

# LLANDAFF SOCIETY

## CYMDEITHAS LLANDAF



Affiliated to The Civic Trust for Wales  
www.llandaffcity.co.uk



NEWSLETTER 122 SPRING 2012

2012

### FUTURE EVENTS

Unless otherwise stated, all venues:

The Parish Room, High Street Car Park, Llandaff  
Admission £2:00. Non members £3:00

Friday, 25th May at 7:30 p.m.

Peter KINGSBURY; former Principal Planning Officer, Cardiff on 'Planning and Conservation in Wales'

Tuesday, 5th June.

Diamond Jubilee Bank Holiday celebrations on The Cathedral Green. Further details inside this newsletter.

Tuesday, 12th June.

Coach trip to 'The Laskett' Sir Roy Strong's garden, near Hereford.

Afternoon visit to Abbey Dore. Tickets and further details—Pauline Grainger—029 2056 8907.

Friday, 20th July.

Llandaff Society Walk led by the Chairman.

THE NEWSLETTER AND VILLAGE NOTICEBOARD WILL ANNOUNCE LAST MINUTE AMENDMENTS OR ADDITIONS TO THE ABOVE AND 2012 PROGRAMME.

### QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE VISIT:

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth opened her two day visit to South Wales by attending a Service of Thanksgiving at 10.30am on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April at Llandaff Cathedral. Flags and bunting had miraculously appeared in the High Street overnight and crowds including many pupils from local schools, turned out to ensure a fine welcome as the stately Royal Bentley glided by. Our Chairman was privileged to represent

Llandaff Society at the splendid gathering of 600 invited guests from many areas of Welsh life. Within the Cathedral a pike armed Guard of superbly attired Beefeaters was posted at the entrances and brass helmeted Gentlemen at Arms provided the Royal bodyguard. The Archbishop of Wales gave the Address in which he expressed thanks for the Queen's long reign through which her Christian faith had provided a sure foundation.



### HIGH STREET COMPLETED:

In the nick of time refurbishment of Llandaff High Street was completed ready for HM The Queen's visit. The appearance of the street has been entirely transformed by realignment of the highway with parking bays and associated adjustments to pavement widths to provide a new and pleasing perspective. Distinctive planters have been placed at strategic points along with attractive benches, all emblazoned with the arms of the City of Llandaff, and several young trees, properly protected by iron

cages, provide a living streetscape. The works extend into the car park entrance where new parking bays have been provided but the need to spruce up the road surfaces leading to the Cathedral for the Royal Visit resulted in last minute resurfacing beyond The Butchers; extending to The Green ; Cathedral Hill and parts of Heol Fair. We can be justly proud of what has been achieved which is well beyond what was promised. Visitors will surely be impressed and hopefully business will benefit.



### KARL'S OAKS:

It is a long time since Dr Michael Richards tended the oaks lining the pathway between Cardiff Metropolitan University playing field and Arls Field, known as Ffordd Gerallt (Giraldus Way). This work was then taken on by Lynton Slack, resulting in extension of the avenue towards Prebendal House. Recent rains have provided ideal conditions for Karl



Johansen; well known for his interest in all things wooden, to fulfil an ambition to complete the task. Assisted by our Chairman he has securely planted ten healthy young oaks and replaced a failing sapling. These are already showing signs of growth and will enhance this much loved green space in the years to come.

### RECORD FOR OCCASIONAL PAPER No 17:

Norman & Vanessa Cunningham's splendid paper on 'Llandaff Newly-weds in the 1760s: Thomas & Diana Mathews' has achieved a record. Following an initial order that took up our remaining stock from the initial printing, descendant; Veronica Mathew asked for 50 more, so when they were ready Jenny and Geoff B-G decided to deliver them personally to her home in

the Chilterns, en route to a stay in London. During a delightful tea on the lawn, Veronica and her mother were delighted to recount tales of their family's colourful history that would certainly provide material for several volumes.

Just think; an early Mathew was created Earl of Llandaff for saving the King's life during the Wars of the Roses !

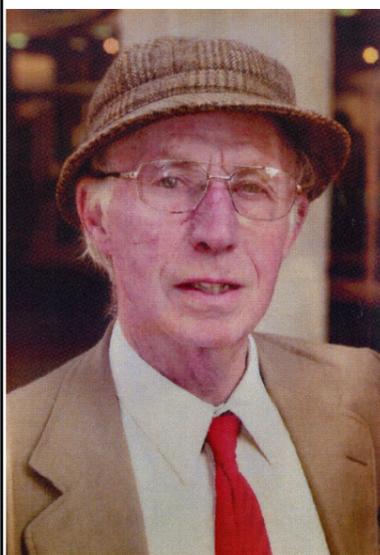
### FIT FOR THE QUEEN

In preparation for the Royal Visit, a Llandaff Society Committee team, wielding scrubbing brushes, Spring cleaned the Lizbeth David Memorial Railings alongside the Bishop's Castle. Then, dodging the showers, they gave a long overdue coat of Black paint to the parapet railings leading to 'the Pound' area to ensure they were at their best for the big day.



### GARTH LLOYD—An appreciation

On 13 January we said farewell to one of Llandaff's more colourful characters - Garth Lloyd, who died on Boxing Day 2011.



Garth was born in Pontcanna, and attended schools in Cardiff. During the war he was evacuated to Garw Valley but insisted on returning home at weekends! As a child Garth had always been keen on drawing and on leaving school became articulated to a firm of architectural designers. Subsequently, he worked in both the private and public sector.

In 1954, he married Joyce - a Grangetown girl - and they settled in Llandaff.

Garth loved knowledge and loved sharing it with people. In addition to his passion for watercolours, he

was a competent silversmith and had his own Birmingham hallmark.

Calligraphy, engraving, photography, wood carving, beekeeping and gardening were all skills he taught himself and passed on to others. 'Why get someone else to do a job around the house when you can do it yourself' was Garth's unspoken maxim. If he was unsure of a process, he would research it in great detail; a very thorough man with meticulous attention to detail. Even after retiring in the mid 1980's, his skills were in demand and among other tasks, he was commissioned to prepare illustrative material for Cadw. Garth did not ask much of the world, except for it to be honest and straightforward - two ideals by which he lived his life. He once said, when talking about relationships 'Never close doors, always leave an opening' He would speak to anyone about anything at anytime. He read widely and thought deeply.

And, of course, his real trademark became his hat, remarking once that if he needed to go anywhere incognito, all he would have to do is take off his hat!

Let nothing disturb you.

Let nothing dismay you.

All things pass.

God never changes.

A verse by St Teresa Avila which was found in Garth's studio.

### AUDREY DAVIES - A FULL LIFE:

Her daughter Ruth Stevens writes:-

My mother was born in Ware, Hertfordshire in 1925. Her father worked for the Inland Revenue and was required to move every two or three years and at the outbreak of World War II they lived in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, which soon became part of Britain's Front Line, so Audrey was evacuated to Kidderminster, Worcestershire, until her parents decided her education was suffering. Nevertheless, Audrey went up to Oxford in 1943; achieving a degree in History and stayed on to take a Teaching Diploma.

Her first post was at Newport High School for Girls where she stayed for three years. Whilst visiting family friends who kept the 'Three Horseshoes' in Peterston-super-Ely she met the local Curate. They married in 1950 making their home in rural Flemingston, Vale of Glamorgan.

In 1956 my parents moved to Cardiff when father became Vicar of St Teilos in Cathays. Audrey had a variety of part time teaching and lecturing posts at the College of Advanced Technology; the College of Commerce and Llandaff Tech., before taking a full time post as Organising Secretary of the Llandaff Diocesan Board of Moral Welfare; a main function of which was running a mother and baby home in Cowbridge Road East.

My father, Edwin became Rector of Radyr in 1969 Retirement in 1982 brought a move to Insole Gardens and the couple much enjoyed living in Llandaff. Following a severe stroke in 2002 Edwin died. For a while Audrey enjoyed her committee work with Llandaff Society but became increasingly immobile over the last five or so years.

Audrey will be warmly remembered for her intelligent and forthright views that contributed much to Llandaff life over the years. Ed,

## TAS MANIA !

As reported in our Winter edition, our Chairman's travels in Australia took him on to Tasmania where he investigated the origins of 'The Other Llandaff' in the County of Glamorgan on the East Coast.

Driving towards Tasmania's dramatic Freysinet Peninsula National Park in 2005 with his family, they were astounded when they saw a lonely road sign announcing 'Llandaff' and within a flash were through it ! All it comprised were two or three timber bungalows and an abandoned graveyard with a traditional Welsh look about it, set in rolling pastures dotted with gum trees. Time did not permit investigation on that occasion. Nevertheless the desire to find out more proved irresistible !

At the Tasmanian National Archive Geoff established that early settlement of the East Coast took place in the 1840's as roads were extended by gangs of transported prisoners. Leading amongst the newcomers was one George Meredith; an officer of Royal Marines; who had served at Pembroke Dock. He opened up sheep pastures on his estates around Llandaff Bridge, fighting off rivals; hostile aboriginal people and marauding 'bush rangers.' Succeeding in taming the wild, Meredith's family home was established at 'Cambria', on the edge of Swansea, originally known as Waterloo Point.

Travelling to Swansea, our Chairman visited the Glamorgan Heritage Museum, where he was welcomed by the Curator; Maureen Martin Ferris, who is also Chair of Glamorgan Spring Bay Historical Society. Would you believe it her home is situated at Pontypool! Maureen presented Llandaff Society with a guidebook to the locality.

Officially named Swansea in 1850, when the Great Swanport District became the County of Glamorgan that in 1860 became the first rural municipality in Australia; responsible for roads and police. Welsh place names were suggested by George Meredith in reminder of his Welsh origins.

What happened to Llandaff ? Twice a school was opened there and then closed down and converted into a house. The strange thing is that plans for development were drawn up but never built. Yet Llandaff appeared on maps as of strategic importance. The idea was to suggest what is known as a 'Potemkin Town'. This may indeed have deceived the Russians at the time of the Crimean War but left the other Llandaff as 'the town that never was !'

## FLATS IN THE AVENUE ???

For many years a pleasing detached house No 16 The Avenue, believed to have been built by Fred. Bruton (Bruton Place etc.) has caused concern due to long periods of vacancy and apparent neglect, so a planning application seeking to demolish and replace with a large three storey block of flats comes as no

surprise. In response to neighbours concern, Llandaff Society has lodged an objection on grounds including inappropriate design and overdevelopment of the site, adding to the unanimous opposition of the Llandaff Conservation Group and our ward councillors.

## Doreen Woodford, author of Occasional Paper No11:

The Story of Llandaff School for the Deaf & Dumb died on 8<sup>th</sup> February, at her home in Much Wenlock at the age of 85 years. Doreen's obituary in 'The Guardian' described her as 'a

champion of deaf education in Britain and the developing World'. It is poignant that Llandaff School today stands empty at the corner of Llandaff Road and Romilly Crescent, pending redevelopment, as part of the St Winifred's Hospital site.

## REPORT ON EVENTS HELD

**24<sup>rd</sup> February 'Question Time', Friday:** This well attended annual event, covering matters of local concern, heard our Police Community Support Officer; Helen Coleman, report on Police matters which show Llandaff to have a fairly good record over the last year. Our two ward councillors then gave a good account of themselves in the face of searching questions from the audience, with particular emphasis on disruption in the High Street and Car Park caused by refurbishment works.

**Friday March 2 'The life of a Headteacher' Kate Bates, Headteacher, Llandaff City Church in Wales School :-** From her Staffordshire origins Kate described her varied career leading to her current appointment and outlined her vision for the School. The school day was well illustrated with a diary beginning with an early start for children taking breakfast. When the bell rings the real work begins. Full of stimulating activities, the children's education is provided by dedicated staff within the Christian ethic; strongly as ever rooted within our community.

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> April:- The Sixth Lizbeth David Memorial Lecture:** Dr John Kenyon: Llandaff Society member and Librarian to National Museum of Wales delivered an excellent presentation titled 'Proud Ambitious Heaps' covering the building of great Elizabethan and Stuart Houses. Not only did he cover well known examples such as Raglan Castle and Hardwick Hall but also considered lesser known places in England and Wales together with those sadly lost from the time of the English Civil War onwards.

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April:- Local Election Hustings:** All eleven candidates were invited to present themselves to the electorate at an open meeting held in the Old Library at St Michael's College. Not all took up the challenge and in the event Canon Graham Holcombe robustly chaired a lively session attended by eight candidates who faced an audience of nearly 70 people. Who said politics was finished?

### DIAMOND JUBILEE BANK HOLIDAY Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June :

In earlier times, Llandaff was renowned for its twice weekly fairs which took place around The Green, until suppressed in Victorian times. To celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee a timely revival is planned in which all are invited to take part. From Midday onwards, until mid evening a sequence of events is being arranged. The Cathedral will be hosting a Hog Roast at lunchtime. This will be followed by Children's Fancy dress Competition at The belltower on The Green. Meanwhile a series of entertainments will be staged including Donkey Rides for children at Court Lane alongside The Bishop's Castle; where a storyteller will be in residence. A 'Bouncy Castle' and a carousel. will operate and Paddy the Clown will be appearing. Towards the evening the focus will shift to the High Street, with various traders opening their shops and restaurants out onto the widened pavements, to celebrate its impressive refurbishment, and open air musical entertainment on the forecourt of Llandaff institute, which will be open throughout.

Let's hope for sunshine to bless the day to make it a truly memorable occasion!



### LATEST NEWS FROM INSOLE COURT

The Llandaff Society joined the Insole Court Trust, Friends of Insole Court and Insole Estate Residents' Association to launch the community appeal, at Insole Court on the 25<sup>th</sup> February.

We are now well on the way to achieving the £5m needed to restore the House and to develop a vibrant community hub in The Stables area, with a community hall and centres for both young and older people.

Contributions to date already show the enthusiasm of Insole Court's supporters, users and neighbours for keeping and improving this fine Victorian mansion. The aim is to raise at least £10,000 to show the major funders that the community is working together to support the renewal project. If you would like to give, donation forms are available from Insole Court, High Street shops and online at [www.insolecourt.com](http://www.insolecourt.com)

A second Public Engagement Event is now planned for the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> May, 10am-4pm, to enable visitors to learn of the many opportunities available both during and after the Renewal of the House and Gardens. There will be exhibitions, stands, heritage archive and DVDs to see, as well as a programme of half-hour workshops. More details are on [www.insolecourt.com](http://www.insolecourt.com)



# Support Insole Court

A Victorian mansion hidden in the heart of Llandaff, Cardiff.



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Tel 029 2056 2757