



DARGANFOD HEN DAI CYMREIG DISCOVERING OLD WELSH HOUSES



NODDWYR/PATRONS:

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*Dathlu Treftadaeth Cymru drwy astudio tai traddodiadol a
bywydau'r bobl fu'n byw ynddynt.*

CYLCHLYTHYR 55 Rhagfyr 2025

EIN GWEFAN

<http://discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk>

yw prif sianel gyfathrebu'r Grŵp - defnyddiwch hi i
weld mwy o fanylion am y digwyddiadau diweddar
a'r rhai sydd i ddod, ac i edrych ar ein llyfrgell sy'n
cynyddu'n gyson ac ar nodweddion eraill.

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

NEWSLETTER 55 December 2025

OUR WEBSITE

<http://discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk>

Is the Groups main channel of
communication please visit it to see details of
recent and forthcoming events and to look at
our growing library and other features.

From the Chair – December 2025

And so, another year draws to a close.

Like most years, 2025 has had its ups and downs. On the downside of 2025 is the loss of Margaret Barr to cancer. I can remember the first time I met Margaret and Wally; sitting in the pub opposite Ruthin Archives, with Margaret Dunn as well. At the time I thought what a lovely couple. Margaret and Wally went on to organise and successfully run the North East Wales branch and took on editing the Newsletter. I am so grateful for her input and will miss her. My sympathies to Wally and family.

Another major blow was the resignation of Peter Masters through poor health, after so many years of doing a brilliant job in maintaining our website. Other trustees have retired and we now find ourselves in urgent need of new trustees and officers. Rosemary, our treasurer, has indicated she is stepping down at the next AGM. We now only have two branches with organisers, so all in all, can you please consider helping to move the group forward.

However, on the upside of 2025 we held our AGM in person at Gwydir [with a remote link up and running at the last minute]. It was so good to meet up with members in person, and we propose to hold the 2026 AGM at Gwydir, and although the date has not yet been set, it is planned to be in June. Hopefully with the remote link again.

DOWHG has now been in existence in one form or another for 25 years, so with all the changes that have recently occurred, it gives us the chance to relaunch and refresh the group. Over the next few

months, a new website will be developed by a third party, which means that apart from retaining many of the old features a new fresh look will be created. It also means, that we will no longer be dependent on one volunteer to maintain and update it.

Because of wide geographic spread from Anglesey to Flintshire, DOWHG has run on branch lines. Perhaps, now is the time to consider, whether this is the best way for our members to interact, or should we be organising specialist groups – several ideas spring to mind, how about members getting together to look at a township or any local area, a good example of this is the Cwm Maethlon Valley report that three members of the Merioneth put together [available in the booklet section of the website], or following the November zoom lecture by Dr James January-McCann how about getting together with some friends to gather field and place names of a place that interests you. The possibilities for these interest groups are endless.

In a few months' time, I am going to start an open zoom meeting for members who want to learn more about doing a house history, how to break a brick wall, or even just have a chat about ideas, Gill Jones has offered to join me with her expertise of researching houses. I am really looking forward to getting this off the ground.

Thinking of the new things planned for 2026 it has made me reconsider stepping down as chair at the AGM and I have decided to stay on for another year.

Do please consider becoming a trustee, or perhaps you can offer your skills as a co-opted member, if you want to chat it over, do email me at chair@discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk

Finally, all the best for 2026 to you all.

News and articles from the branches

At the moment we still don't have all our branches operating as usual unfortunately, so if you would like to help with any of these please let us know. Remember, you don't have to be a whizz with IT or research and it can be as much about a social event, as doing research or learning about new houses if you want – provided there is some link to historic houses obviously, however tenuous!!

Autumn/Winter Update – Anglesey Branch

Unfortunately, our September visit to Cefn Coch had to be postponed due to illness, but we had a very successful dual building visit in November within Beaumaris. Firstly, we went to The Tudor Rose – Castle Street's Medieval gem. Often called one of the oldest houses in Britain, it dates back to around 1416, though local lore pegs its origins even earlier.

Currently, the front of the building is being used as an Estate Agency, but originally it was built as a hall house with a large central space open to the rafters, the building was later updated with a floor above, probably in the 16th century. The building has a timber-framed wing that faces Castle Street, with its projecting gable, blackened timbers and the distinctive close-studded façade.

Inside, the hall retains a sense of its former grandeur, a space that once soared above without a ceiling, just the exposed timbers of the roof trusses. Folklore once held that timbers from nearby Beaumaris Castle and even a 12th-century house were used in the construction, though more recent dendrochronology suggests otherwise.

Over time, the Tudor Rose has worn many hats: a bakery in the 19th century, an antique shop, a bookshop after World War II, thanks in part to restoration by artist Hendrik Lek and currently an Estate Agency. Today, it is being used, but the back is maintained and protected as a Grade II* listed building — testifying to its architectural importance and its contribution to Beaumaris's character.



We moved on from there to **Alma House** – ‘Victorian Elegance by the Water’ – located on Alma Street. This terrace of houses was built in the mid-19th century as part of Beaumaris’s transformation into a genteel seaside resort. The street itself takes its name from the Battle of Alma (1854), a notable conflict in the Crimean War, which gives you a hint of the Victorian era’s spirit of commemoration.

Alma House sits at number 4, in a terrace of four late-Georgian–style townhouses, all Grade II listed. From the street, the houses have a refined symmetry: three storeys, scribed roughcast walls, slate hipped roofs, and elegant oriel windows on the first floor.

Number 4 has a beautiful sense of light and view: from the side windows, you look out over the Menai Straits, with the pier and the mountains of Snowdonia beyond. These homes were designed to embrace both the tranquillity of the water and the prestige of a resort town — a vision of Victorian elegance fused with coastal charm. We were hosted very graciously and generously by the house owner, who regaled our group with tales of Beaumaris life, whilst we enjoyed coffee and biscuits.

Visiting these two very different buildings — one edieval, one Victorian — felt like tracing the architectural and social evolution of Beaumaris. The Tudor Rose whispered of feudal grandiosity and the layered history of town life, whilst Alma House spoke of optimism, leisure, and the 19th-century reinvention of Beaumaris as a seaside retreat. We finished the afternoon with a visit to The Bull, a local Beaumaris hostelry, that boasts the largest single-hinged gate in the UK.

We ended the year with a Christmas social event – Afternoon Tea at Chateau Rhianfa in December (photos below). This is an amazing building inspired by the chateaux of the Loire Valley. It overlooks the straits and operates as a hotel, so it was lovely to spend some time together, looking back on our year and planning for next.



DOWH Denbighshire Branch report for June to November 2025

The second part of 2025 has continued to be extremely busy and productive for DOWH, with much help from members of local communities in Denbighshire, Flintshire and Merionethshire (now part of Gwynedd), as well as from existing DOWH members.

Garth Lwyd



July saw an initial visit to Garth Lwyd, a Llandderfel property in the township of Doldrewyn, near to Henblas¹. Although the present dwelling is possibly largely C17th, documentation and bardic poetry suggest an earlier dwelling on or near the same site, and Garth Lwyd was also owned in C17th by the prestigious Meyrick family of Ucheldref², near Corwen.

Plas Derwyn



In November a group DOWH visit was kindly hosted by the owners of Plas Derwen, Corwen (rear view above). A magnificent building said to have been built c1830 as the Rectory for Corwen Parish Church³, but possibly originally a farmhouse; such a complex history!

¹ Cynwyd Scrapbook Five, pp.35-9, <https://www.discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/page18.html>

² History of Ucheldref, <https://www.discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/page14.html>

³ Appendix One and <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/300015511-plas-derwen-corwen>

From the wider area, spanning both sides of the Llantysilio mountains between Corwen, Llangollen and Llandegla, Ty'n Ilan, Llantysilio is featured in this Newsletter, and Tyn y Celyn, Bryneglwys appeared in our autumn edition. Ty Helyg, near to Tyn y Celyn, has definite cruck construction and will be the focus of a potential architectural visit in the New Year.

Bryn Brith



We also hope to revisit and complete a house history for Bryn Brith [above], Corwen parish, and several members are also gathering Parishes Project information, potentially leading to further invitations for DOWH visits, from the parishes of Betws Gwerfil Goch, Gwyddelwern, Llansantffraid Glyndyfrdwy (Carrog), Derwen and Llandderfel.

Denbighshire branch of course, covers the whole county, and it would be good to have more meetings further 'north' - the last probably having been at Lleweni, Denbigh (house history to be published, when our new website is ready). Our Denbighshire branch has also been working together with Flintshire branch; we hope to visit the Old Post Office⁴, Llanasa in early 2025 and a new member has initiated research of the Salusbury Arms, Tremeirchion.

House histories are largely completed, but awaiting architectural reports for Cadwst, Llandrillo; Caenog, Gwyddelwern; Henblas, Llandderfel, and Henfaes isaf, Cynwyd. Still underway are Plas isaf, Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd; Pant y Llyn and Bryn Penllyn, Llandrillo; Llwyn Lleiaf, Betws Gwerfil Goch, and Owain Glyndŵr Hotel, Corwen.

Our last meeting of the year will have been at Brynberllan, Cynwyd (to be featured in our next Newsletter), and our next meeting will be in January at Hafod y calch, Corwen, where we'll be continuing to catch up with and share ongoing DOWH research. (Date to be confirmed).

Jenny Lees, Denbighshire Branch Secretary, November 2025- leesjenny@gmail.com

³ Appendix One and <https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/300015511-plas-derwen-corwen>

Ty'n Llan, Llantysilio – a house that harbours secrets!

Ty'n Llan

Photo One



Ty'n Llan is a beautifully preserved and partly timber-framed Denbighshire house, lying not far from Llangollen; between Llantysilio Church and *Llantysilio Hall*. This area was once within the *commote* of *lâl* (Yale), which covered the present parish areas of *Llantysilio*, *Bryn Eglwys*, *Llandegla* and *Llanarmon*. *Ty'n Llan* lies north of *Afon Dyfrdwy*, on the apparently original London to Holyhead route, that preceded the building of Telford's A5. Further along this road is the dwelling of *Efenechtyd*, subject of a fascinating DOWH house history¹, and although dendrodated by DOWH to **1602-46**, a building on *Efenechtyd*'s site was once a *grange* and *vaccary* (cattle range) supplying produce to the now ruined Cistercian monastery of *Valle Crucis*.

In **1699**, Edward Lhuyd (Llwyd) in his book *Parochialia* wrote: '*Llan Dyssilio: there are by ye church abt. six houses and a cottage ... An Impr: belonging to ye Abby of Vale Crucis*'. He also named eight other houses in the parish; *Blaen Ial*, *Rhydonnen isa*, *Dol Rhyd y Bont*, *Rhyd onnen*, *Tan y Graid dhy*, *Venechdyd*, *Pen Y Clawdy* and *Plas Hyswy*, but our research on the original sites of these suggests that *Ty'n Llan* was probably one of Lhuyd's unnamed six houses and a cottage by the church.

Research on *Ty'n Llan*'s origins has been considerably challenged by name changes over the centuries! By **1891** *Ty'n Llan* appeared to be owned by *Llantysilio Hall*, built in **1872-4** and replacing a now demolished **1723** brick house slightly to the south. But as initial DOWH visits² suggest, parts of *Ty'n Llan* are likely to be earlier than C18th. Could it have originally had a use connected with the church? From C15th onwards *Church Houses* were often built close to the church to raise church funds by housing festivals and church 'ales' that were no longer considered appropriate to be held in the church itself. After the Puritans later banned such merrymaking, redundant church houses were often converted to other parish uses - or rented as ordinary alehouses.³ There are also local suggestions, not yet researched by DOWH, that *Ty'n Llan* once served as an inn used by the drovers.

¹ https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/den%20103_HH_25_Efenechtyd.

² Observations are awaited from a brief DOWH architectural visit in summer 2025.

³ https://discoveringgoldwelshhouses.co.uk/library/Hhistory/con%20091_HH_QueensHistory2.pdf

Other suggestions that *Ty'n Llan* had appropriated the name of a completely different property, now seems to be verified! In the **1841 Census**, Edward Parry was at a *Tyn y Llan*, but this seems to have been a farm of the same name, across the road from present *Ty'n Llan*, that was subsequently demolished (along with other nearby houses) to build a new road. Evidence for this is provided by the **1867 Plan of the Llantysilio Hall and other estates advertised to be sold at auction in 1867**⁴. This showed the former 'Tynllan' to the north of the planned present road, as well as the curved route of the former road below it – also meaning that the present *Ty'n Llan* would have then been near the road in a more favourable position for a possible inn! The sale document includes mention of a *Church Cottage*, *Llantysilio*, and in the Parish records, the present *Ty'n Llan* also seemed to be called *The Cottage* from the 1880s onwards, but became *Tyn Llan* before a Mrs Burgess (see below) died in 1913!



The 1761 tomb in Llantysilio churchyard of Thomas Jones of *Llantysilio Hall* (2025)

However, on the 1888-1913 *National Library of Scotland* map it seems the present *Ty'n Llan* was then called *Pen-llan Cottage* – confusing for historians, but usefully indicating its position at the head of the *llan* or church site! In the **1891 Census** *Llantysilio Hall* was listed with *Butler* and *Housekeeper*; *Llantysilio Lodge* with *Gardener*; *Llantysilio Hall Stables* with *Coachman*, and *Number 3* of several *Llantysilio Cottages* with a *Hall Porter*. But *No. 1 Cottage* had no *Occupier* named, so was possibly in poor repair, and was listed for *Llantysilio Parish Church*. Then by the **1901 Census** the *Cottage* seemed to be the present *Ty'n Llan*, as its occupants **Margaret Burgess** and daughter **Elizabeth** were at 'Tynyllan' in the **1911 Census**! After Margaret's death the name *Llantysilio Cottage* was reverted to by the **1914 auction**⁵ of her 'HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE and EFFECTS', which interestingly included the following - suggesting now a home of some comfort:

'Excellent Fall compass, Pianoforte in Walnut Frame, in splendid order, by Crane and Son; Solid Mahogany Dining Room Suite, upholstered in Leather; Mahogany Suite in Hair Seating; Polished Oak Table, Walnut Loo Table, White-top and other Tables, Sofas and Couches, Windsors and other Chairs, number of Fenders, Coal Boxes, Treadle Sewing Machine, a Large Collection of Glass, China, Crockery, &co., Painted and other Sideboards/Washing Machine, and many other effects'.

⁴ DOWH has obtained a copy of this plan, to be reproduced with permission in a full DOWH house history.

⁵ <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/4244151/4244155/16/llantysilio>

Ty'n Llan's present occupiers have been in the property since 1970, since when they have carefully preserved its amazing historic features. Work included substantial underpinning, when *Ty'n Llan's* timber framing began to crack (and the house to slide) because of the 1976 drought! And interestingly, an aerial photograph at the time apparently revealed the 'footprints' of demolished houses in their drive - perhaps some of Lhuyd's '*by ye church abt. six houses and a cottage*'?



Ty'n Llan

Photo Two Photo Three



This year, at kindly hosted DOWH visits, we could appreciate *Ty'n Llan's* intricate network of ancient timbers. Pending an expected external architectural opinion, I could not resist sharing some 'amateur' images! Photo Two (above) shows the first floor of the right-hand house section if viewed from outside front (Photo One at beginning of the article). Below this room is an exposed section of 'wattle and daub' infill on what was possibly an original back house wall, and above it is an attic, accessed through a trap door in the ceiling at the top of the stairs, which may have smoke blackened timber.⁶ Then crossing the landing through the doorway seen to the right of Photo Two, one reaches the room depicted in Photo Three (above) – on the left side of the house if viewed from outside front.

Returning to its occupants, *Ty'n Llan's* owners have told us their property once featured in a television programme about haunted houses; the filming of which included, an introduction to the house of a 'medium' who is said to have communicated in Welsh with a named C18th personage. While DOWH research does not extend to investigation of the supernatural, such beliefs appear to be an important element of local tradition, so we will include the deceased maiden's story in the full DOWH history!

Our work so far has also revealed many more unexplored avenues for potential research, such as the *Harrison Family Papers*⁷ at the National Library of Wales; these include earlier family deeds as well as correspondence from 1777-1840 of the Jones and Harrison family of Llantysilio Hall, '*including letters from Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby... to various members of the Jones and Harrison families, 1800-1828*'.

⁶ Photos of the attic timbers are available.

⁷ <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/e47ba0c6-edbe-33d2-9a96-35a6d4e1b563?terms=1571>

A Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT – now part of Heneb) report⁸ also states that *Tyn-y-llan almost certainly lay on the eastern side of a common* that had disappeared by the end of the 18th century, but was shown at small-scale on Thomas Badeslade's map of the commons in the lordship of Bromfield and Yale, drawn in 1740. This was said to show a lane from the east, beneath the churchyard wall opening 'into a small triangular common or green with at least four houses beside it ...with the other dwellings now gone.

Finally, enormous thanks are due, not only to *Tyn-y-llan's* owners for both hosting us and steering our research, but also to all the DOWH members who have helped with these exciting discoveries!

Jenny Lees, November 2025

KEEPING TRACK OF THE TREE-RING DATED HOUSES OF WALES

Every year, *Vernacular Architecture*, the journal of the Vernacular Architecture Group (to which DOWH is affiliated) publishes summaries of the results of scientific-dates obtained over the previous year or so for buildings in England and Wales. It is pretty comprehensive and definitive. Much of the information for North Wales can also be obtained via the tree-ring dating reports on the DOWH website - recently up-dated by Peter Masters. But the easiest way to get a quick overview of what has been dated, where and why, is by turning to the VAG website (vag.org.uk), clicking on 'Bibliography and Databases' and scrolling down to the final section 'Tables of Tree-ring Dated Buildings in England and Wales'. Information is organised by date and county and the entries are basically distillations of the rather longer summaries in the journal.

Very sadly, as a result of the death of Bob Meeson who compiled these indices, they were discontinued after 2021. It is hoped to find someone to take on the job of updating but in the meantime, I offer a brief summary of recently tree-ring dated houses in Wales gleaned from *Vernacular Architecture* starting with Volume 52 (2021) and including those in the forthcoming issue (VA 56) due to be published in the new year, but freely available now to view on-line <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/yvea20>. This is the first time this information has been brought together in one place.

Some of the most exciting discoveries lie in the North, among them Gorphwysfa, Ruthin, 1413/4, the oldest dated town house in Wales; Cadwst (1417) and Henblas (1424-6), both remarkably early houses in what had until recently been at the heart of Glyndŵr country (see the last Newsletter); the gorgeous church with its magnificent rood screen at Llanegryn in Merioneth (1512-33); and a group of late-17th century town houses in Ruthin, that reflect the thriving society and economy of that time. Early dates emerge further south, such as the Old Vicarage, Glasbury (Radnorshire) of 1430/1 built as was proper for a clergyman, like a gentry

⁸ <https://cpat.org.uk/ycom/denbigh/llantysilio.pdf>

house and the chapel at Court Henry (Llangathen, Carmarthenshire) of around 1413 - half a century earlier than thought.



The Old Vicarage, Glasbury (Radnorshire)

The spectacular roof of the former Old Vicarage in Glasbury, Radnorshire, discussed by Richard Suggett in his book on Radnorshire houses, and now dated by the stable isotope method to 1430/1.

Part of a cruck, re-used in a house of 1573/4 at Abergillery, Monmouthshire dated to between 1380-1410, provides very early physical evidence to confirm the mention of crucks in 14th-century documents. At the other end of the chronological scale are a number of 18th century buildings scattered throughout the country, with most of the dates being very specific: although the 18th century is very well documented. A detailed chronology of building techniques still suffers from gaps in our knowledge. Finally, and now beyond living memory, a 1921 cart shed on an 18th-century estate at Mandinam in Llangadoc (Carmarthenshire) shows how long-lived traditional building techniques lasted into the age of mechanisation and prefabrication.

The table below gives details about location and age and a brief summary of the nature and significance of each building. References to *Vernacular Architecture* are to the paper volumes, but information can also be located on the web (from 2024 via open access,

<https://www.tandfonline.com/action/showOpenAccess?journalCode=yvea20>)

But the quickest way to get an overview of dated buildings in Wales is to use the tables in *Vernacular Architecture*, mentioned above, supplemented by this one.

Felling date range	County	Place name	Building address	Vernacular Architecture ref	Description/keywords	NGR
1380-1410	Mon	Abertillery (Aberystroth)	Gwrhyd-mawr	56 (ODL)	Re-used cruck elements in a house of 1573/4 (q.v.) Important physical evidence of the use of crucks pre-1400 to supplement documentary evidence of their use in Wales.	SO 222069

c. 1413	Carms	Llangathen	Court Henry (The Chapel)	54.94-5 (AM)	Chapel to house, thought to be Henry ap Gwilym's of c. 1460, a date that must be reviewed in light of the TRD. Double arch-braced trusses, cusped at apex.	SN 557226
1413/14	Denb	Ruthin	Castle St., Gorphwysfa	53.84 (AM)	Town house. 3-bay cross-wing (to 2-bay hall n.d.); collar/tie-beam to box-frame, jettied to street. Jowelled posts, cranked tie-beams. (Wing gable 1635/6). The oldest TR-dated town house in Wales.	SJ 124582
1417	Denb	Llandrillo	Cadwst	56 (ODL/Loader)	Open hall house with full crucks and storeyed ends in series. Remarkably early considering Merioneth's reputation as being ungovernable.	SJ 033362
1424/5 (hall); 1425/6 (wing).	Mer	Llandderfel	Henblas	56 (ODL/Loader)	House comprising cruck-framed hall which slightly pre-dates the box-framed cross wing. The massive service-end truss incorporates the three doorways into the service area and is technically a jointed cruck, the joint set very low, about 3 ft (0.91 m) above the sill beam. A few miles from Cadwst (above).	SH 988378
(a) 1430/1 (b) 1511/12	Radnor	Glasbury	Old Vicarage	56 (ODL/Loader)	(a) The medieval vicarage (patrons St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester) adheres to the traditional form of the gentry house, 2-bay hall cross passage and inner and outer rooms and elaborate roof. Glasbury was a grange of the abbey. For the tithe barn of 1511/12 see below. (b) the tithe barn followed 80 years later.	SO 177 390
1438-70; 1442; 1437-71; 1442-78	Mer	Brithdir	Gwanas fawr	56 (DendroArch/ Loader)	House. 2 pairs of crucks re-used in an 18 th -century house (c. 1772). House possibly occupies the site of a grange of the Knights Hospitallers.	SH771166
1464/5. 1466/7.	Denb	Ruthin	10 St Peter's Sq (The Myddelton)	54.97 (AM)	Town house or inn with shops. 4-bay, storeyed (n.b.) hall range with N cross-wing (containing services and outer room, possibly a parlour above) with to the S, two narrow shop units. Jettied. 1 st floor partitioned into bays, each heated by braziers. TRD samples from main range.	SJ 124582

c. 1470, 1475, 1477/8.	Denb	Ruthin	9 Castle St	54.95 (AM)	Town house. Cross wing to 2-bay open hall (s/b, n.d. but possibly coeval). Crown-strut roof with trencled purlins, heavily s/b. (Roof raised over hall, 1710)	SJ 124582
1478/9	Denb	Ruthin	6 Well St	54.98 (AM)	Town house. Open hall (s/b; n.d.) with two cross wings – the hall and W wing sampled, but only a single timber from the latter produced a precise felling date: so, this must at present be considered tentative.	SJ 124582
1484/5	Mon	Llanhilleth	Ty-Llwyd	56 (AM)	Cow shed—presumably a house in origin? (Attached to ‘hall’ of 1623/4, q.v.)	SO 218017
1485, 1490/1.	Denb	Ruthin	55 Clwyd St (The Star)	54.97 (AM)	Open-hall town house, aligned parallel to street, s/b queen strut roof with collar. (Repairs to roof 1611/12d; an inscribed date of 1639 probably indicates insertion of present fireplace & stack.)	SJ 122582
1517, 1517/18	Denb	Ruthin	24 Clwyd St	54.96 (AM)	Town house. Aligned parallel to street. 3-unit house, central chimney backing on to cross-passage but some s/b suggests earlier open hall. (Rear range a little later, 1513-43)	SJ 123583
(a) 1505-45; (b) rood loft 1512-33.	Mer	Llanegryn	Church of SS Mary & Egryn.	56 (ODL/Loader)	Church (a) roof and (b) screen.	SH 605055
1505-36 and 1514-35/	Mon	Abertillery (Llanhilleth)	Llanhilleth Farm	56 (ODL)	Longhouse with a Renaissance tower-like parlour block to one side. The early-16 th century house was originally cruck-framed; the dendro-dates relate to cruck stubs, ceiling beam, door head and screen.	SO 225003
1513-43	Denb	Ruthin	24 Clwyd St	54.96 (AM)	Rear range to former open hall range	SJ 123583
1513-33	Mon	Abersychan	Pistyll-gwyn	56 (AM)	Cowshed, part of a phased complex comprising ‘hall’ (1531-58), reconstruction of cowshed (1551) and a ‘second hall’ (1582-1614)	SO 258023

1534	Denb	Ruthin	21 Well St	54.96 (AM)	Town house. Principal range of 1535. One precisely dated sample, 3 broadly consistent with it. 2 ½-bay range parallel with street. The half bay (E) heavily s/b, the middle bay lightly s/b, the W bay clean – this suggests a smoke bay (or an open kitchen) with smoke leaking into the housepart. Roof with crown strut and straight braces.	SJ 125582
1537	Mon	Aberystroth	Bwlch-y-Garn	56 (AM)	House, 2-bay, end chimney with byre; upper cruck.	SO 179094
1522-52 and 1533-63.	Den	Cynwyd	Hafod yr Afr	56 (ODL)	Cruck-framed hall house; 2-bay hall flanked by service and parlour bays. It appears never to have functioned as an open hall; evidence suggests one bay was floored either during building or immediately afterwards, with a large chimney constructed at the lower end of the house.	SJ 067237
1543, 1545/6.	Denb	Ruthin	22 Clwyd St	54.96 (AM)	Town house aligned parallel to street. Samples from possible smoke bay.	SJ 123583
1531-58	Mon	Abersychan	Pistyll-gwyn	56 (AM)	House ('hall'), part of a farmstead complex beginning 1513-33 (q.v.)	SO 258023
1550	Den	Gwyddelwern	Caenog	56 (ODL)	The house, of the central-entry type, with hall to the one side of the passage and a parlour to the other, was originally timber-framed. It contains a chamber with a vigorously cusped and pegged arch-braced roof and—a rare feature in a domestic context—boarded rafters (the boards rebated between the rafters). 17 th -century highly finished partitions were inserted to accommodate a new stair, now removed. See 1729-60.	SJ 090460
1551	Mon	Abersychan	Pistyll-gwyn	56 (AM)	Reconstruction of cowshed (1513-33, q.v.).	SO 258023
1559/60	Mont (Powys)	Tyn-y-Coed	Cern Goch	55.170 (AM)	Box-frame house	SJ 063033
c.1561, 1562/3, 1563.	Denb	Ruthin	7 Castle St	54.95 (AM)	Town house. Front wing to main range of 4 bays (n.d.). Queen-strut roof, decorative framing. Jettied.	SJ 124582

c. 1564, 1566/7.	Denb	Llanfair DC	Ty-brith	55.171 (AM)	House. 5-bays; central (sic) smoke bay. Queen strut, trenched purlins. Small square panels. Herringbone. Pit sawn.	SJ 135518
1573/4	Mon	Abertillery (Aberystroth)	Gwrhyd-mawr	VA56 (ODL)	Longhouse, hall with gable entrance (cf Gwrhyd-fach, 1583; the byres of both appear to have been rebuilt in 1816). Late 14 th -century cruck parts were re-used in this building (see 1380-1410).	SO 222 067
1582/3	Mon	Abertillery (Aberstroth)	Gwrhyd-fach	56 (ODL)	Longhouse; hall with gable entrance; upper crucks.	SO 222067
1582-1614	Mon	Abersychan	Pistyll-gwyn	56 (AM)	House ('second hall') to complex beginning 1513-33 (q.v.)	SO 058023
c. 1590	Mon	Llanhilleth	Upper Hafod Arthen	56 (AM)	House, central chimney plan; upper crucks (For east range see 1623)	SO 220019
1590/1	Mon	Troedrhiw-Gwair	Fountain Inn	56 (AM)	House, 3-bay with 2-bay cross wing; upper crucks.	SO 159066
1600/1	Mon	Abersychan, Treveithin	Waterloo Cottage	56 (AM)	House, 3-unit plan with end chimney (and stair); upper crucks.	SO 265037
1602	Denb	Ruthin	11 Well St	54.98 (AM)	A multi-period townhouse with a rear range of 1602d. The dog-leg stair with twisted balusters set in a projection at the junction of front and rear ranges is noteworthy.	SJ 124583
1604, 1604/5.	Denb	Ruthin	24-6 Well St	55.171 (AM)	House. Stone. 4-bay end chimney plan. Collar, tie beam, trenched purlins. Ridge purlin. Scroll stops. Pit sawn.	SJ 126582
c. 1605, 1606/6; 1605/6	Denb	Ruthin	7 Upper Clwyd St	54.97 (AM)	Town house. Main range of 5 bays parallel to street with rear wing. Based on very few samples. The rear wing produced a similar date.	SJ 123582
1611, 1612	Denb	Ruthin	55 Clwyd St	54.97 (AM)	Roof repairs to open hall range of 1485-9. The fireplace and stack were probably inserted later (1639 inscribed date).	SJ 122582
1621, c. 1623, 1625	Mon	Llanhilleth	Upper Hafod Arthen	56 (AM)	House, end chimney plan, upper crucks. (For main range see c. 1590)	SO 220019
1623/4	Mon	Llanhilleth	Ty-Llwyd	56 (AM)	House ('hall'), 2-bay, upper cruck. (Attached to cowshed, 1484/5, q.v.)	SO 218017

1635/6	Denb	Ruthin	Castle St., Gorphwysfa	53.84 (AM)	N gable to cross wing of 1413/14 (q. v.)	SJ 124582
1639	Mon	Trinant, Crumlin	Gelli Farm	56 (AM)	House, 3-bay, central chimney plan with ruined cowshed attached; upper crucks.	SO 202005
1654/5, 1662/3, 1662.	Denb	Ruthin	13 Castle St	53.83 (AM)	Town house. 3-bay, end-chimney, box-framed; crown-strut roof.	SJ 124582
1646-76; 1556/7; 1668, 1673/4, 1674.	Carms	Laugharne	Island House	53.83 (AM)	House. 3 phases (Front, porch to front, rear, ex-situ) all with collar truss roofs.	SN 301107
1661; 1661, 1660/1.	Denb	Ruthin	34 Clwyd St	54.97 (AM)	Town house. 5-bay central chimney range and front wing roughly coeval. Box-framing, elaborate towards street.	SJ 122582
1662/3	Mer (Gwynedd)	Llanelltyd (Bontddu)	Hendre Forion	53.84 (AM)	House. Stone, 2 ½ storeys, 3-bay, end-chimney. Collars, trenched purlins. 1 st -floor beams with lamb's tongue stops.	SH 666202
1665/6; after 1656; 1655-85; 1651-87; 1655-91	Mont	Llawr-y-Glyn	Y Gribyn	(DendroArch/ Loader)	House, medieval in origins, rebuilt in 17 th century.	SN 927916
c. 1677, 1678, 1679	Denb	Llanynis	Rhyd-y- Cilgwyn	55.171 (AM)	3-bay barn. Queen struts. Small square panels. Pit sawn.	SJ 108604
1690; c. 1688,1689, 1690.	Denb	Ruthin	16 & 18 Castle Street	54.96 (AM)	Two town houses of 1690 (that appear to be associated with a range to the rear) forming a coherent piece of townscape design comprising four gables facing street. (The inner gables appear to be 1738-68 q.v.)	SJ 124581
1692; 1685-95.	Denb	Ruthin	20 Castle St	54.96 (AM)	Town house. 2-bays end-chimney range with porch. Queen-strut, trenched-purlins; lamb's tongue stops. Adjacent to neighbours (16 & 18 Castle St) and, although different in character, very close in date (1692)	SY 124581
(a)1694; (b) 1695	Mon	Crucorny (Llanvihangel)	Trewyn House	56 (DendroArch/ Loader)	Country house. Dates from (a) one truss and (b) one ceiling beam. The building is document as built in 1692.	SO 328229

1697, 1698.	Denb	Ruthin	5-7 Clwyd St (Castle Bell)	54.96 (AM)	Town house parallel to street; 2 of 3 bays survive; queen strut roof, trenched purlins; sawn timbers. All samples from roof.	SJ 123583
1700, 1702.	Denb	Llanbedr DC	Plas Towerbridge	55.171 (AM)	House. 3-bay, end chimney; queen strut, trenched purlins; large panel framing. Scroll stops. Pit sawn.	SJ 137593
1709/10, 1710.	Denb	Llanfwrog	Plas Galchog barn	55.171 (AM)	3-bay barn. Small square panels. Pit sawn. Associated farmhouse did not date.	SJ 114569
1710	Denb	Ruthin	9 Castle St	54.95 (AM)	Roof raised over medieval hall.	SJ 124582
1726/7	Carms	Llangadog	Coedweddus	54.94 (AM)	Farmhouse, 3 units with chimney backing on to passage; jointed cruck.	SN 744278
1720-56; 1726; 1725-61.	Carms	Llanddeusant	Cilbrywen Farmhouse	56 (DendroArch/Loader)	House. Scarfed crucks and some rafters re-used in 18/19 th century rebuilding.	SN 754255
1728-60	Denb	Gwyddelwern	Caenog	56 (ODL)	Rooms added to original range of 1550 (qv)	SJ 090460
1752; 1753	Pembs	Hook	4 & 6 Lower Quay Rd	56 (DendroArch/Loader)	Two coeval cottages, each of 2 storeys of 2 rooms.	SM 978116
1738-68	Denb	Ruthin	16 & 18 Castle St	54.96 (AM)	Gables over inner wings facing street	SJ 124581
1790/1	Carms	Llangadog	Mandinam	54.94 (AM)	Late-Georgian double-pile house. 7 bays. Although raised, original collar and tiebeam roof survives. (No timber of the C17 house dated or survives.)	SN 736281
1921, 1921/2.	Carms	Llangadog	Mandinam	54.94 (AM)	Cart shed 'surprisingly late for a traditional building'.	SN 736281

Abbreviations: TRD= Tree-ring date; s/b = smoke-blackened; ODL = Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory; AM = Andy Moir (Tree-Ring Services); Loader = University of Swansea Dendrochronology Laboratory (sampling by R J Bale). VA references give volume and page number; VA56 is forthcoming (2026).

Mon = Monmouthshire, Denb = Denbighshire, Carms = Carmarthenshire, Pembs = Pembrokeshire, Mer = Merioneth (Gwynedd), Mont = Montgomery (Powys), Radnor = Radnorshire (Powys)

Martin Cherry, December 2025

Something to do when there isn't anything on the television over the Christmas and New Year break! A wordsearch using architectural words associated with historic houses.

Find the words below in the table.

A	S	A	B	K	U	R	A	L	M
Y	N	J	A	G	A	S	E	I	O
N	O	I	L	L	U	M	C	N	S
H	Z	I	U	A	V	F	I	T	N
T	O	C	S	Z	Z	Z	N	E	A
R	O	M	T	I	O	B	R	L	R
A	K	E	R	N	H	H	O	X	T
E	S	E	A	G	G	B	C	K	U
H	O	O	D	M	O	U	L	D	E
T	C	T	E	L	A	I	N	I	F

Balustrade Cornice
 Finial Glazing Hearth
 Hoodmould Lintel Mullion
 Ocular Transom

Margaret Barr (18.9.54 – 3.11.25)



A long-time member of DOWH, Margaret passed away peacefully a few weeks after her 71st birthday. She was born in Abergavenny and brought up in Corwen, Denbighshire. She and her husband Wally married in 1976, having met as students on a Sociology degree. Her main career was in teaching and she spent 18 years as an infant teacher in Prestatyn and Abergele, where she was History Co-ordinator.

Her interest in history was continued in her later life when she worked as a Heritage Assistant at the Ruthin Gaol Museum. Employment in the gaol enabled Margaret to indulge her interest in family history and research about prisoners, in particular transportation to Australia in the 18th and 19th centuries. Margaret was the warden of historic Llanasa Church in recent years, and an active member of the Flintshire Historical Society and Welsh Place-Name Society.

She joined Discovering Old Welsh Houses in 2011 and researched the histories of several North Wales houses. In 2017, she and Wally set up the Flintshire Branch of Discovering Old Welsh Houses, which they ran until she became ill in 2024. Margaret also co-authored the most recent DOWH generic leaflet.

Margaret is survived by her husband Wally, three children and five grandchildren.

Help

As mentioned in 'From the Chair' as we go into the new year now is the perfect time to reinvigorate DOWHG, and I am asking you to help in this next phase of the group. To do this we need new trustees, our constitution allows us up to twenty trustees, at the moment we only have nine trustees and many of us have been here for what seems forever, so we would welcome new people with new ideas to join us. And as Rosemary is stepping down as treasurer next year we really need someone now so that a timely handover can take place.

Apart from being a trustee we can co-opt members, so if you don't want to be a trustee, but have skills in IT, marketing, experience of working within a charity, or if you would like to organise a group perhaps looking at different aspects, do get involved. Do get in touch with me if you have any questions or would like to help in any way.

Janice, DOWH Chair

email: chair@discoveringoldwelshhouses.co.uk

FOR YOUR DIARIES.

Here is the programme for the next few zoom lectures for 2025-6.

14 January 2026 at 7pm

Dr Liz Green - Architectural History in the National Trust

Liz is the Senior National Curator for Architectural History & Interiors, at the National Trust.

The National Trust is one of the power houses for research in architectural history - on buildings, furnishings, landscapes and the way buildings were used - and Liz has a unique overview in that her responsibilities extend over Wales, Northern Ireland and England. This will be a great opportunity to hear an insider view of on-going cutting-edge research, conservation and presentation at a national level.

Wednesday 11 February 2026 at 7 pm

Eleanor Carpenter - A brief overview of DOWH's research in Flintshire

Eleanor is a DOWH trustee and has amassed huge and varied experience, having served as a conservation officer in three Welsh authorities (Flintshire, Eryri National Park and, currently, Ceredigion), and in the private sector.

The Flintshire Branch has done some interesting research, including a very unassuming house in the middle of Caerwys which was found to have a cruck frame and an early date. The talk will be an opportunity to see what the research found and how this links into the wider picture of historic houses in North Wales.

Wednesday 11 March 2026 at 7 pm.

Miles Wynn Cato - William Parry (1743-1791) and his portraits for Welsh Houses

Miles is an independent art dealer of long standing and a national expert on pre-20th century Welsh painting. He is the author of several books including a major study of William Parry, the most significant Welsh portrait painter of the 18th century.

William Parry occupies a unique position in Welsh art history. He is the only pre-19th century Welsh painter who enjoyed widespread & lasting patronage in his own country. This talk will look at the Welsh families who patronised him from the late 1760s until his death and the country houses where the portraits he painted were hung. It is a story of paintings lost and found as well as the vicissitudes of the gentry houses of North Wales.

