 on sale completely modernised, and 6 private houses. This is of course just one of numerous parishes our branch is researching, but I think these *Llandderfel* findings exemplify the existence of relatively 'undocumented' areas falling between our present DOWH county divisions - and explains why Denbighshire branch previously 'adopted' this parish far from Dolgellau, but 'on our doorstep'!

Eight hundred years of Llangar parish history Part One: 1160 - 1660 by Jenny Lees

In his elegy following the **1160** deaths of Madog ap Maredudd (last Welsh Prince to rule the whole of ancient Powys) and his son Llewelyn, the poet Cynddelw described a battle at Cynwyd - part of the ancient parish of Llangar in Edeirnion: '*When we were summoned to Cynwyd Gadfor Our counsel was offered ... Fine warriors each with broken shield ... Over the pasture land were we scattered*'.¹



Llangar church - view across the confluence of Dyfrdwy and Alwen from Hafod y calch

Having read several books from our DOWH 'Cynwyd Scrapbook' series, a visitor to my home of *Hafod y calch* once exclaimed: "How can there be so much history from such a small place!"

Well, perhaps because in the later Middle Ages Cynwyd seems to have become Edeirnion's commotal centre and may have been the original *maerdref* of Owain Brogyntyn, the illegitimate but recognised son of Madog ap Maredudd granted lands in Edeirnion and Dinmael. Following inheritance by Owain's sons Bleddyn, Gruffudd and Iorwerth, Iorwerth gained *Llangar* and part of *Gwyddelwern* parish, then his son Gruffudd became Baron of Cymer and son Elise Baron of Llangar, a separate *township* within *Llangar* parish. Although such baronies were very small, the rights of *pennaeth* or 'Welsh barony' granted to these Edeirnion barons gave them considerable independence, power, and their own *commote* court, thought to have been somewhere at Cynwyd.²

Part One of this article considers what evidence we have so far, from documentary sources or dendrochronology (tree ring dating of actual timbers), of *Llangar* parish dwellings existing by **1660**. The oldest *Llangar* house dendrodated so far is the magnificent **1435** cruck and aisle-truss hall house of *Plas uchaf*, once called *Plas o Kymmer* or *Cymer* and owned by the Barons of Cymer before they moved to *Gwerclas* in around **1600**. Our DOWH house history, downloadable from [https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%2023 HH 32 Plas Uchaf.pdf](https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%2023%20HH%2032%20Plas%20Uchaf.pdf) illustrates *Plas uchaf*'s architectural history and relates with references the lives of the Barons from **1282**, including their propitious marriages

¹ Translation from the original Welsh poem by Gruffydd Aled Williams, 'The literary tradition to c.1560', in J. Beverley Smith and L. Beverley Smith edited, *History of Merioneth, Vol.2: The Middle Ages*, 2001, pp.527-8.

² A. D. Carr and J. Beverley Smith, 'Edeirnion and Mawddwy', in *History of Merioneth* op.cit., pp.139-147.

with prominent families across North Wales such as *Cors y gedol* and *Nannau*, as well as with relations from *Branas uchaf*, *Crogen*, *Cryniarth* and *Hendwr*.³

Cynwyd resident Betty Booth originally 'alerted' me to *Henfaes isaf*, which she and her relatives had been carefully restoring since 1961, and our 2021 DOWH visit proved very exciting as the timbers of this originally cruck-framed late medieval hall-house are exceptionally well preserved! We have promising evidence of a dwelling there from as early as 1470: '1. Margaret verch Grono ap David ap Plethyn. 2. Jevan ap Madog ap David. Lease of a tenement at Henvaes; 4 years, renewable, rent 12d. Given at Kynwyt Vawr on the Vigil of St. Michael the Archangel, 1470'.⁴ Our full DOWH house history is still pending publication, as *Henfaes isaf* timbers were too 'fast grown' to dendrodate, so we are awaiting the hopeful results of isotope analysis - but a shortened version is available on:

https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Publications/Cynwyd_Scrapbook-4.pdf



Oak post-and-panel dais partition at Henfaes isaf (Image courtesy of Moyra James)

Interestingly, as court hearings sometimes moved between gentry dwellings, two *Henfaes isaf* fields were once named *Cae'r ustus ucha* and *Cae'r ustus isaf* - upper and lower fields of the magistrate or judge; also note that *Henfaes isaf* once lay in *Gwyddelwern* parish, which contained the townships of *Cynwyd Fawr*, *Cynwyd Fechan* and *Bodheulog* until transfer to *Llangar* parish in 1854.

Next of the dendro-dated mid C16th *Llangar* houses already having DOWH house histories on <https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/page17.html> are *Ty'n Llwyn*, with a timber felling date of winter **1537-8**, and *Brynberllan*, dated c. **1553** and with generous and decorative use of timber suggesting an original building of some status. Its early 'plank and muntin' screen partition bears the initials 'H.W', and though *Llangar* Parish Records do not extend back beyond 1614, the possible ancestry of Thomas Evans of *Bryn y Berlen* can be traced back through the parish records to an Evan Llywelyn of **1674**; a name possibly connected with families of the Edeirnon Barons. (See also pp.22-28 of https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Publications/Cynwyd_Scrapbook-3.pdf).

Plas isaf, although parts of the earliest house there may no longer exist, was of high status when *Gentleman* Robert Wynne Pyers of *Plas Issa* was 'buried in church' at *Llangar* in **1642-3**. Robert was another descendant of Owain Brogyntyn, being great-grandson of Gruffudd ap Robert ap Gruffudd of powerful *Maesmor* in Dinmael, who married his relation Lowri, daughter of 10th Baron of Cymer William ap Gruffudd. (More of *Plas isaf's* fascinating history in *Cynwyd Scrapbook Three*, pp.48-50).

³ See also Jenny Lees, 'A Quest for Cymer in Edeirnon and its Barons. Part I: c.1200-c.1700', *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society* (JMHRs), Vol. XV111 (II), 2019, pp.129-40.

⁴ Bangor University Archives (GB 222 MN/193).



Plas isaf viewed from near the stream of Nant rhyd y saeson (Jenny Lees 2016)

Our DOWH 'Parishes Project' of identifying pre-1750 houses includes those already demolished - at least the histories of them and their occupants will be preserved through research, if not the actual houses, and their wills and inventories can be of considerable interest. Many are viewable online at: <https://www.library.wales/catalogues-searching/catalogues/specialist-catalogues/wills> , and one formerly important *Llangar* dwelling was *Glanalwen*; lying in



Arms of the Hughes Lloyd family of Gwerclas on façade of the present 1767 house (Jenny Lees)

Cymer township just across the Alwen from *Hafod y calch* and once a small estate of some significance. William ap Iwan, grandfather of Humffrey ap Elisau 'of *Glan Alwen* in *Llangar* and *Maerddu* in *Gwyddelwern*', was described as 'seated at *Llangar*',⁵ and in the Civil War Humffrey's son became Captain William Humffreys in the King's army, selling the *Glan Alwen* estate in the **1640s** to Edmund Meyrick of *Ucheldre*,⁶ brother of his wife Dorothy. After Griffith ap Dafydd ap Iwan was buried in **1643** at *Llangar* as 'of *Rhwng y Ddwy Afon*', an old name for *Glan Alwen*, his Davies family were associated with *Glan Alwen* for the next three centuries, with David Davies being one of two freeholders qualified to serve on *Cymer*'s juries in **1743**. Although *Glanalwen*'s domestic buildings were sadly demolished in C20th, its former impressive farm buildings still stand, and are pictured in *Cynwyd Scrapbook Three* (pp. 37-41).

Although only parts of the pre-1767 house at *Gwerclas* remain,⁷ several fascinating sources tell us of life there from c. **1600** onwards. It was among the baronial courts providing hospitality to the bards in exchange for entertainment and acclamation, and '*Noddwyr Beirdd ym Meirion*' (Glenys Davies, 1974) includes over seven pages of C16-17th Welsh poems devoted to *Gwerclas* and its inhabitants. Bardic references to the dwelling as *Gwercllys* or a *llys* (court) match the **1614** burial record of Alice, wife of Baron Hugh ap William of *Gwerlleise*; fully referenced history is available from:

https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20110_HH_27_Gwerclas-2019.pdf

Bardic poems can of course contain an element of adulation, but in his invaluable Memorandum Book (**1662-1674**) we have the words of Humffrey Hughes II of *Gwerclas* himself. He recorded not only the births, deaths and marriages of his

⁵ Burke's Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry.

⁶ House history: https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20004_HH_24_Ucheldref.pdf

⁷ Building report: https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/ABR/den%20110_ABR_26_Gwerclas.pdf

extended family, including the amazing **17 children** with his first wife Magdalen from *Bryntangor*, but also detailed information on crops grown and wages paid on *Gwerclas* estate.⁸ Humffrey (listed as of *Querкле -Gwerclas*!) had also served in the Civil Wars as a Royalist and Commissioner of Array'; resulting not only in 'compounding'- loss of a sixth of the value of his estates, but also the sad **1644** death of his eldest son Richard 'in the King's service'.

Sometimes documentary evidence can lead us to wonder if a later house still contains concealed parts of an earlier one, as might be the case with Llangar's still existing *The Old Rectory*. Trefor O. Jones, including in his book a list of Rectors of *Llangar* church from 1537-1838, suggests they could have lived at a *Llangar Rectory (Rheithordy Llangar)* originally built in **1500**,⁹ and the Dean's report¹⁰ described in **1730** the thatched home of Rector Edward Samuel as having an *outkitchen* and *outparlour*, and 'for want of larger windows', having the appearance of 'the condemn'd hole'!

Another important township in *Llangar* was *Gwnodl* or *Gwnodle*, with 16 taxed tenants already by **1293**¹¹ and including at various times *Gwnodl Fawr*, *Gwnodl Bach*, *Blaengwnodl Ucha*, *Blaengwnodl Isaf*, *Siamber Wen*, *Ty'n y wern Gwnodl* and *Bron Gyddio* (now *Fronguddio*). At one time *Gwnodle* belonged as part of the Lordship of Glyndyfrdwy to Ieuan, said to be living in **1389** and second son of Gwion Llwyd, Baron of *Hendwr* in Llandrillo parish. Ieuan's great-great grandson John and his wife Jane, daughter of Robert Wynn of *Maesmor*, are believed to have been involved in the building of Cynwyd's magnificent **1612** bridge, and though it is not certain which *Gwnodl* is referred to in the earliest Llangar Parish Records, another *Cynwyd Scrapbook Three* article (pp.31-6) tracks the high status marriages, births and deaths of its Wynn (or Wynne) and Watkins families to the Lloyd family, whose celebrated bard Peter Llwyd or Lloyd (1765 -1842) we know inhabited *Gwnodl fawr*.



Siamber Wen Bach to the left and Siamber Wen on the right (Jenny Lees)

Also in the former township of *Gwnodle* is *Siamber Wen*, lying on the former drove route from Mynydd Mynyddlod to the taverns of Cynwyd. In **1622** the prosperous drover Thomas Lloyd, by then 'of Mylton in Kent' but born in *Llandderfel*, obtained a mortgage from William Salesbury of Rug for property 'in the tenure of Robert Salesbury, gent' including 'Y *Siamber* in Botteulog'.

Another *Cynwyd Scrapbook Three* article (pp.9-13) traces y *Siamber wenn*, 'in the tenure of Elise ap Morgan' in **1615**, forward past the **1661** burial of Catherine Lewes of *Chamber Wenne* to the family and descendants of Gabriel Humffreys (will **1677**), who seems

to have been connected with the prestigious Humffreys family of

Maerdu Mawr. Although *Siamber Wen* does not have remaining timbers suitable for dendrodating, during refurbishment its owner found a blocked off area beside a chimney breast with remains of an extraordinarily narrow spiral staircase embedded in the wall!

(See history https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/mer%20059_HH_41_Gwernbraichdwr.pdf)

⁸ For a partial transcription see Merfyn Wyn Tomos, 'A Memorandum Book (1662-74) of Humffrey Hughes, Gwerclas', *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*, Vol. XVII, 2014, Part I, pp.1-25.

⁹ Trefor O. Jones, 1975, '*O Ferwyn i Fynyddlod*', p.15. (No reference is given for the building date of 1500).

¹⁰ 'A report of the Deanery of Penllyn and Edeirnion' by the Reverend John Wynn, 1730, abstracted from the original manuscript by G. M. Griffiths in *The Merioneth Miscellany*, 1955,

¹¹ 'Taxed tenants in townships 1293' (PRO, E179/24), cited in *History of Merioneth* op.cit., p.223.



Finally, we know that other still extant Llangar houses are on or near sites dating from before 1660, including *Hafod yr afr*, *Penlan fawr* and *Moel lladdfa*, and others may come to light during renovation or when DOWH is contacted with information about them - and please feel free to do so! In contrast to many other parts of Wales, no early Baronial court records remain for Llangar as they are said to have been burnt in C18th by Hugh Hughes of Gwerclas following a dispute with neighbours,¹² but DOWH's new Edeirnion project may allow further dendrodating. We may never know where exactly the earliest Edeirnion Barons lived before occupying present *Plas uchaf* - no surviving pre-1400 Llangar dwellings have yet been identified, and we know that during the Owain Glyndwr rebellion of 1400-1415 Henry, English Prince of Wales, reported his retaliatory destruction of the "fine and populous country" of Edeirnion, but other possible causes have also been considered.¹³ In Part Two of this article, covering **post 1660** developments, I will draw on fascinating additional sources including Churchwardens' reports; handwritten letters from Gwerclas by Baroness Margaret Lloyd, and estate records covering most of Llangar's dwellings and their occupants - as well as Llangar parish records, property transactions and some fascinating probate items from wills. And I too am amazed that so much 'history' has emerged from the area covered by my 1949 map below! Jenny Lees has email address leesjenny@gmail.com

FLINTSHIRE BRANCH

Branch report for spring Newsletter 2023 by Wally and Margaret Barr



Our meal in the Faenol Fawr



Lloyd Armorials of 1597 over the Faenol Fawr fireplace

¹² Gwallter Mechain in Burke's Landed Gentry, 1846, p.608, referenced in A.D.Carr, 'The Barons of Edeyrnion, 1282-1485, Part One', *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society*, Vol.4, 1963, pp.187-93.

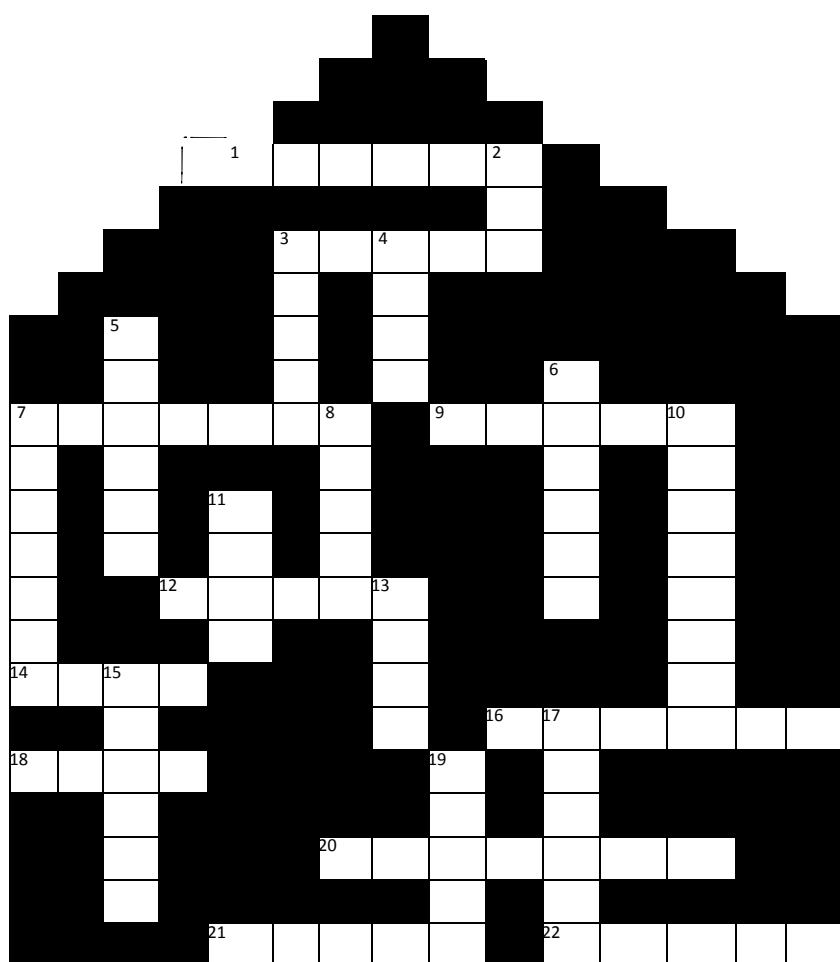
¹³ Richard Suggett, 'Crucks in Wales', in Nat Alcock, P.S.Barnwell and Martin Cherry ed. (2019), pp.298-9

In early December 2022 thirteen members and friends from the Flintshire and Denbighshire branches met at the Faenol Fawr Hotel, Bodelwyddan, for a Christmas meal. We ate in a beautiful 16th century room and had an excellent meal. This venue is highly recommended.

In January this year, eight of us met at The Old Post Office in Llanasa, courtesy of the owner, Jean Jones. This is a lovely 17th century house on which Jean has completed an extensive history which is now on the DOWH website. Our February meeting will be held in the Community Room, Caerwys, where we will be discussing the DOWH database. Future meetings will include a joint visit and talk with the Denbighshire branch to Nantclwyd y Dre in Ruthin (Monday March 20th at 2pm), and visits to Colomendy in Afonwen (Tuesday April 25th at 2pm) and Brithdir Mawr, Cilcain (Thursday May 25th at 2pm). Full details are given on the website. Please book with Wally Barr, email:

flintshire-branch2@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk; phone: 01745 888622.

Discovering Old Houses Cryptic Crossword composed by Wally and Margaret Barr



All the answers relate to houses - answers are given below

Across

- 1 A very good setter, though lime mortar is better (6)
- 3,15d Widow welcomes new beginning to see outside at the end (5,6)
- 7,9 Sounds like this criminal (in winter clothing) could hold up a house (7,5)
- 9 See 7 across
- 12 See 19 down
- 14 Look inside - do whatever - to reveal familiar housing association (4)
- 16 Coming in fourth at chess keeps the rain out! (6)
- 18,5d Resistance to sideways movement is provided when we birds can fly around (4,6)
- 20,17d Disturb thatcher and learn to make a fireplace in the middle of the floor (7,6)
- 21,22 Do re-use. How? To make a home for a widow (5,5)

Down

- 2,4 About time to include initially boastful economic analysis uniting truss supporters (3,4)
- 3 See 11 down
- 4 See 2 down
- 5 See 18 across
- 6 Reported that you'll find a precious gem in this supporter! (6)
- 7 See 11 down

- 8 For openers look into much ado or something (5)
- 10 Supporter provides letter specifically for the monarch (4,4)
- 11,7,3 Found at the end of a house this staircase is strictly for the birds (4-7,5)
- 13 When Brexit removes the first of basic rights the way out is clear (4)
- 15 See 3 across
- 17 See 20 across
- 19,12a Mix maroon and other hues to make an old place to live (5,5)

Book review by Jean Jones

An Epic Tudor Journey - John Leland's Itinerary of Northern Wales by Derek Williams (2008) (ISBN: 978-1-84524-121-6)

John Leland, King Henry VIII's Antiquary, made his journey across northern Wales - without maps - in one of the summers between 1536-39. His notebook gave details of towns, villages, churches, castles as well as rivers, lakes and coastal

features. He was given hospitality at houses belonging to families who had supported Henry VII, who became the first Tudor monarch. His route from the English Border to Llyn followed the valleys and coastal lowlands. He avoided the mountains and the remote valleys where the King's Writ did not run. Much of the detailed information he collected was used soon afterwards to produce the first maps of Wales by Christopher Saxton and Humphrey Llwyd.

The above summary is taken directly from the book. The Preface also says John Leland was given a royal commission in 1533 to search the libraries (monastic and cathedral) for manuscripts of historical interest. He was engaged in refitting the King's libraries to receive monastic books. Fortunately, he was also interested in the contemporary geography, towns, villages, farming, woodland, castles and especially rivers and coastal features.

After the 'dissolution' of the monasteries in 1536 he also started to travel in search of history and topography with the intention of producing a map of England and Wales. He kept detailed notes of his journeys but with no exact dates. He travelled on horseback, about ten miles a day, and must have had a travelling companion with the help of local guides. His journey started at the Shropshire border where he entered Maelor Saesneg (a land of Manor Houses and Moats) and continued westwards to Llyn. His finest description is of Denbigh town, which at the time was undergoing rapid development. Even though he did not venture into Snowdonia he recorded many of the lakes in a neat geographical context. His notes are based on observation and careful enquiry (from local landowners) and give a marvellous account of northern Wales at the end of the Middle Ages.

After leaving Bangor on Dee he progressed over the River, visiting many houses and churches on the way. The book gives descriptions of all houses visited. Leland mentions Valle Crucis but only to give its position. From there he made his way following the River Alun to Moldsdale lordship and on across northern Wales. He may have ended his journey at Penrhyndeudraeth. At the time there were no practical maps to help him.

John Leland started to write up his notes and presented them to the King in January 1546. Unfortunately, his health declined and he died in 1552. His manuscripts were copied by the antiquary John Stow in 1576 and eventually were given to the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

This was a fascinating book mentioning many familiar old houses and names of families, most still in existence today.

[Editor's note: Interested readers may access this work online at, e.g. http://www.tpwiliams.co.uk/leland/leland_2010.pdf]

Stop Press

Can you help ?

Janice Dale writes 'We have been discussing vineyards in North Wales today here at Rhug. Can you put in a bit in the newsletter to ask if any member has any knowledge of vineyards at any time in North Wales ?'

Janice's e-mail is JaniceDale@Rhug.co.uk

Conwy Branch Report

House Visit - Two Effigies - Gruffydd ap Dafydd Goch and Hywel Coetmor by Gill Jones

A group of stalwart branch members braved the wintery weather on the 11th March to visit two churches. The first was St. Michael's old Church in Betws y Coed where there is an effigy of Gruffydd ap Dafydd Goch (c.1385). He was moved in the 19th century and slightly trimmed to fit in an arched niche to the right of the altar. Next we went across to St. Gryst's Church in Llanrwst where Gruffydd's grandson, Hywel Coetmor (c.1440) takes his place amongst the Wynns of Gwydir in their own side chapel. Both were experienced fighting men.

Gruffydd was one of the most important people in the area but his ancestry is a matter of some debate. Lewys Dwnn, the Welsh poet and genealogist, claimed that he was an illegitimate son of Prince Dafydd ap Gruffydd, brother of Llewelyn the Last. Others claim that he was descended from Nefydd Hardd of Penmachno, founder of the 6th Noble Tribe of north Wales.

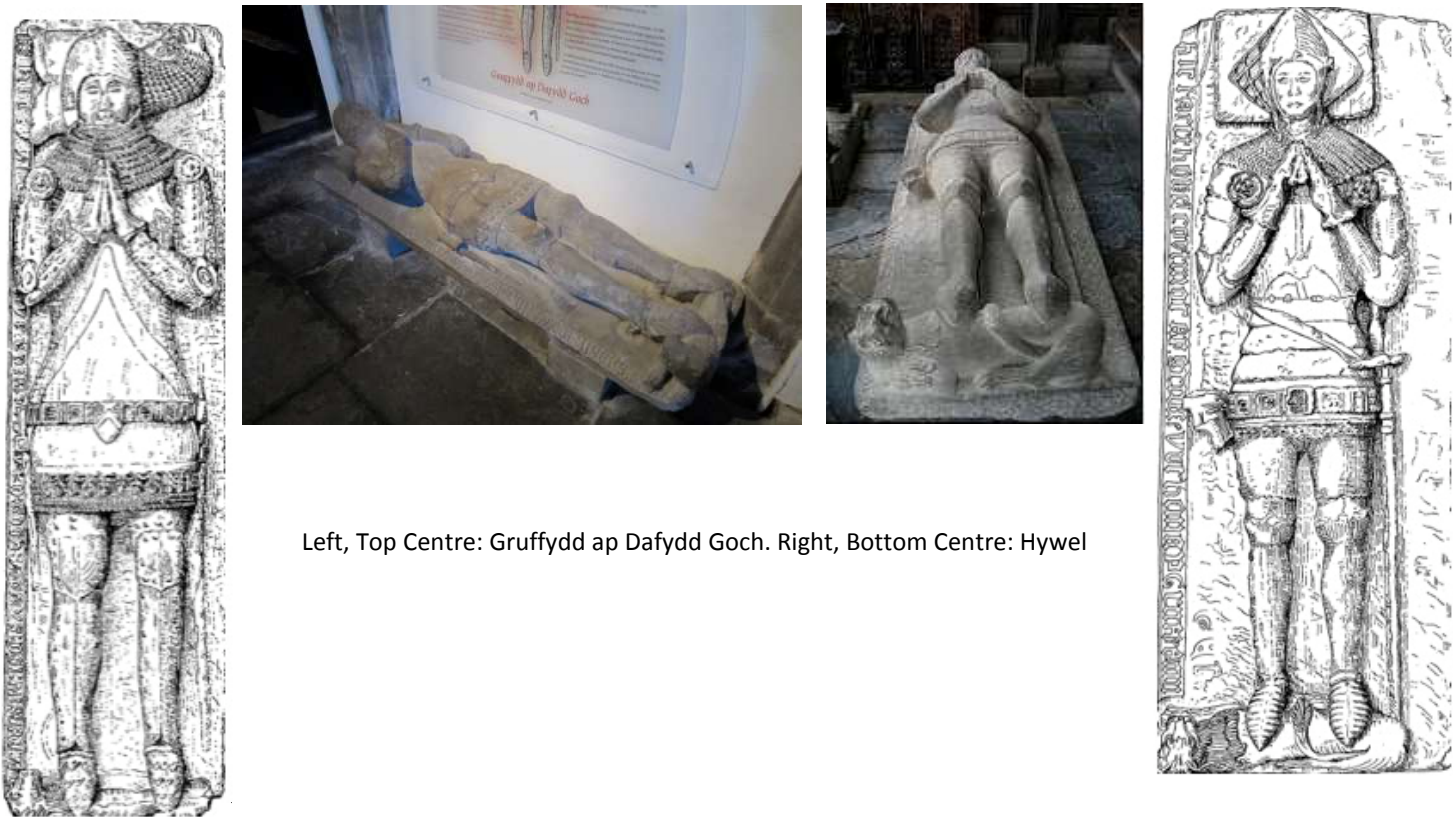
The two effigies derive from a distinct North Wales school of sculpture, which began with heavy coffin slabs carved with crosses, circles and foliage patterns in the early C13th, and evolved into more three-dimensional effigies of priests and knights by the mid 1300s.

After the conquest of Wales by Edward I, the English Crown was fighting very costly wars in other countries. Men like Gruffydd ap Dafydd Goch were required to render military service. He may have fought at Crecy or Poitiers but there is no existing evidence to confirm that he actually went to France but many local squires did take part in the campaigns. His

grandson, Hywel Coetmor, is believed to have fought at Agincourt but he also took part in Owain Glyndwr's rising with his brother Rhys Gethin.

There is a booklet which Tony Scharer and I put together for the visit to see the effigies which gives more information about the two men and about life in Nant Conwy. A digital version is available to view on the Discovering Old Welsh Houses website. Click on [Newsletters>Booklets](#) to access it; or copy and paste the following:-

<https://www.discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/cat/index.html?catalog=TwoKnights>



Left, Top Centre: Gruffydd ap Dafydd Goch. Right, Bottom Centre: Hywel

Tom David writes

I think I have a conjecture for the strange name ‘Enisnethe’ in my piece about George Owen: I wonder if it might be ‘Evionethe’, as read from someone’s bad handwriting? Owen puts ‘Llyn’ instead of ‘Cefnamwlch’, and Talhenbont might have been thought to be the chief place in the commote of Eifionydd in the same way.

Across	1 CEMENT; 3,15d
	GABLE
	WINDOW; 7,9
	SCARFED
	CRUCK; 14
	DOWH; 16
	THATCH; 18,5d
	WIND BRACES;
	20,17d CENTRAL
	HEARTH; 21,22
	DOWER HOUSE
	Down
	2,4 TIE BEAM; 6
	PURLIN; 8
	DOORS; 10 KING
	POST; 11,7,3
	CROW-STEPPED
	GABLE; 13 EXT;
	19,12a MANOR
	HOUSE

