

# CYFEILLION EGLWYS SANTES JULITTA FRIENDS OF ST JULITTA'S CHURCH

*A local history and conservation group / Grŵp hanes a chadwraeth lleol*

Llywyddau/Presidents: **Emma Disley & Kate Disley**

Rhif Elusen Cofrestredig/Registered Charity No. 1068756

Ysgrifennydd/Secretary: Vacant

[www.stjulittas.org](http://www.stjulittas.org) [www.wv1insnowdonia.org](http://www.wv1insnowdonia.org)

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## Annual Report 2017

Again 2017 was an active and productive year for the Friends of St Julitta's. Many thanks to the committee, and my fellow officers, for all their support, and all the support that come our way from the membership, many of whom live many miles away from medieval church that means so much to ourselves and hopefully the village of Capel Curig.

Good attendance at our AGM 2017 ensured the meeting went well, as did the social afternoon when we explored the church and chapels of Llanberis, thanks to the efforts of our member Ken Jones. The late Cyril Jones wrote, following the meeting, *'It was a wonderful weekend. I thoroughly enjoyed myself, especially the wonderful company we were all in. Ken Jones was very interesting and the evening at Tyn y Coed went very well. Sorry I was not with you on Sunday, but I couldn't have climbed the hill to that café above Llanberis with the state of my breathing at the moment'*. Sadly, Cyril, a generous supporter passed away later in the year.

The Easter weekend was also a success, – especially Easter Saturday when the weather was fine, something not always expected in Snowdonia in April! Brian (Templar) is thanked this year for submitting the below report on the stewarding and working day; 'Barry, Pat, Jill and Brian had a full day in the churchyard. By closing time at 4 10pm there was a demand to stay on in the lovely weather, 'Best day here yet' was Pat's comments. 'Peter came around at lunchtime, (Jill makes a good banana cake). Barry laid slabs to the rear of the church, creating a new footpath that will extend access to the more difficult areas. He also promised to rebuild the compost area. The ladies attended to visitors (7) and improved the churchyard by both planting new flowers and transplanting /resitting the mass of primroses that are now coming through. Brian sorted his favourite job, emptying and cleaning the toilet and sited a reflective post near the entrance, on the end of the road wall, ensuring that cars will not collide with it in future. Brian also plans to replace the Bier House slate sign, (old one stolen) and update and reset signs of the churchyard trail, (Ed. note: *now done*). As usual. A pleasant social gathering that progressed our project'.

Hard on Easter the London Marathon took place with our two runners achieving wonderful results and added well over £2000 to our funds, probably our biggest ever fund-raising event, the entries brought about by the support of our presidents, Kate & Emma Disley.

Again, Plas y Brenin is a top runner for our thanks for their support. Their video *Why Snowdonia*, showcasing Snowdonia, ([www.pyb.uk](http://www.pyb.uk)) is well worth viewing bring forward all the activities that students who attend the centre can become involved. Public Talks and lectures are regularly held at the centre and are listed on the web site or details from 01690

720214. Jackie Bryson, is the very forward thinking and hardworking Chief Executive. They have sponsored a Capel Curig nature trail, copies available at reception. Pick up copy.

Through the hard work and enthusiasm of Mr Richard Pennant we again held our Alice and Hilda Music and Poetry evening in June which was yet another excellent cultural evening at this lovely location. Peter Smith writes; 'It was a pleasant warm evening; we were greeted by Brian Templar at the door of the church with a glass of wine - an excellent idea'.

'The church looked beautiful with the soft evening light and the candle light within the church. It might be my photographic background, but all the candles were the same length and Brian had obviously spent considerable time getting everything perfect.

The evening kicked off at 7.30pm and we were entertained by wordsmith Richard Douglas Pennant with violin background accompaniment by Kirsten Hellier. Kirsten then played several solo pieces. Eleni Skarpari also sang and played and sung several songs with her extraordinary strong and unique voice. On this occasion, the whole evening's entertainment was played without an interval and sometime after 8.30pm we all decanted to the Tyn Y Coed Hotel for a buffet again kindly provided by the Pennant family. St Julitta's committee member Mrs Yates gave an excellent vote of thanks at the church before we departed. An excellent evening and many thanks to the Pennant family, the performers and Brian Templar'.

I print a further detailed report, written by Pat Mowbray Yates as further provides publicity and will hopefully encourage more people from Capel Curig to attend in the future. 'After a week of a melting heatwave, Friday June 23rd dawned damp, drizzly, midgy and muggy up in the mountains. I set off at 6.30 in the evening, still in heavy cloud, with a gaggle of my friends who had worked in Penrhyn Castle with me for years and years. They chatted excitedly, eager to visit Saint Julitta's, agog at the thought of hearing Richard Pennant read poetry about his beloved aunties Hilda and Alice, whom they knew about from years of giving talks and tours in the castle. We all knew the name scrawled by a diamond ring into a window with 'amour' and speculated wildly about what it must have been like to live in that period in the gloomy castle, panelled and draped with mystery, marquetry and formality'.

'We parked opposite the church and trotted in high heels looking 'posh', down past the drooping wet long grass, gilded with raindrops, tickling our ankles. The door was ajar, and we shooed inside to animated conversation. Brian, looking dapper, was half way up a ladder, ready to light the candelabra. John Mathews, the jolly Llandegai vicar, and his band of followers, were already in the box pews on the left with Edmund, one arm slung over the back of the pew chatting amiably to them all. Richard Pennant was setting up his chair, the darkly dramatic young singer positioning her music stand, the ethereal tousle-haired violin player was tuning her violin whilst others of their entourage were helping.

'The church was busting with people now, about 23 turned up, amid exclamations and kisses from old friends, lots who had worked together at Penrhyn Castle. Richard greeted us suited and floral shirted, he shook hands, touched shoulders, recognition lighting up his features. I retrieved the wine glasses in from the pulpit, much to Richard's amusement. The bar was set up the 'bar' and we were off!

'At 7.30 the microphone was ready, Richard faced us all and people shuffled to find a comfort zone on the hard benches; a hush settled and the performance began. Poignant poems about the Aunties, their lives, the cars, the watercolour painting, living in the mansion cocooned in isolation. The singer sang deep plaintive songs, the musician with the violin drifted in and out of the music and words, moving us all to emotion in the soft candle light and the intimate space.

'I gave a vote of thanks, filled with emotion myself with the fleshed-out personalities of those 'aunties' who had before the evening been like cardboard cut-outs to those of us who had talked often about them to visitors and tourists at the castle. The links between Llandegai church and Saint Julitta's in times gone by knotted us all together, the aunty in her grave, today celebrating her birthday all those years ago. We clapped the performers who bowed and smiled.

'Do join us for the birthday cake at Tyn y Coed' Richard invited us all and happily we all drove off to celebrate at the buffet, the big white iced cake was cut, a toast was given amid laughter and light-heartedness. "See you at Jonathan Richard's performance in August?" Brian queried to my friends. "Oh yes", "It's so lovely" "What a treat" they chimed.

'All good things had to come to an end. I took the empty glasses from St. Julitta's, in the soft dusty cardboard boxes, back home to wash. In soapy suds I washed them, thinking of the aunties, the castle and the memorable evening in beautiful Saint Julitta's Church.

Pat Mowbray Yates

Our next celebration was the early opening of our summer exhibition commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Snowdonia Society, on the 11<sup>th</sup> June, at Dyffryn Mymbyr farm house. There was no problem for myself when asked if the Friends of St Julitta's would design and bring forward the material for an exhibition to celebrate their anniversary. I had been involved with the group since 1975, the research for the exhibition recalled a big part of my volunteering life from 1975 – 1996. I think we brought together an exhibition which told the story of the foremost conservation group in Snowdonia, positively and sometimes aggressively led by the late Mrs Esme Kirby. They continue to contribute in many positive ways to ensuring the Snowdonia National Park that we all love has a guardian to over-see the work of the many authorities who administer the area, [www.snowdonia-society.org.uk](http://www.snowdonia-society.org.uk). Saturday, the opening day was memorable in that the heavens opened, the forecast of a shower, somewhat underestimated the amount of rain, for when it rains properly at Dyffryn Mymbyr it RAINS! But the all visitors seem to brush it off – a fine gathering of friends and supporters, an excellent display and some interesting speakers.

The Exhibition opened at St Julitta's in July and as we had made two copies it could be shown at different venues and can still be outreached to other venues when there is a need. It certainly revealed a section of local history not generally available to the public. Local papers always like to report major happenings, but they so often become forgotten in the hurly burly local politics.

Many thanks for the support that Classical Guitarist Johnathan Richards continues to give us, with his evening in August, and together with Mynydd Llandegai Choir we are able to bring together lovely and unique evenings in our medieval building. Our 'Thank You' dinner in November in the church was again an evening to remember – made so atmospheric by the children, who also choose to come along, with a gang of oldies. WONDERFULL!

It has not been all fun at St Julitta's in 2017. We have lost four very important members. Caroline Smith's death will leave a huge hole in both the community of Capel Curig and St Julitta's. How sad that Caroline can be taken from us at a comparatively early age, her fight against cancer over a long period of time was eventually lost. The loss to her family is great; a lovely thanksgiving service was held in her memory in Betws y Coed Church on 29<sup>th</sup> September.

Professor Antony and Mrs Annis Flew, from Reading, had been generous members of our society since the 1990s – introduced by Jane Pulley from the Pen y Gwryd. When it was

decided, in our first year, to have a working party we needed a skip (£150) to get rid of a great deal of rubbish etc. An appeal to our small membership brought forward Antony, unknown to us then except for his £50 standing order, agreed that he would pay as long as we filled the skip; there was no problem in achieving that so developed our link with the family. Antony, a philosopher, passed away some time ago (*put his name into Google*), but Annis kept her link with Capel Curig, until she passed away in March. Our thoughts are with their two daughters.

A long staunch supporter of the Friends of St Julitta's was Jane Pulley, part owner of the Pen y Gwryd Hotel, and a neighbour of mine for 25 years. Jane was hugely enthusiastic about her support for our group from the earliest of days and attended all our principal functions.

Finally, our last 'son' of Capel Curig has passed away. Cyril Jones spent his early days in Bryn Derwen, Capel Curig and was very proud that he, despite moving to Ellesmere Port, still retained his knowledge of the Welsh language. Cyril was always ready with a helpful pair of hands – even in the pouring rain at Dyffryn, on 11 June he was helping to put up the exhibition – having booked two nights' accommodation in the Court House in Betws y Coed. We will miss him so much!

Progress continues with the restoration of the church, we have now commissioned our restoration builder to go ahead, initially, with improving the water drainage of the building. Being so close to the river the water table is very high, so we have been advised to install drainage around the building, with proper water 'soak- a-ways' to take the drainage away from the building. We had hope that this would now be complete but ... we wait patiently – one has to in Snowdonia! This should lead to the replacement of a slate floor inside the church.

Barry Fox has continued to be the main flag-flyer in the churchyard. Although we just about kept the grass under control, Barry has gone ahead and supervised the diverse collection of bird boxes, rebuild the compost area and created a new flagged footpath that runs around the rear of the churchyard, opening up the section where Bill Wigram and Alice Douglas Pennants grave are situated. We do wish to restore one or two of the collapsed graves memorials, but again one needs lots of patience to live through the completion of the work!

We are having a new outside Notice Board fitted – kindly constructed by Ken Smith and Edmund, using recycled oak wood. This should be in place shortly.

We have lots to go at in 2018. Note our Diary of Events\*, our summer exhibition will be entitled *Teithio Trwy Hanes/ Travelling Through History, The Roads and Bridges of Caernarfonshire*. Already the exhibition is starting to take shape but if anyone would like to get involved please speak to myself or any on the committee members. It is a hugely interesting topic, little explored by historians in the area. It is great that we are getting support from Andrew Davidson and GATT. Visiting the exhibition does give our members a chance, both to see the church and view progress, but of course to visit Snowdonia too. Why not put our opening date in your diary, full details on the web. It will be nice to meet you from afar during the summer months. Let me know of anticipated visits to Capel, or even arrange a visit to fit in with one of our Diary of Events activities.

Our involvement in the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates, a very active department of Bangor University was extended this year, through their promotion of the project to the local community. We hope to further this contact in 2018/19 by drawing attention to the Penrhyn and Gwydir families and their involvement in the rural area around Capel Curig.

The church will again be open over Easter Good Friday March 30<sup>th</sup> 2018 for four days, Easter is often a time when visitors visit the churchyard to put flowers on graves etc. The churchyard now is definitely looking its best, the daffodils and the primroses will be in bloom, making a real picture. We will be having a working day there on Good Friday and probably Easter Saturday, - but please note there is no pressure to get involved, you can just visit us socially! Being 2018 we will have on display an exhibition about the remembrance of the First World War. If you are in Capel over Easter, please make a point of introducing yourself to the Steward in charge - who will be there from 11 am till 4 30pm each day. We might even have our new notice board on display! Don't forget our WW1 booklet, a bargain still available from above. Also, please note our Web Sites [www.stjulittas.org](http://www.stjulittas.org) & [www.ww1insnowdonia.org](http://www.ww1insnowdonia.org)

Many many thanks again Mrs Catherine Williams, who continually gives us wonderful support in many ways, including setting up and managing our web site [www.stjulittas.org](http://www.stjulittas.org) . And of course, thanks to the Disley girls, (I hope I am not being too informal!), Emma and Kate, our Society Presidents who generously give us support when needed.

Finally thanks to the members and visitors who support our events. 2018 sees us another year on, now over 20 years old, showing the past progress we have made and of course presenting us with fresh challenges for the future. No longer does Capel Curig have a sad neglected medieval church as was the case when we initially took over a rather sad looking building, we certainly have progressed from that era. Again, many thanks to all those who have contributed, particularly the committee, who often travel far to attend a two-hour gathering around a table. It is a real pleasure to report the continued support of those who keep our flag flying – keep it up and THANK YOU AGAIN!

Harvey. 03 2018

\*Please if you don't have a copy ask for one.

# Teithio Trwy Hanes/Travelling through History

*Ffyrdd a Pontydd Sir Gaernarfon*  
*The Roads and Bridges of Caernarfonshire*

## *Exhibition / Arddangosfa*



**Cyfeillion Eglwys Santes Julitta**  
**Friends of St Julitta's Church**  
**Capel Curig**

11am tan 4.30pm  
o ddydd Sul 29 Gorffennaf tan 9 Medi 2018  
hefyd 14/16 a 21/23 Medi 2018  
(ddim ar agor ar ddydd Mawrth)

11am to 4.30pm  
from Sunday 29 July until 9 September 2018  
also 14/16 and 21/23 September 2018  
(not open on Tuesdays)

*Presented by the Friends of St Julitta's*  
*Cyflwynwyd gan gyfeillion Eglwys Santes Julitta*

[www.stjulittas.org](http://www.stjulittas.org)  
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The flyer for the 2018 Summer exhibition, with opening details.