CYMDEITHAS HYNAFIAETHOL MON
ANGLESEY ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY CYLCHLYTHYR/NEWSLETTER ... HYDREF/AUTUMN 1987

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PUTTING THE CLOCK BACK

An Antiquarian Society, more than any other, "puts the clock back" constantly, as it studies how history has been made in an area over the centuries. We, as Anglesey Antiquarians, do so by visiting sites to see for ourselves, by listening to the experts, and, hopefully, through reading the Society's Transactions and other publications which appear from time to time to enrich our knowledge.

The Society's own "Studies in Anglesey History" is a collection of titles rightly envied by many other county societies not so prolific in their output, nor with the same expertise upon which Anglesey can call. Mrs. Ramage's recent "Portraits of an Island" is the seventh in the series which has also dealt with our prehistoric heritage, industrial archaeology, natural history, shipping, education, and Anglesey in medieval times.

What next? This is the question the Publications Committee have been asking, and now they are turning to you, AAS members, to make some suggestions about the sphere of research for the volume to appear shortly after 1993.

Should this be biographical? historical? another reference to industry in Anglesey? a study of Anglesey publishing and local newspapers? another title concerning natural history?

You must have ideas. Mrs.Helen Ramage, chairman of the Publications Committee, would welcome a call from you if you have. Her number is Menai Bridge 712738.

This summer, the range of the Society's excursions has been wider than ever, taking members to the top of a mountain, to the borders of Wales to visit Shrewsbury, to Pentrefoelas to see how a village is being conserved. We have dipped into the far distant past with Mrs.Frances Llewelyn and Mr.Tomos Roberts as our guides. Half day visits nearer home have taken us to Gronant where Mr.Harrington welcomed an invasion to tramp through his old house and inspect restoration. Mr. Norman Squire Johnson talked of restoration at Llanbadrig Church. Cochwillan has already received attention, and Mrs.Llewelyn explained its historical importance on a day which must have been one of the worst, weather-wise, an AAS excursion has experienced.

Our thanks go to all who made these excursions possible. Those who have never ventured should do so in 1988.

Three day outings are planned for 1988, one to the Abergele area, St.Asaph, Kinmel and Llangerniew; one a hilltop walk in Ardudwy around Corsygedol, in the company of Mrs.Llewelyn; and the third to Liverpool to see further additions to the Maritime Museum and, hopefully, the "Northern Tate" to be opened there next year. Half day visits will be to the Wylfa and Llanrhwydrus areas and to Plas Berw, Trefeilir and Llangaffo Church, providing permission is forthcoming at these places. The weekend excursion, already well into the planning stage, is called "Cheshire Houses". The party will be based at the Manchester Polytechnic hall of residence in Didsbury, and will visit Bramall, Tatton Medieval Hall, and Lyme and, hopefully, Nether Alderley church and there will be a passing look at one or two typical Cheshire villages. Emyr and Margaret Hughes have arrangements in hand once again.

The Gwynedd Archaeological Trust have now come to the end of their excavations at Bryn Eryr, Llansadwrn, under way for the past three seasons. When the work ended, about three quarters of the site had been excavated. David Longley came to our Pot Pourri meeting some time ago to describe his plan of action. The results have made the project well worth while. Evidence has been found of an original timber enclosure, superseded by substantial bank and ditch work, and these have been dated to the 2nd and 3rd c.B.C. There was also a sequence of round houses, and a 3rd c. Roman pottery. David is to report on his findings to CADW next year.

The Trust has also done exploratory work on a small scale at Plas Berw and Castell Trefadog.

Mrs.Frances Llewelyn's excavations in the '70s at Trefnigaeth and Dindryfol aroused interest. Her findings are now published as a Cambrian monograph, at £27. Mrs. Llewelyn will have copies at the Autumn Meeting.

Looking for Christmas gifts? Also at the Autumn Meeting you will find a selection of the Society's publications. Why not include a copy of the Index to the Transactions? This will be the key to many hours of interesting reading, and will be valued particularly by researchers.

AN ANGLESEY MARBLE TABLE FOR NAPOLEON

Angharad Llwyd, in her prize-winning essay at the Beaumaris Eisteddfod of 1832, referred to the green marble quarries "which first came into the notice of the late Mr. Bullock who manufactured a magnificent table of green marble which was sent to Buona parte at St. Helena. This table was part of the furnishings of the 56-room bungalow which the British government built for its eminent prisoner.

Travellers to Anglesey noted the serpentine marble; Fenton in 1810 referred to these quarries "lately discovered"; Pennant, forty years earlier, had described the marble as "green, black and a dull purple" and it was to be found "between Bodior and Rhyd Pont (Four Mile Bridge), similar to that at Mynachdy" (Llanfair yng Nghornwy). Llanfechell and the Skerries are also mentioned.

Who was George Bullock? An informative article in "The Times" on June 23 - I am grateful to our President for drawing my attention to it - describes him as "a furniture maker of the calibre of Chippendale". In Great Tew Park in Oxfordshire, a despatch box containing his bills and correspondence about the furnishing of that mansion was recently discovered. He supplied furniture for Sir Walter Scott's Abbotsford, and made a suite of furniture for the Duke of Palmella, the Portuguese Ambassador to Britain, which was sold in June for £220,000. An exhibition of his work will be held early next year in London and Liverpool. How did he learn about our green marble?

Angharad Llwyd visited Trentham, and the owner, the Duke of Sutherland, showed her "a beautiful chimney piece made of Mona marble" and told her that it compared favourably with the "verd antique" which he had imported from Rome.

At Plas Rhianfa, Glyn Garth, there are chimney pieces with panels of green marble brought by Sir John Hay Williams from his farm, Cruglas, Valley.

If you know of other examples in Anglesey, do please write to the newsletter - readers will be interested to know. HELEN RAMAGE.

ADDITIONS TO THE ARCHIVES' OFFICE

Mr.Einion Wyn Thomas, the area archivist (who is to be our speaker at the Autumn Meeting) has received the following:

Correspondence of the Merseyside & North Wales Ramblers Association with reference to Anglesey, 1960s.

Additional registers and minute books of the Wesleyan Churches of Amlwch and Holyhead, 1842-1979.

Rhestr o enwau milwyr o Fon a laddwyd yn y Rhyfel Mawr.

Log book: Amlwch Nat.School 1885-1912.

Managers' Minute Book: Amlwch British School, 1859-1883.

Llyfr Cownt James Williams, Cefn Llanfair, plwy Llangeinwen, 1875-1895.

Log Book: Llanfairpwll British School 1872-1898.

Mss. Recipe and Household Hints belonging to Margaret Wynn of Boderwyd, 1673.

Nature lovers having frequent access to the Anglesey coastline are invited by the Greenpeace Environmental Trust to join a "Dolphin Lookout". As many volunteers as possible are needed to provide information on the numbers and movements of whales and dolphins around the coast.

More details may be had from The Cetacean Group, c/o Zoology Department, University of Oxford, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PS.

Local history studies have started at various centres under the WEA and Extra Mural programme, but some new ones begin in the New Year.

At Beaumaris, Mr.Aled Eames starts a series of six afternoon meetings on Thursdays at the Community Centre, on January 14, entitled "Shipwrecks".

Cyrsiau ychwanegol yn Gymraeg: "Hanes Lleol" (y Parch.Edgar Jones), Llun 7 p.m. yn yr Ysgol Gynradd, Aberffraw, 5 cyfarfod o Ion.25. "Ardal Mynydd Parys" (Mr.J.C. Hughes), Iau, 2.30 ym Mrwynog (Cartre'r Henoed), Amlwch, 6 cyfarfod o Ion.21.

"Crwydro Mon" (Mr.William Evans, Llun, 4.30 p.m. ym Mhlas Crigyll, Bryngwran, 6 chyfarfod o Chwefror 15.

"Bywyd Gwyllt ym Mon" (Mr.William Evans), Iau, 7 p.m. yn yr Ysgol Gynradd, Pensarn, 5 cyfarfod o Ionwr.14.

"Hanes y Wasg ym Mon" (Mr.Alun Lloyd), Gwener, 7 p.m. yn yr Ysgol Cynradd, Rhosybol, 5 cyfarfod o Ionawr 15.

"Teithio o Gwmpas Mon" (William Evans) Mercher, 7.30 yn yr Ysgol Gynradd, Talwrn, 5 cyfarfod o Ionawr 13.

Next year's Annual Dinner will be on March 26, at Henllys, Beaumaris, when a special guest will be presented. His identity is to be secret until his appearance. The only clue - he has made a uniquely valuable contribution to the history of Anglesey.

Solve the mystery - apply for your places early so as not to be disappointed.