

Cymdeithas Treftadaeth Dyffryn Conwy



Conwy Valley Civic Society

Chair report 2016 – 17

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Since our last AGM in Dolgarrog your committee has met and discussed various planning matters including The Conwy Falls Hydro scheme, conversion to a dwelling of the (listed) Community Hall in Gyffin, also (outside our area, but of concern) housing development on the Sychnant Pass, and more recently the building of chalets at Tal y cafn Hotel site and demolition and rebuild of a store in Betws y coed for JD Sports. While, as a Civic Society, we have neither supported nor objected to any of these applications I have endeavoured to keep our members informed through the newsletters.

The Civic Trust Cymru, our umbrella organisation, has ceased to exist - which has certainly made it more difficult for us to keep up with national events and information, and in touch with other Civic Societies.

I have sadly had to report during the year that some of our longest-standing and loyal members have passed away – Margaret Birks, Pam Shires – and, in June, Ray Parry.

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Our meetings have, as usual, thanks to our Programme Secretary covered so many subjects and interests. We started the year with “The Historic Gardens of North Wales”, and on the building front we had "40 years of working with lead", and in April a visit to The Natural Building Centre in Llanrwst, with a talk and tour of the gardens.

100 years ago WWI was raging, so it was entirely appropriate that we had two talks this year on that subject "The Royal Welsh Fusiliers in The Great War" and "The Home Front".

Our joint meeting was courtesy of Aberconwy Historical Society - "Steam to Patagonia". One of our two experimental and successful afternoon meetings was at The Bee Inn where we learned of the legends of "Mythic Snowdonia". Our biennial awards ceremony was held at The Princes Arms in Trefriw – and for those who were unable to be there for the evening there is at this meeting the display of the award winners' projects.

Our final meeting of the year in June was in Eglwysbach. We discovered that

Eglwysbach would be “closed” that evening (the road was being dug up), and when I visited a couple of days before there were warning notices everywhere ... “You shall Not Pass This Point after 7pm” Some of us were concerned that attendance might be sparse – but we needn't have worried as our resourceful members and guests arrived regardless, making detours by road and on foot, and despite all the dire threats on the notices all we had to negotiate as we left were some friendly traffic lights, which saw us coming and very obligingly changed to green! Our talk, “The Snowdonia Society at 50” was particularly interesting as The Snowdonia Society and our Civic Society have much common ground and history – they being concerned mainly with the natural environment and we with the built environment – it was also a timely reminder that in approximately eighteen months The Conwy Valley Civic Society will also be 50 years old.

And now we reach the end of our year, and look forward to the next. The Conwy Valley faces many challenges, perhaps more than ever before. Some of your committee will be retiring from “active service”, and my grateful thanks to them for all they have done, but I do hope that other members will be willing to step forward either to serve on the committee, or to volunteer to help in other ways during the year.

Catherine Mortimer Hart
Chair, 2016-17

4th July 2017