



Cymdeithas Treftadaeth Dyffryn Conwy
Conwy Valley Civic Society

Ebrill /April 2008

APRIL MEETING

Members' Evening

Wednesday 16th April

TWO members, **Barbara Baldon** and **Nick Hamer**, will talk about "**Art in the Valley**". Barbara will be sharing her research on the Artists of Tal-y-Bont in particular and Nick will be covering a wider area of North Wales in general. The meeting, in the **Aberconway Hall, Eglwysbach** is at 7.30 as usual but as it is a members' evening coffee, tea and refreshments will be served from 7.10 pm. Why not come along early for your after-dinner coffee and a chat. Drinks and leftovers at the end of the evening for those who arrive late!

Birthday Congratulations

HAPPY Birthday wishes and many congratulations for May 3rd to Harry Hyde, who will be 100 years old that day. Harry has only recently moved from his home in Maes Tawel, Llanrwst to Cartrefle y Bont. We send him our warmest greetings.

Laurie Willoughby

WE, the members of the Civic Society, are saddened by the death of our dear old friend, Laurie Willoughby. He was a loyal member of our Society and a committee member for many years until old age and frailty beckoned him towards the Abbeyfield in Llandudno.

Always a quiet and courteous man, Lauries's gentle wisdom was respected by many. He had a friendly word for everybody and his lovely dry wit brought a smile to many. History was Laurie's passion. He read avidly — always biographies or books on the history of Wales, England and afar. (He said he never had time to read a novel.)

After Mary, his wife, died he indulged this passion for history by visiting the battlefields and cemeteries of World War I and World War II. These visits affected him greatly. Music was Laurie's other great passion—classical and the dance music of the nineteen forties and fifties. Alas, without Mary, to listen was torture and he gave his collection of records, tapes and CDs to charity.

Life in Abbeyfield was quiet and restful. His books, the daily newspaper and rugby matches on Saturday (and any other day if possible!) were his companions. Friends called and disturbed this peace as did an occasional “playday” (his word) to

Anglesey or the mountains. He was content there.

Laurie had a strong Christian faith, the Ten Commandments being his guide throughout his life. He lived the last few years quietly and gratefully, always looking towards the Day when he and Mary would be united again.

We thank Laurie for his friendship and say goodbye, with affection, with affection, to this kind and gentle man.

Shelagh Peters

New Members

I'LL begin with an apology. Mentioning names is always likely to call problems because of the danger of missing someone out. So if I've missed out your name— I'm sorry. I'll add it next time. And after that preamble we would like warmly to welcome all those who have joined us in the last year or so.:- Lady Aberconway, Bodnant, Mr & Mrs Balden of Tal-y-bont, Miss Himsworth of Eglwysbach, Mr & Mrs Howard, Capel Garmon, Mrs

Huges, Trefriw, Mr & Mrs Jones, Ty'n-y-groes Mr & Mrs Knight, Henryd, Mrs McConachie, Glan Conwy, Mr & Mrs Scott, Tal-y-Cafn, Mr & Mrs Sherlock, Rowen, and Mr & Mrs White, Glan Conwy.

SAT NAV Dangers

IN the November newsletter I reported on the concern many members felt about the number of lorries, guided by SAT NAV, who were taking chunks out of Llanrwst bridge. We were not alone. Phillip Venning Secretary of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings says, 'Blind reliance on satellite navigation is fast becoming a serious issue for old buildings,' with the cost of repairs running into many thousands of pounds. Both the Ordnance Survey, who provide the maps, and the Government are reported to be working on solutions to the problem. Let's hope they can solve it before Inigo Jones's bridge suffers any more direct hits. I have written to Mr

Venning drawing his attention to our bridge.

Unwanted Aliens

ALSO in November Nick and Sue Hamer alerted us to the need for more help in eradicating invading species such as Japanese Knotweed and Himalyan Balsam. I implied that once spotted the illegal immigrant should be promptly uprooted. Not so. It is only necessary to identify the position of the plant. So this is not just a job for the lithe and lissom but for anyone who enjoys walking and is prepared to tear their gaze away from the views and look at the ground from time to time. Please contact Sue and Nick for more information. 001492 640843. Aliens are fine on the small screen but a real threat to native plants in the country.

Local History Societies

THE Federation of History Societies is holding their Annual conference on Sat. 19th April from 10.30 am till 4.00 pm in the Community Hall, Beddegelert. The first

lecture on “Dyffryn Membyr-Portrait of a Village”, by Francis Richardson, will be accompanied by an exhibition by the Friends of St. Juliettas to whom we made an Award a couple of years ago. After lunch — picnic or local café/pub — Margaret Dunn, who was our speaker in February, will talk about Beddgelert and this will be followed by either a gentle walk around the village or a visit to a 16th century house recently tree-ring dated. Dilys has been to several of these Days and confirms that they are friendly and interesting gatherings. If you would like to attend please ring Syd Caplan (01766 522238) asap.

Dating Old Houses

AT the February meeting in Eglwysbach members learned all about dendochronology, i.e. tree ring dating. Climate variations cause a variation in the width of annual growth in trees and this means the timbers in an old house can be dated with reasonable

accuracy depending on the amount of wood in the beam. Our speaker, Margaret Dunn, of Cymdeithas Hanes Beddgelert, had led the project in the Beddgelert area. It had lasted from 2004 to 2007 and in that time Margaret and researchers had visited 60 houses, identified 40 that were probably old enough, i.e. pre 1700, tested 28 and were able to date accurately 26. It was a fascinating lecture and the Committee are considering the possibility of involvement with a wider project in the North Wales area for which funding may be available. So, how old is your house?

Food — Fresh and Local

JUNE Jones, who spoke to the Society in the new premises at Glasdir, Plas yn Dre, Llanrwst, was preaching a basic doctrine. Eat 5 fruit or vegetables a day. Basic to us, no doubt, but to many young mothers, particularly on large housing estates, not basic and too expensive. Working with community groups June Jones

encourages the formation of food co-operatives to provide boxes of locally sourced fruit or vegetables for £2.50 a box. In the east of the county space for a market garden has already been set aside and here she is working to provide opportunities for local growers to help fill these boxes. A good evening in new and pleasant surroundings with parking!

less of a chore. Details and booking form in the next newsletter. IDEAS, please, for speakers & trips.

May Meeting

On 14th May in Eagles Hotel, Llanrwst, Professor Hywel Wyn Owen will be lecturing on “Place Names and Landscape: Gwynedd and West Clwyd.” For those of us whose Welsh is limited to a knowledge of Ty or Plas or Ysbyty, to say nothing of ARAF this should be invaluable. I’m also hoping to learn the difference between all the different words for hill.

AGM

4th June in Rowen Memorial Hall. There’ll be a buffet to make it more of a party and