

CYFEILLION EGLWYS SANTES JULITTA FRIENDS OF ST JULITTA'S CHURCH

Rhif Elusen Cofrestredig/Registered Charity Number 1068756

ANNUAL REPORT 2009 & FRIENDS' NEWSLETTER 16 NEWSLETTER

Dear All,

Sadly again I must report the sad loss of one of our committee in 2008. **Mike Cousins** passed away peacefully on November 8th. He was an enthusiastic hard working committee and trustee to ours and a number of other organisations to whom he freely gave his time. Mike was a man very much involved in Capel Curig village life, a huge and active supporter of the St Julitta's from the earliest of days.

In his early working life he had a very adventurous time serving on the Antarctic Survey and following this becoming a mountaineer instructor. He successfully applied for the vacancy of deputy manager at Kent Mountain Centre in Llanberis. Here, although on a three year contract, he became totally dedicated to the centre, and to all the children who experienced their first taste of mountaineering in Snowdonia. He was a wonderful mountain instructor, who radiated confidence, whilst having a quiet and gentle way but through with the instruction and teaching, always providing an impressive welcome to both staff and children of the many schools that visited the centre. Naturally his contract was renewed until he filled the vacant post of Centre Manager, from which he retired in 1995.

Meanwhile Alison and Mike bought the Grosvenor Hotel in Llanberis in 1978, and from here moved to Capel Curig in April 1985 where Alison operated a very successful Bed & Breakfast establishment based at Bryn Derwen, whilst Mike continued in the centre. Alison also owned and ran the Bryn Glo Cafe, somewhere that became famous for its tea and cakes and other goodies, a famous dropping off spot for walkers and mountaineers to Capel Curig.

After retirement The Art Gallery, purchased in the year 2000, in Betws y Coed became the next challenge. Here they put in a tremendous amount of effort to build up a very successful business. Part of Mike's contribution was not only selling fine works of art but also making the frames for them too.

In Capel Curig Mike was a Community Councillor from 2000 – 2008;

Our AGM in 2008 went as well as one could expect an AGM to go! Most things were very good news but I guess the best is that we now have a new secretary. Ron Evans, a past resident of Capel Curig and other parts of Snowdonia has agreed to fill the gap, I did not have to turn the thumb screws very much! I have known Ron for about 55+ years so we are not strangers to one another! Many thanks Ron, we all hope you enjoy your time with us. It was an action based 3 days, starting with the Friday when Roy & Tony brought out the exhibition(+ we now have a disabled sign on the gate), Ken sorted out the final bits of **The Churchyard Trail** in preparation for the opening on Sunday, I sorted the notice board & cleaned up gravestones and had a hard look at what is needed for the Art Exhibition. Gill Richards was confirmed that we have been granted £400 for this - very good news for our latest venture. Eileen did her usual bril. job of putting a fine display of flowers in the church - and Peter Smith turned up with the newly printed Churchyard Trail Booklet, which of course we all admired!

The meeting flowed, we are so lucky to have the support of **Plas y Brenin** as a venue. We had a very respectable turn out - thank you all for supporting us. The formal meeting, including the appointment of the new secretary took 40 minutes, with Warren saying a few nice words (well they

were generally nice!) and following this Pierino Algieri's talk was totally fascinating, life below the surface of both the rivers Conwy & Llugwy was brought to life.

Lunch was gobbled down, helped on its way by a pint of bitter and the fantastic view from the bar looking up towards the Snowdon Horseshoe, a view admired by visitors 30 or so years before the Victorians came along. We were at the **Pen y Gwryd** a few minutes after 01 45pm. The weather, although cold, very much behaved itself & Frances took us on a circular round, with the PyG as the hub. History was revealed and this was followed by cream teas for all in the Holy of Holies of the Pen y Gwryd - very comfortable and fitting place to end up, Jane was a welcoming hostess. We also had a look at the lovely little chapel that Brian & Jane have created to celebrate the Millennium. The day was rounded off by dinner at the **Tyn y Coed**.

Sunday was another full day and a little forward planning meant it ran really smoothly despite the flurries of snow that discouraged any operations outside. Yes a nice day, with Gill, Pat, Jean, Mike, Andrew & Maureen joining the work party. The church looked well; an instant primrose patch was created, two pans of soup were concocted, a new window catch was fitted, grave stones were scrubbed and all the daffodils looked really pleased with the results - they smiled at everyone in the way that only daffodils at St Julitta's can.

Again many thanks to all that braved the elements, it was especially nice to see Eileen Jackson with us. **Arfon Curig Williams** opened our Churchyard Trail and we all had a trek around the churchyard, examining a number of generations of the past residents of Capel. The soup went down well, everyone socialised in a big way, the raffle was drawn (many thanks Mike for taking it on) and the afternoon closed with a general feeling of a job well done.

The Diary of events for 2008 went really well – **the AGM weekend** had set the scene, as reported above, I managed to get the business side over in 40 minutes, could that be a record!? **The Art Exhibition** at the end of May for us was another leap into the dark. Converting the Church into an Art Gallery was somewhat of a problem, when one considers we do not have electricity, and works of art need careful illumination to show them off. But with a bit of imagination, several trips to B & Q and a delivery of timber from the Builders Merchants in Bethesda things soon took shape. We titled the exhibition **Mountain to Mountain** and Christine Scott & Anthony Rankin brought together contrasting styles in depicting the Snowdonia mountain environment. The two artists of differing backgrounds showed how they individually interpreted the Snowdonia National Park and the mountain environment. Christine Scott has made a home high on the side of the Conwy valley where she has a studio. Anthony Rankin left his career with Rolls-Royce Derby to pursue his love for drawing in the mountains. Christine & Anthony follow in a long tradition of artists who have for over 200 years captured the essence of Snowdonia and have recorded the changing scenery for future generations. We felt proud that we could using a minimum of resource allow them to show their skills and artistic ability under one roof. The exhibition was a huge success and a number of paintings were sold.

How lucky we are! We again drew on the labours of the **Snowdonia Society's Clear Up Group** under the leadership of Bea Kelsall, who we thank very much for a great deal of hard work. The management of the Churchyard presents a bigger problem than one could imagine. The main challenge is that the grass continually grows and labour to keep it under control is not readily available. The Clear Up Group are like manner from Heaven; long may they reign in Capel Curig! *The 2008 exhibition was again a very special event. Most visitors who climb Moel Siabod will hardly give a second glance to the slate quarry that they walk through. I think it would be fair to say that we brought it alive.* [*Chwareli a Mwyngloddiau Capel Curig, The Slate Quarries & Mines of Capel Curig*](#), was the title that we gave the exhibition. We do like to thing, and we put a lot of effort into making research for the exhibition into a communal activity, which does help to increase awareness of the rich local environment, and a sense of community that Capel has. We were very grateful to the National Lottery for a grant of £3087.

The "The Quarries and Mines of Capel Curig"; are features that are not often associated with the village in our modern society but provided employment for the local population for over 150 years.

The group of 5 slate quarries, hidden away on the slopes of Moel Siabod are dominated by Rhos Quarry. Rhos employed up to 50 men and worked for over 100 years, closing eventually in the 1950's and will provide the main subject matter. Our exhibition did not only look at the Quarry's but also investigated the quarry & mine workers and their families – the lives that they lived in Capel Curig.

We were honoured to have Dr Michael Lewis, an authority on Industrial archaeology in Snowdonia to open the event and in the evening deliver a very knowledgeable lecture at Plas y Brenin entitled “**Monuments of the Slate Industry**”.

Frances again gets a mention for the research, But Roy Coppack very much produced the goods by getting hold of a early survey of the Quarry, put together by a team from Plas Tan y Bwlch; we are extremely grateful for their support.

Many thanks to all again, especially **Pierino Algieri** for all the time and work involved (all freely given), for providing some wonderful photographs.



Again we had a lovely evening with **Jonathan Richards on the Classical Guitar** assisted by Deborah Barker with poetry readings in August; we thank Arts Council for Wales for the support with this evening. Audience attendance was respectable, for a change the organiser was not embarrassed by the size of the audience, but we could do with a few more!

Our autumn lecture was delivered by **Dr Alan Dyer**, who titled it “**Richard Pennant's Capel Curig Inn and the beginning of Tourism in North Wales**”. Again we are thankful for his time; he revealed much to us about the life in Snowdonia from 1750 onwards and the growth of the tourist. The new village hall is an ideal venue for this type of evening, complete with digital projector and all the other fancy gadgetry that lecturers demand these days.

Of course the **Village Candle-lite Carol evening** was a evening well attended and organised by Peter Smith and his team. On the day the **Revd. Clive Hillman** brought the evening together, again an evening to be remembered, thank you very much for the many contributions received. Peter Smith, the organiser writes; *What a difference a day makes! I had the feeling that the Annual Candlelight Carol Concert at St Julittas had run its course and this year would be the last one I organised. We moved the date to 23rd December 2008 as close to Christmas as possible and by popular demand. How wrong I was! By 6.30pm the church was almost full. In all there were over 110 people crammed into the church and we had a wonderful service taken by Father Clive from St Mary's in Betws y Coed. The service was dedicated to Carol Jones and Mike Cousins both of whom died during the year. It was good to see their families at the service and I hope the proceedings gave them some comfort.*

We as usual sang ten carols inter dispersed with readings and the 'childrens spot' which this year was organised extremely well by Alice Douglas. There are certainly some very talented young singers in the community. Many thanks to

Geraldine Tundstall who played the organ, Haf Roberts who undertook the beautiful floral decorations, the individuals who did readings and the children who sang and played musical instruments. After the service mince pies and mulled wine were served.

The date for 2009: **Tuesday 22nd December 2009 at 7:00pm**. Please come along to what is a lovely evening in a beautiful setting.

The Churchyard Trail has moved on! The full colour booklet published in English is now on sale and the Welsh version is on order, delivery soon! I do hope that everyone gives it full support,

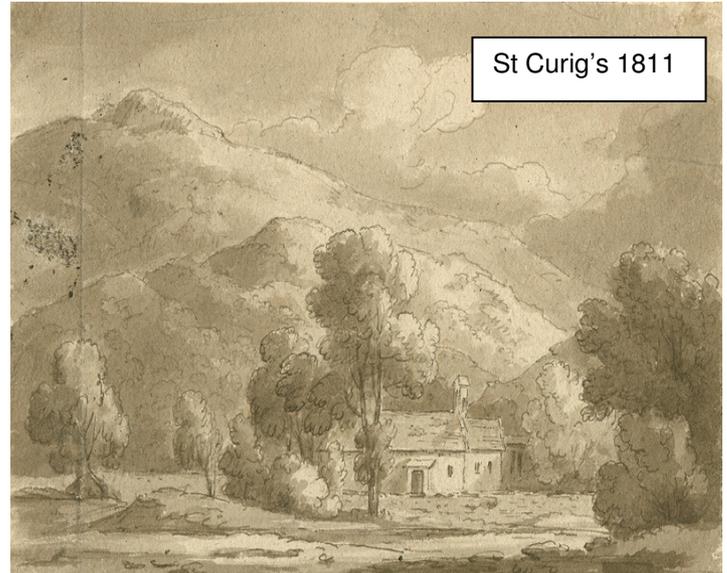
there is even a children's version; copies are available price £2 20 post free from the address at the end of this report.

We are in the business for recruiting a couple of new members to our committee. Naomi Hughes has had to resign owing to other commitments in an already hectic life so we are casting the net! Added to this we could do with a little (or even a LOT!) membership growth, which in the real world means that we need a Membership Secretary too! I await the applications!

2009 programme of events is already full to overflowing. Make sure you have a copy of our **Events Diary** and note down the details. We look forward two visits from the Snowdonia Society, in May and December please get in touch if you can join them. Yes the dreaded grass continues to grow (surprise, surprise!) but we are largely on the winning side; a position that ensures we will continued the struggle to keep it in its place. The war has not been won, but we have not sounded the retreat either, and we enter 2008 in a better situation than we were in 2007.

I guess that most will know that the 8th annual summer exhibition 2009 will be titled **Hanes, Eglwys a Chapel yng NGHAPEL CURIG;**
Church and Chapel in CAPEL CURIG, a history

And will run from 26th July – 6th September & 12th / 13th September 2009.



In the exhibition we hope to develop the way that man from earliest of times, in a remote a settlement as Capel Curig, has turned to worship for support and guidance. Pre Jesus Christ early Celtic settlers looked to the gods for support for their crops and livelihood. Sacrifices, often human, were used to influence the gods and produce results. We know little of these times. With the coming of the Roman legions they brought other beliefs, methods and customs. They worshiped Gods too but did not promote human sacrifice, although they did persecute the Christians for not accepting and showing homage to their gods. In their later years they began to accept Christianity. There is evidence of both levels of worship in Wales.

From these early times the clock moves forward one thousand years to when we have documentary evidence of Christian beliefs in Capel Curig. We know from this that for about 650 years the people have accepted Christianity in various forms as their religion; legend would put this date back about another 600 years. Through extensive research we will examine this period and present a picture of how the populace lived and supported Christianity. The village now has three redundant church buildings and two chapels. Fortunately a third chapel, Chapel Nant y Benglog, has survived the passage of time and still holds regular Sunday services. The exhibition will be opened by Mr Tim Hughes, the author of *Wales Best 100 Churches* and will support a lecture to be held on the evening of the opening day.

In 2008 we have not moved into the field of further renovation of the church – but things are stirring. I think we could say that over a period of about 10 years we have redesigned the wheel that signifies St Julitta's Church! But there is still much to be done, and to move forward we do need some substantial help. If we can raise the support needed then perhaps shortly we will be looking at raising the floor in the church and replacing it with something more in keeping with a medieval building. The churchyard moves forward; we have a volunteer now who will oversee it, Mrs Pat Hooson; Pat will always be known as the person who initiated the painting of the iron

railings in the churchyard and her remit is to make it more comfortable for the residents. We have still many more challenges to go at not the least of which is the provision of a Toilet.

A direct contribution to the church that Mike Cousins made in 2008 was to oversee the laying of some slate slabs outside the front door.

Evan's Book has continued to sell; it is nice to report that we now have a return for the investment that we put into publishing the book, get in touch if you want a copy. We still have lots of Tea Towels, why not push the boat out and send in an order. Ken Smith still spends a lot of time putting stones on top of each other and Peter Hutton has completed the replacement of the window furniture.

Yes the in-tray is very full; we are hoping to get the roof timbers dendro dated; in fact it has had a major overflow! The reams of material that were with me last year have grown. Family social history of Capel Curig is a huge field to get into. But I trust that you feel that things have gone well in the last twelve months and I thank all members for their support. I have again been lax in circulating information but please feel that this is YOUR group, we are relaxed, friendly, in it for the fun, perhaps to learn, to contribute.

Finally sincere thanks to the officers and the committee for their loyalty and outstanding contributions. Particular thanks to John Disley who recently celebrated his 80th birthday. We will be formally saying thank you to him on the evening of the 3rd April,

Very best wishes

Harvey 02 04 09

PS Please note we now have bird feeders in the churchyard, the hanging system kindly donated by John Jackson. Fill them with seed if you are passing! Many thanks again.

Yn gweithio i achub Eglwys Ieiaf Eryri
Working to Save Snowdonia's Smallest Church