



Cymdeithas Tref tadaeth Dyffryn Conwy Conwy Valley Civic Society

Cylchlythyr/Newsletter

Awst/August 2008

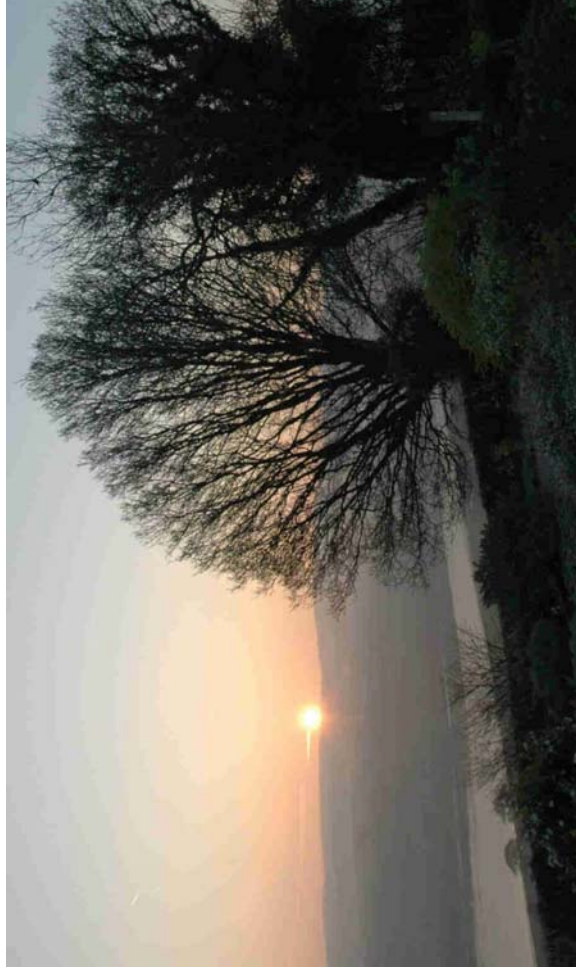


Photo of the Estuary from Pete and Kath Barrar's house which Pete has used on the first page of the Website. www.conwy-valley-civic-soc.org

ON-GOING BATTLE

MORE problems with the block of flats being built on the old Victoria Hotel site opposite Llanrwst bridge. Ann Peacock, our Planning Officer, has been keeping a watching brief on this development from the start, in view of the sensitivity of the site.



Now that it is roof height the developers want to make changes which would mean replacing five of the windows on the ground floor with doors to provide access to Bridge Street. The council's planning committee refused to allow the amendments. One councillor described the changes as 'a fussy design' another planning officer felt 'the amount of clutter on the front of the building isn't appropriate'. The developers have been asked to produce a simpler design in sympathy with the previous building'.

GWYDIR CASTLE

A couple of years ago, following a visit to Gwydir Castle as on of our Summer Outings, the Society make a donation, from the Heritage Fund, of £750.00 for the repair of an oriel window in the castle. The highly skilled work has now been completed and the cheque will be handed over to Peter and Judy Welford on Wednesday afternoon, 10th September at 2.30 pm. If you would like to attend the short ceremony and have a cup of tea afterwards please let Dilys, Kath or Anne know by midday on Monday 8th September at the latest.



Bed & Breakfast at Gwydir Castle

"Worthy entertainment and most cordial welcome were never found wanting at Gwydir Castle".

Sir Roger Mostyn, 1670

EDITORIAL

YOU will have found the new programme for the coming year included with this newsletter. I hope you will find its contents interesting and be already looking forward to some of the talks and entertainments on offer. However, I want to give those of you who missed the AGM a round up of the evening, and some important information.

AGM

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

FIRST of all I must apologize for not being with you this evening. Idris, as Vice-Chairman, has nobly stepped into the breach. We had carefully planned to start our holiday on 7th June but when Shôn decided it would be better for his health to travel to America by sea I'm afraid I had only a very minor tussle with my conscience before agreeing to go with him. No matter where we are in mid-Atlantic we will be raising a glass to-night to the future and further success of the Society.

Let me talk about people first. And as you will have read in the newsletter Dilys Glynnne has retired as our indefatigable secretary. In the Autumn we had to say farewell to Mike and Rosemary Gache who are now living outside Oswestry. I tell

myself no one is indispensable but I have been aware of several occasions when it would have been good to have their advice and support. Sadly we have lost some long-time and faithful members this year, Trevor Williams, Arthur Rowley and Laurence Willoughby, but we are proud to still have, amongst our members, Harry Hyde who is 100, not out!*

We have also welcomed several new members—some of whom I discovered I already knew. But thanks to the Welsh custom of using first names and house names I failed to recognize them when given their surnames.

From people let me turn to projects—in particular the Heritage Fund. Initially, we were trying to find something to support that would involve children, schools and the environment. This proved impossible. The Government, who come up regularly with ever more time consuming subjects to add to the curriculum seem not to realize that there are a finite number of hours in a day. Many teachers who were approached by Hywel and Idris were appreciative of our interest but were unable to take it further. We are now exploring a n o t h e r a v e n u e — Dendrochronology. (see below)

Meetings were, on the whole, interesting, informative and entertaining—usually all three—and were well supported with one or two

exceptions. The past seems to hold more interest than the present. The January meeting, with Eric Maddern, story teller, was the best attended and certainly the most unusual meeting we've had in a long time. Eryl Rothwell Hughes' lecture on Telford was masterly and Margaret Dunn's February lecture on Dendrochronology has perhaps started us on a new path.

James and I were asked recently "What does the society do?" James was able, most impressively, to quote the Constitution and it all sounded very high-minded and worthy. But I think the truth is more simple. We try to support what is good, beautiful and worth maintaining in this lovely valley. We aim, also, to raise the awareness of people who may not notice what they have. Those are two worthy aims.

Thank you, on behalf of the Committee, for all your support. Have a good evening.

*Sadly Harry died a short time afterwards.

TRIBUTE TO DILYS

FOLLOWING the Chairman's report James Greenhalgh paid warm tribute to the work Dilys Glynnne had accomplished as Secretary over the last 14 years. He said that during this time she had made her mark on the Society, particularly in the Committee and in dealing with correspondence, in addition to other tasks such as organizing the River Cruises.

Her example had helped and encouraged other Committee members who are very glad that she will remain on the Committee.

DILYS'S RESPONSE

IN a letter to the Society Dilys wrote: 'I must apologize to those members who were at the AGM on 4th June for my failure to respond to James Greenhalgh's kind words about my 14 year stint as Secretary of the Society, but I lack his graceful turn of phrase when speaking off the cuff. I am also most grateful for the lovely bouquet and the very generous gift of garden tokens.

My visits to garden centres are usually for things like compost, fertilizer and weed or pest control with, perhaps a treat, a tray of bedding plants, but I felt that your gift deserved something more memorable. I decided to develop my orchard, in which the original mostly anonymous trees are about 100 years old and feeling their age (like me). Some years ago I bought a Bardsey apple and when it was clear that none of my old trees was going to pollinate it, a Cox Cymraeg, and both have now fruited. I have since acquired another apple, Nant Gwytheyrn, and now with your gift I have bought a cooker, Trwyn Mochyn, and also a Denbigh plum, of which I have a very old specimen and which has few but gorgeous fruit—puts Victoria in the shade.

It has been a privilege to serve as the Society's Secretary since 1994, and the workload has been lightened by the readiness of members, especially of the Committee, to lend a hand when needed. I recall John Lloyd Morris offering to help when I was more than usually smothered by papers, trying to lead the Committee through various matters and to take the minutes at the same time. I offered him the Secretary's job but he did take over as Minute Secretary; splitting the work in this way has been a blessing ever since. I enjoyed organizing the Awards Scheme for several years but was glad when Mike Gaches and now Liz Green took on this role.

Thank you all for your friendship over the years.

Dilys Silenno

TREASURER'S REPORT

ROB Kenwell presented the Report and Accounts. He told the meeting there had been some losses of members, through death or other reasons, but these had been balanced by new members, resulting in a net loss of one corporate member. Gift Aid was slightly down, but room hire only slightly up and the river cruise had made a profit. A transfer of £200 had been made to the Award Scheme and we still had a healthy balance of over £4,500. As a Society we all owe Rob

a great debt of gratitude for all his work in meticulously maintaining the accounts throughout the year and in particular for all the intricate preparation needed to produce them in the correct form for the AGM.

HERITAGE FUND

WE have still not settled on a Heritage Fund project that we feel as happy about as we did with James Thompson's brilliant idea of the seats which we donated to all 17 villages in our area. If anyone has any ideas please tell the committee. We are not yet committed to anything definitely although, following Margaret Dunn's talk on Dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) Dilys has joined the Federation Committee overseeing this project under the umbrella of the Federation of History Societies in Caernarfonshire. There is a special all day meeting in Trefriw on Saturday, 18th October, to see what further progress is being made. The current balance in the Heritage Fund is £4,550.00 and The AGM voted to transfer a further £400.00 from the Society's General Fund to the Heritage Fund.



A.O.B. PUBLICITY

AMONG several items brought up under Any Other Business Elizabeth Cook again raised the need for more publicity of meetings. The Website is a great start. You can find it at www.conwy-valley-civic-soc.org and on the back of the programme. Pete would be very interested in any information you have that would be appropriate and he would like to see photos of the area, particularly if they have some special reference. People sitting on one of the Society's seats, for example. In addition the Secretary has plenty of blank posters which can easily be filled in with a thick (Dayglo?) pen and put up in Village Shop windows and on Village notice boards, wherever we have members. We would be overjoyed if every village could post a notice with the lecture details – date, time, venue, subject, lecturer – before every meeting. If you would be willing to do this please ask Kath Barrar. She will be only too happy to oblige.

NEW COMMITTEE

SINCE the AGM Peter Barrar (IT resources officer) has resigned from the Committee but thankfully is still maintaining our Website. In addition we warmly welcome Mike and Alison Cousins to the Committee. Alison has much

experience in planning matters and has taken over responsibility for the National Park from Dilys and Mike has joined the Programme Subcommittee. In addition, Catharine Mortimer-Hart (who is the unsung heroine of the envelope labels) has agreed to join the Programme Subcommittee as well. The full list of Society Officers and committee members is printed on the back of the enclosed programme.

LAST OF THE SUMMER WALKS

Another of Idris's walks on Saturday 13th September. Meet at Plas Engan, Trefriw at 10.30 for an 11.00 am start. Packed lunch, waterproof, etc. This is a walk to suit everyone carefully designed to cater for the hale and hearty and the fearful and

FIRST TWO MEETINGS

Wednesday, 17th September we have our first meeting at Glasdir, Llanrwst. Very comfortable, nice atmosphere and masses of parking. People who attended our first meeting there highly recommend it. In October the first of our popular historical lectures in another fairly new venue, the Taly-Cafn Inn. Another atmospheric room, with plenty of parking and the possibility of a pie and a pint beforehand. I look forward to seeing you there.

WILL THIS SOON BE A THING OF THE PAST?



THE FEDERATION OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

18th October 2008 in Trefriw Community Centre. 10.15 am. Special Meeting to discuss Dendrochronology project. Lunch—BYO or local café/pub. Choice of afternoon visits. **Offers of help with tea, which the CVCS is providing, would be much appreciated.**

FLOOD DEFENCE OK!

At the end of an August which is thought to be the wettest for one hundred years residents in Llanrwst and in Trefriw will be relieved to know that flood defence work will at last go ahead on the Llanrwst side of the Conwy and on land to the north east and south of Trefriw between the river and the B5106. Gareth Jones, Aberconwy AM, who is relieved that a decision has finally been reached, said, '...rather than fighting the river, trying to confine it within high embankments, the idea is to allow it to flood land where it can't wreak as much havoc.' He added that it was now important to secure a fair deal for the landowners involved.

Finally, the council has announced that flood defence work will go ahead on the Llanrwst side of the Conwy and to the NE and S of Trefriw between the river and the B5106.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to five new members. Mr and Mrs Bevan of Llechwedd, Conwy; and Mr and Mrs Taranuk of Tyn y Groes and Mr P Broomhead of Bridport, Dorset (our fame is really spreading).