



CYMDEITHAS HYNAFIAETHWYR A NATURIAETHWYR MŌN

# Newsletter

ANGLESEY ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY AND FIELD CLUB

No. 43 Autumn 2004

## Editorial

**I**t is with great trepidation that I shall try to live up to the role of editor following the outstanding record of my predecessors. It is appropriate to thank Alun for the work he has put in since issue 37. His attention to these duties in addition to his obligation to the Oriel is something to be admired. I must offer my personal thanks to him for that and for his guidance during my take-over.

I share his concern for the early signs of a possible decline in the Society. Meetings remind me somewhat of our Church and Chapel congregations. As I am in my seventieth year I do not think I insult anyone by commenting that the average age of our members, or at least, those who attend meetings, is not that much younger!

Do we project the wrong image? This during a time when there have never been more nature and historical programmes available on television, seemingly hugely popular.

There has been a recent upsurge of other organisations devoted to history, archaeology and nature studies on the Island. I shall not name them as many of our members are involved. It is possible that loyalties are split and energies and money spread thinly. This is not intended to decry them as they are complimentary. Can I urge our members to support our programmes? Can they even recruit new members from these groups? If any primary school teachers and heads of history departments of our secondary schools are members, cannot youngsters be encouraged to attend our public meetings? Our transactions and other publications must continue to maintain high academic standards but that cannot happen if we relapse into fatal decline. The drop in the membership numbers gives cause for concern and we are addressing the problem.

Pat West is in charge of our publicity and her first aim is to create a flyer aimed at the younger generation. Part of the problem is to explain the term 'Antiquarian,' often mistaken for old furniture! The Committee feel that our title is special and should be retained. Pat, we extend our heartfelt welcome and wish you success.

We may need to increase the numbers of our lecture sessions, with the possible need to liaise with other organisations. Members' comments and suggestions would be welcome. Please contact me or any relevant committee member. Do not forget our website. Applications for membership can be printed out and utilised for recruitment

### Looking back..

**T**he Newsletter has existed for only twenty years, designed to give more up to date information and release space in the Transactions.

Here is an opportunity to glimpse a little of our previous activities.

#### Twenty Five Years ago.

The 1979 edition of the Transactions carried the news of that time. Our membership was 1,041. At the Annual General Meeting a talk on Marine Archaeology and Social History was given by Dr. Cecil Jones. The Autumn Meeting was a lecture by Mr. Kyffin Williams on the 'Artist in Anglesey.' Mr. David Lloyd Hughes addressed the Annual Dinner and Dr. Ildid Anthony gave the Narlith Goffa Syr Ifor Williams- 'Rhai agweddau ar gartrefi Gwynedd.'

Excursions included the 18<sup>th</sup> century iron foundry at Bersham; Erddig and Bwlchgwyn Geological Museum, Powys Castle, Bath and Slimbridge.

#### Fifty Years ago.

In 1954 there were only 418 members. The report of the Committee carried the resignation of Sir Ifor Williams as President.

Main lectures given were 'A Survey of the Anglesey Antiquities' by Mr. Hemp and 'Soils and Rocks of North Wales' by Dr. F. Smithson.

Excursions included a visit to Ynys Llanddwyn, Barclodiad y Gawres, Aberdaron Church and Ynys Enlli. In fact, on the last excursion, only the church was visited as, true to form, the weather let everyone down and a crossing to the island was out of the question!

### Annual General Meeting, 2004

**A**t the Oriel Llangefni, on 14<sup>th</sup>. May, the meeting was well attended, our President taking the Chair.

For all past services to the Society it was a pleasure for the new President, Mr. John Rowlands, to present to Lord Stanley, our past President, a gift of an inscribed

Anglesey hornbeam bowl, the work of Arthur Harrison and Siobhan Webster.

A two minutes silence was observed in remembrance of past stalwarts Llewelyn Jones, Dr. Eifion Jones, Dr. Iolo Griffith and Jim Roberts.

Reports were submitted; in particular the unavoidable delay with the next publication by Dr. William Griffiths. A second book will follow soon after so it is inevitable that further publications will be some time in surfacing. A laudable suggestion was made for possible Welsh translations of earlier publications.

The One Day School was hailed as an outstanding success and a new one will be planned in 2006.

The question of a task group to increase membership was raised. The need for a Press Officer was discussed. J.O. Hughes announced his standing down from the Committee and Pat West was recommended to replace him. We send good wishes and thanks to Mr. Hughes.

Following the meeting David and Sue Chapman gave a fascinating talk on 'Reconstructing Archaeology.' Their work involved precisely what the title suggested. They have gone one step further than examining ancient tools and fragments. They have tried to master the original techniques and succeeded in manufacturing replicas of the old. On the table was a wide range of such artefacts and we had the pleasure of handling and testing their function. It was an unusual presentation.

*The Editor*

### **Evening Excursion 27<sup>th</sup>. May**

**A** Party of 27 members were guided on an extremely interesting visit to Holyhead. Dr. Ken Roberts gave a brief account of the development of the Port from a small creek in Roman times to the present, with particular emphasis on what could be seen from the vantage point overlooking the inner harbour.

This was followed by a description of architectural features of the Church building which demonstrated its development over several centuries. We were then taken by a Stena coach inside the 'Controlled area' of the port where Mr. John Hodgson described the work that had been done to create the present ferry facilities, mentioning some future developments. He took us into the port Control Room and we also had the opportunity to view Telford's Harbourmaster and Customs House, the George IV Arch and inside Rennie's lighthouse on Admiralty Pier.

*Gareth Parry*

### **Full Day Excursion 5<sup>th</sup>. June**

This was the day we should have walked along part of Sarn Helen, visited Bryn y Castell and walked the Rhiwbach Tramway, all in the Ffestiniog area. Only 15 members expressed an interest which meant that a considerable financial loss would be incurred. I am indebted to Mrs. Frances Llewelyn who, as usual, spared no effort in planning the walk. Thanks also to several persons outside the Society who had agreed to be involved on the day.

*Gareth Parry*

Our Website/Safle Gwe-  
[www.hanesmon.btinternet.co.uk](http://www.hanesmon.btinternet.co.uk)

### **Half Day Excursion 26<sup>th</sup> June**

**A**n exceptionally well attended meeting of 73 members took place at Brynddu, the delightful home of Professor and Mrs Grove-White. We received a warm welcome and much appreciated refreshments; a cup of tea and scones in the 'back kitchen' was the highlight of the visit.

The Rev. Emlyn Richards addressed us on the contents of the house, its history and more especially the connection of the house with William Bulkeley, the 18<sup>th</sup>. century diarist. Professor Grove-White followed with a summary of the house and its contents.

We split into two groups to view the house and all the memorabilia of William Bulkeley and also the peaceful kitchen garden close by.

At St. Mechell's Church the Rector, the Rev. Canon Geraint Edwards, read some of the extracts from the Bulkeley diaries. He also outlined activities in the area and described particular features of the church.

*Gareth Parry*

### **Full Day Excursion 21<sup>st</sup>. July**

**F**orty eight members were in the coach leaving Menai Bridge for a coffee stop at the Meifiod House, Bontnewydd before joining a train at Waunfawr to travel to Rhyd Ddu.

The weather was good enough to appreciate the scenery en route but Snowdon was in cloud. We made our own arrangements for lunch at Beddgelert. At St. Mary's Church Mrs. Margaret Dunn spoke to us about the history of the area and what is known of the Augustinian Priory that used to be on the site. The Priory held some lands in South East Anglesey. We then went to the National Trust's 'Small Victorian Manor' at Craflwyn. Unfortunately the restoration work had fallen behind schedule so we had limited viewing of the work done to develop the site as an environmental and education centre, including accommodation for volunteer workers. One of their tasks was removing *Rhododendron Ponticum* from the hillsides. The day ended with a meal at the Royal Sportsman Hotel, Porthmadog. We were able to provide a 'Feeder coach' from and to Amlwch for this excursion.

*Gareth Parry*

### **Weekend Excursion 3<sup>rd</sup>.-5<sup>th</sup>. Sept**

This was the time we should have set off for a weekend at Ironbridge. Mr. and Mrs. Mason had worked hard developing a varied programme which included a stay at a hotel, once a Tudor manor. As only 22 members booked to join, the excursion had to be cancelled, again because of financial non viability. I am grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Mason for their efforts and to those outside the Society for their forbearance over cancellations at such short notice.

*Gareth Parry*

Amazon.uk - when purchasing your books, use this link via our website and you will contribute to the Publications Fund. Don't forget at Christmas!

## Railway News

The new sewage project excavations for Holyhead and district are uncovering some interesting artefacts.

A small pumping station is being installed near the end of Hibernia Row at Holyhead. When the turf was removed a double row of stone sleepers was uncovered, on the approach to the abutment of a wooden trestle bridge that crossed the Sound to Salt Island in 1850. It is



Stone sleepers with visible chair beds just north of the modern bridge. The lines of sleepers were seven feet apart- the railway was a wide gauge. One sleeper carried a cast iron chair. After careful recording and photography by Andrew Davidson and his archaeological colleagues, they had to be removed and are now at the Maritime Museum.

## Book Launches

Yet more evidence of Margaret Hughes' industry was recognised on 15<sup>th</sup> July by a quiet ceremony at the Maritime Museum.

Her latest books in the series on Anglesey, 'Anglesey Villages' and 'Museums and Galleries' were introduced and went on sale. They are available from all the usual outlets. £4.50 and £4.75.

On October 8th., at The Ucheldre Centre, a new autobiography will be introduced by our President, John Rowlands. It is the work of our Patron, Lord Thomas Stanley. He and Lord Stanley will engage in an open discussion with the audience.

'The Stanleys of Alderley 1927-2001' throws a refreshing light on his life,



Lord Thomas, centre, with his brothers and his mother, Lady Kathleen Stanley

including aspects of local history. He writes with a remarkable candour, demonstrating his honest personality with a tremendous capacity for good common sense.

It is already available at local bookshops and I am certain that members will enjoy its contents. Accounts of his early life, experiences as a farmer and his work in the House of Lords are covered in detail. Well illustrated, it is an excellent read.

Bookshops: £19.95. By E Mail: £15.25 (incl. P&P)  
Order: web@amed.co.uk

## Publications

Dr. W.P. Griffith's work, *Public Administration in Anglesey c1780-c1914* is expected to be available at Christmas/New Year.

Some photographic work and indexing is all that remains before reaching the publisher. It promises to be a tome of some significance, with 19 chapters and 150,000 words.

Gwilym T. Jones

## Looking ahead..

Owing to poor support during the last two excursion seasons there will not be a weekend excursion next year. Future plans may have to be linked to special events.

A full day excursion off Anglesey will be prepared. To enable us all to plan ahead, here is a **provisional** list of forthcoming events. Please enter them in your 2005 diaries. Confirmation will be given in the annual programme next Spring.

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May:** An evening visit to Plas Llechylled with Mr. and Mrs. M. Doble.

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June:** A walk in the Brynsiencyn area visiting several monuments with Mrs. Frances Llewelyn.

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July:** An afternoon visit to Plas Cadnant with Mrs. Ann Benwell.

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> July:** Day excursion to Northwich, the Weaver Canal and Anderton Boat Lift- organised by Mr. and Mrs. Mason.

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September:** An afternoon between Malltraeth and the A5 looking at the sites of ancient and current river crossings with Mr. Gwilym T. Jones. It could be of mutual benefit to organise joint excursions and visits with other Societies and Groups. I would be pleased to hear from anyone to discuss the issue.

Gareth Parry Tel: 01248 722697

## Don't Forget...

Dydd Gwener, 15 Hydref am 7.00 o'r gloch  
Oriol Ynys Môn, Llangefni

**DARLITH GOFFA SYR IFOR WILLIAMS**

Cyfarfod cyhoeddus di dal

Dr. Jason Watford Davies

"R.S. Thomas"

Bydd lluniaueth ar gael

Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> October at 7.00 p.m.  
Oriol Ynys Môn, Llangefni

## **AUTUMN MEETING**

Mr. Spencer Smith

"Visible symbols of Kingship- symbolism and  
Castles built in the Kingdom of Gwynedd"

Refreshments will be available and the Society's publications on sale

Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2005 at 7.00 p.m.  
Oriol Ynys Môn, Llangefni

## POT POURRI

Short talks by Society members: watch the Website.  
This will be combined with a Buffet Supper.

### Oriol Ynys Môn and the Museums Service

The Oriol was delighted to welcome a new member of staff who has joined the team since mid August. Ceri Jones is the department's Trainee Museums and Archives Education Officer.

Oriol Ynys Môn continues to work towards revamping the main Heritage Gallery. This tired and rather dated exhibition is in the process of being redesigned and we very much hope that a new gallery complete with a temporary exhibition space, will be unveiled by the autumn of 2005.

Another project, the Sir Kyffin Williams' Gallery, is also being developed.

### Alun Gruffydd: Library & Information Service

The Library Service's projects for 2004-05 under CyMAL's Library Development Fund have all been confirmed, there are two projects in particular which may be of interest to Newsletter readers:

Four 'Aladdin Rainbow' CCTV full colour low vision reading aids have been acquired and will eventually be located at Holyhead, Amlwch, Llangefni and Menai Bridge libraries.

High specification Lap Top computers (loaded with Office 2000 Suite) will be made available for loan; some 20 machines will be available initially. The loan period will be for 3 months (renewable!!) at a modest cost of £10.

Local Studies Centre: Additional information requested by the Heritage Lottery Fund in support of the bid for funding is to be submitted within the next two weeks or so. Included with the information will be a set of computer produced 3D graphics of external views of the proposed new building.

As usual the Library Service will be sponsoring the annual lecture at the Holyhead Arts Festival. This year's lecture by Emyr Price on 'Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos' will be published as an A4 sized booklet, with bi-lingual text and a photographic section containing over 40 photographs. The published lecture will be available for sale on the evening of the lecture priced at £5.00.

### Archives and Educational Services -

welcomes the new Principal Officer, Pat West:

"It has been five weeks now since I took up the post of Principal Officer Archives and Education Services based at Park Mount in Llangefni. Previously I was curator of Gwynedd Museum in Bangor and then County Collections Officer. After thirteen enjoyable years working in museums I was more than ready for another challenge. I am very fortunate in that my new responsibilities encompass those things that I am most passionate about. It is nice to get back to my roots, in archives, where there are many exciting developments

going on. I look forward to my new challenge. I can be contacted:

Tel. 01248 752945 or [pxwed@ynysmon.gov.uk](mailto:pxwed@ynysmon.gov.uk)"

*John Rees Thomas*

### Good Wishes

Dewi O. Jones, F.L.A.

Dewi, a Life Vice-President of the Society, has been unwell recently.

We are glad to hear that he is now making good progress and we send him our very best wishes for his recovery.

*John Rowlands*

## Snippets

Under the jurisdiction of Leicester University, recent borings in quartzite at Holyhead have produced specimens alleged to be 501 million years old. This would place the indigenous rocks to be Cambrian rather than Pre-Cambrian.

Yet another arrowhead has been discovered at Parc Bryn Groes. It is Neolithic, amongst seven others found in a confined area over the last three years.

Might it be one from a quiver lost in the distant past?

*Dave Wilson*

## Anne's Accessions

### More additions to the Record Office-

1. Records of Holyhead Sailing Club, 1955-1999 - WD10
2. Llyfr cofnodion Gorsedd Eisteddfod Môn, 1977-2001 WM1291
3. Llyfr Hir Porthamel, llungopi. Trwy Cymdeithas Morrisiaid Môn WM2070
4. Bundle of papers regarding public rights of way, footpaths and bridleways in the Malltraeth and Llanddwyn areas, photocopies, 1981 WM2071
5. Additional records of Llanedwen W.I., 1948-1993 WD3
6. Records of New Park Street English Baptist Church, 1886-1988 WM2075
7. Plans and bundles of Annual Returns, Llandyfriedog National School, 1873-1905 WA

*Anne Venables, Tel. 01248 75208 Record Office, Llangefni.*

### **STOP PRESS**

At the latest Committee meeting, it was decided to introduce a greater range of events. There will be monthly meetings next year and these will be publicised. It might be possible to join a two day excursion to Ireland being organised by Oriol Môn. Contact Gareth Parry at 0128722697 if you would like details when they become available. Please note the first of the new meetings THIS year:

**Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2004 at 7.00 p.m.**

**STONE SCIENCE, TALWRN**

Owain T.P. Roberts

**THE BRONZE AGE BOAT FROM DOVER**

Refreshments will be provided

The next edition of the Newsletter will be published in the spring of 2005. Please forward any articles to the Editor :

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