ANGLESEY ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY
CYMDEITHAS HYNAFIAETHWYR MON

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NEWSLETTER No.22 ..... CYLCHLYTHYR Rhif 22
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THE LLANFAES COLLECTION

Eighty pennies, some dating as far back as the year 61 A.D. and including a number of Roman coins, are among the artefacts now catalogued at Oriel Ynys Môn. These now bring the number of items catalogued to around 300.

In the words of Dr. Kath Davies, when she was research officer until her recent move to Cardiff to become development officer for the Museums Council in Wales, "I've been amazed at the size of the collection found at Llanfaes, which is of great historical importance as it proves that Llanfaes was one of the most important towns before the reign of Edward I."

Some of the items may be on show at Penrhyn Castle during the summer, as part of an exhibition organised by Gwynedd County Council and TARGED, called "The Princes of Wales".

THE SOCIETY LOSES A GOOD FRIEND

With Dr.Davies's departure to Cardiff, the society has said good-bye to a friend. Kath was keenly interested in our activities and was instrumental in persuading the National Museum of Wales to return the Anglesey Antiquarian Society's archaeological collection to the island after 60 years. We wish her well in her new post, and hope to welcome her back to Oriel Ynys Môn when she pays one of her official visits to north Wales. But - we still have friends! Alun Gruffydd, who worked alongside Kath, is still with us. Alun is an archeologist who worked with Gwynedd Archaeological Trust before coming to Oriel Ynys Môn. He is a native of Menai Bridge, and has the island's history and archaeology at heart.

NEW ACQUISITIONS TO THE ARCHIVES

Ann Venables, archivist at the Llangefni area Record Office in place of Einion Thomas who left for Dolgellau last year, is another new friend - she is the pleasant, helpful lady who smoothes our path when we do not know our way around the Record Office!

Among the accessions for 1993, she says, were the administrative records of the society from 1912-1978. There are additional papers, mainly historical notebooks of Lucy Williams, Holyhead, 1853-1940; Papers of Dosbath Cymraeg Amlwch (an extension class organised by Bangor University) from 1922-1972. Records of Capel y Gad, Bodffordd, 1893-1964; Records of Aberffraw Parish Council 1895-1985; Poetical works of Llew Llwydiarth, 1913-1970; contribution book, Aberffraw branch of the Workers Union, 1920-1974; Papers of John Bennett Hughes, tailor, Amlwch (mainly his notes re the history of the area) 1896-1960s.

The Record Office has also received significant deposits of parish registers for many Anglesey parishes and the Anglesey branch of the Family History Society has lent microfilms of the non-parochial (chapel) registers in the Public Record Office to the Llangefni office.

A PICTORIAL RECORD

One of our members, David Chambers of Menai Bridge, is making a unique collection of drawings of Anglesey churches.

You may already have seen some of these, which have been reproduced on cards for sale locally.

Up to now, David has drawn 46, but hopes to increase this number to nearer 90 by the end of the year, when they will be exhibited in the Lecture Theatre at Oriel Ynys Môn.

David Chambers takes an art class at "Indefatigable" at Llanfairpwll once a week - for adults and younger people - and at present is particularly interested in an experiment he runs at Treffos school where he combines art with musical appreciation among the smaller children.

A SUMMER EXHIBITION AT CEMAES

A week-long exhibition of old photographs and other items of local historical interest will be held at Cemaes Bay Village Hall from August 21 - 26.

The exhibition will open on Monday evening, August 22, with a slide show of "Cemais and District", covering the period 1880-1930.

The exhibition will be open daily with photographs from Gwynedd Archives as well as from local sources.

On Thursday evening August 25, a lecture with slides will be given by Eryl Rothwell Hughes on "Cemais and district through the ages". Any Antiquarian Society member with photographs of Cemais or other material of interest, willing to lend to the exhibition, please contact Gwilym Jones, telephone 0407 - 710420.

HELP WANTED!

The Dry Stone Walling Association is looking into the traditional construction of "clawdd" (dry stone earth bank) to include in a booklet.

Such stonework is particularly common in the low-lying areas of Anglesey and Gwynedd.

The booklet will contain information on styles and construction techniques, and recommended guidelines.

Today, many of these walls which consist of a bank normally lower than a dry stone wall, usually with a hedge planted on top and a ditch on one side, are built using mechanical diggers, but the Association wants to know how they used to be built, before the skills are lost.

Can you help? If so, Steve Adcock would be pleased to hear from you, on 0286-871275.

The Welsh Archaeological Institute keeps its members informed on what is going on in North Wales, and offers an update on national archaeological activities too.

The Institute is looking for new members.

Further details from the membership secretary, The Welsh Archaeological Institute, The Old Custom House Building, 41 Dock View Road, Barry, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 5JP - with SAE please.

KEEPING AN EYE ON THINGS ANCIENT AND MODERN

The Gwynedd Archaeological Trust has been doing work on evaluating the proposed new route of the A5 across Anglesey. The Trust has been studying the archaeology, and going ahead with field and documentary work in view of the possible up-grading.

A watching brief has also been kept in Beaumaris, as part of the pipe work for the new sewerage scheme.

In Beaumaris, too, the Trust has been assessing the settlement on the old coal yard site in Steeple Lane, and has found that the present buildings were erected on clay pits.

Another watching brief has been carried out on work associated with the resurfacing of the car park adjacent to the Roman fort at Caergybi.

SUMMER EXHIBITIONS AT ORIEL YNYS MÔN

April 1 - May 29: "One Man's Vision", paintings, drawings and woodcuts by Flemish artist, Karel Lek.

June 8 - June 12: Eisteddfod Môn craft entries.

June 18 - Sept.4: "An Anglesey Perspective" A new look at Anglesey through the eyes of various artists.

Sept.10 - Oct.30: David Woodford's paintings and drawings.

A recent review of "A New Natural History of Anglesey" (Studies in Anglesey History No.8) published by the society, reads ...

"... the book is well printed, illustrated where appropriate with maps and diagrams and enhanced by a number of line drawings. The Anglesey Antiquarian Society and Field Club are to be congratulated on making this book available at such a low cost."

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR COPY YET? The book will be available at the sales table at the Annual General Meeting.

STONE HEAD GOES TO LLANGEFNI

The Celtic stone head which has stood on the stone wall immediately in front of "Hendy", the farmhouse at Llanfairpwll, has now been loaned to Oriel Ynys Môn by the owner, Mrs. Eluned Cllosson and her family, and will be on display indefinitely.

It is pictured in "Prehistoric Anglesey", and has attracted a lot of attention from archaeologists countrywide.

Alun Gruffydd of Oriel Ynys Môn says, "The head was respected by the Iron Age Celts, who believed it had great powers."

NEW BOOKS

Three new titles have appeared on the shelves of the bookshops, dealing with Anglesey subjects.

"Benllech and its Surround Parish of Llanfair ME", by Jane Robinson, reflects the author's interest in local history. Jane has lived in Benllech for 15 years, and has gathered a rich collection of photographs to illustrate all aspects of village life. She touches on the language of place names, ancient monuments, education and religion. Price £3.95. Publ. Bridge Books of Wrexham.

"A Curious Place; an industrial history of Amlwch, 1550-1950" is the result of deep research by Bryan Hope. Published by Bridge Books, it contains some hitherto unpublished and interesting pictures. Aled Eames comments, "This book is surely essential reading for anyone interested in the history of Anglesey .. enabling the reader to revisit Amlwch and look with new eyes at the town and the little harbour from which so many fine ships once sailed." Price £17.95 (plus £2.70 postage if ordered from Bridge Books, 61 Park Avenue, Wrexham, Clwyd LL12 7AW).

"Anglesey Branch Lines - Amlwch and Red Wharf Bay" by Bill Rear, an established writer on North Wales railways, and a leading member of railway enthusiasts seeking to re-establish the line to Amlwch. Price £9.95. Published by Foxline.