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IN MEMORIAM

Since our last issue, the Society has lost two of its most influential members. A tribute to Mrs. Helen Ramage will be found in the Transactions - a fitting frame for a word picture of all she meant to the Society over the years, through her scholarship and her love of the island. The influence of the late Mr. Alun Lloyd was subtle but, nevertheless, noteworthy. Alun would have claimed to be "an ordinary member", yet his loyalty to all aspects of the Society's interests was maintained over a long number of years, up to the week of his death. He was an avid reader of its publications, he attended all the society and committee meetings within his power to do so, he supported the excursions, made suggestions, wrote to the newsletter (see Spring 1991 issue), and was a careful auditor of the Society's accounts. He will be sadly missed in every sector of our activities.

SOCIETY WELCOMES SOCIETY

In September, a party of 50 members of Stockport Historical Society visited Penmon, where they were met by three one-time members, and Antiquarians, Jeffrey and Joan Lewis and Margaret Hughes. Congregating in the orchard (there was a funeral service taking place in church at the time), a brief outline of the history of the settlement was given before they locked around themselves.

In her talk, Margaret Hughes also told them of the work currently under way, through CADW and Ynys Môn Borough Council, who have already cleaned the fishpond, stabilised the walls along the path to the well, and are at present working on the Dovecote Barn. If grants will be available, the next project is to stabilise the estate wall, much of which has been attacked by ivy and is crumbling.

Work has also been going on this summer to restore what is left of St. Seiriol's monastery on Puffin Island. Building materials were flown by helicopter to fix the crumbling roof on the tower.

Stockport Historical Society members also visited Oriel Ynys Môn, and Cochwillan, Talybont, where Mrs. Frances Llewelyn welcomed them and told them the story of the house.

HELP!

Gareth M. Davies, of 27 St. Seiriols Close,

Holyhead LL65 1RD (Tel. 0407-760576) is researching the history of football in Anglesey, in order to help in compiling a publication for the North Wales Coast F.A. who celebrate their centenary in 1994.

He would welcome any photographs or information from the 1870s to date.

CAPTURING AN ATMOSPHERE

A book which attempts to recapture the lost atmosphere of Edwardian Anglesey with its unspoilt countryside, its leisurely way of life and its extremes of wealth and poverty, is EDWARDIAN ANGLESEY by Society member, JOHN COWELL.

It consists of 106 pages of illustrations reproduced from picture postcards of the period, with a detailed commentary on each, showing what life was like during an age long since vanished. There are 25 pages of text dealing with various aspects of life on the island from the accession of Edward VII in 1901 to the outbreak of the first world war in 1914.

Copies are available from Mr. Cowell at 52 Lon y Bryn, Menai Bridge LL59 5LI, price £6.95 plus 75p postage and packing.

For your Christmas gifts ... remember the Society's publications too. They are available in the shop at Oriel Ynys Môn.

GWYNEDD ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

The Society was represented at the annual open meeting of the Trust held at UCNW in September, when details were given of the work accomplished during the past year.

During 1991 intensive work was undertaken on the five Anglesey "maerdrefi" at Aberffraw, Rhosyr, Cemais, Penrhoslligwy and Llanfaes. A geophysical survey at Llanfaes has identified enclosures, pits and hearths possibly associated with the medieval township of Llanfaes.

As part of the St. Cybi Environmental Improvement Scheme, consolidation work was carried out in two phases in the churchyard, on two levels. During the second phase of the scheme, it was apparent that the archaeological implications were far greater than anticipated. The work here concentrated on the upper churchyard, especially on the area adjacent to Eglwys Y Bedd in the south west corner - the church is, in fact, the surviving nave of an early 14th c. church which once stood there.

The Trust is conducting a watching brief during excavation of foundations for a sewerage pumping station by Welsh Water, at Maes Wendon Car Park, Benllech, close to the site of a possible Viking burial observed some 45 years ago.

Two major developments which together span the medieval town defences of Beaumaris are currently the subject of planning applications. Excavation in advance of any development is likely to produce important information on the nature of the town defences and on structures both within and outside the town limits.

Thanks to Mr. & Mrs. J.M.Lewis for their attendance to report proceedings on our behalf.

COURSES FOR THE NEW YEAR

At Ysgol Goronwy Owen, Benllech: Tuesdays at 7 p.m. from January 12 (10 meetings): NATURAL HISTORY OF ANGLESEY. Tutor, Dr.David C.Seel. Enquiries to Extra Mural Dept.UCNW. Tel: Bangor 351151/ext.2256.

Cwrs WEA yn y Ganolfan, Moelfre, dydd Mercher 7 p.m. 10 cyfarfod o Ionawr 13. MON A'R MOR. Tiwtor: J.Richard Williams,B.Add.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY TOUR TO IRELAND: March 21-27, 1993. Details from 0248-382258.

NORTH WALES CHURCH PAINTINGS: WEA Day Study Tour on Saturday June 5, 1993, departing from Llandudno with lunch stop at Bala. Tour led by E.Gwynn Matthews, tutor-organiser. For full details and reservation arrangement, tel:074578/482. Early booking advised.

THE NATIONAL TRUST ON ANGLESEY

The summer newsletter of the North Wales region of the National Trust reports an interesting project at Cemlyn, where an old house dating back to the 15th c., used at one time as a stable, has been renovated.

"As the roof had completely fallen in", it reports, "a great deal of work has been necessary to re-build it, and this has been done in a traditional way, using slates in diminishing courses: as the apex is reached, and lining the inside with a mixture of horsehair and lime."

"Oak grown at Erddig has been used in the roof as well as the floor, to make doors and to make the three-barred windows as probably used in the old building. Also, small pebbles from the beach have been used to whip the surface of the walls."

During the last few years, most of the coast path from Cemlyn, through Mynachdy and Clegir Fawr to Porth Swtan, has been repaired and walkers are now welcome to see the work for themselves.

THE POCKET VENUS

One of the portraits hanging at Plas Newydd which has excited regular comment this year is that of a wistful-looking child, carrying a small basket of flowers.

The picture was painted by the Hon. Henry Richard Graves, a nephew of the 1st Marquess of Anglesey and a Royal Academician, who was the cousin of the reputed subject, Lady Florence Paget.

Florence was a daughter of the 2nd Marquess. Her mother died when she was a child. Her father loved racing and gambling, and she was brought up in this atmosphere, against an insecure financial background. Her father cared little about her, but she had one personal attribute which was to stand her in good stead - her beauty. As she entered her teens, Florence became the toast of all the young racing fraternity, and her petite, fragile beauty earned her the sobriquet "The Pocket Venus".

Two men were to dominate her life. Henry Chaplin was the handsome son of a Lincolnshire squire and parson. Henry Hastings was the son of the 2nd Marquess of Hastings. The two met at Oxford, where they shared a penchant for racing, gambling and women, and their acquaintance carried on after their University days. As they mixed with society both met Lady Florence Paget and both fell in love with her.

Henry Chaplin was infatuated, but while he was travelling on the continent, Hastings took his opportunity and courted her. On his return, Chaplin proposed and Florence accepted him, and Henry Hastings returned to his horses and gambling, disappointed but determined to outwit him.

The wedding of Lady Florence Paget and Mr.Henry Chaplin was arranged, but while Florence was shopping for her trousseau at one of the fashionable London stores, she disappeared, presumably through a side door from where she was driven to St.George's Church, Hanover Square, where she was married secretly to Henry Hastings.

As she suffered through her father's wayward style, so she suffered through her husband's dissolute, spendthrift years. He pre-deceased her, but she married another gambler, Sir George Chetwynd of Grendon Hall, Warwickshire.

The Paget family connections were strengthened through her daughter, Lillian Florence Maud, who married the 5th Marquess of Anglesey. Lady Florence Paget died in 1907.