

# CYFEILLION EGLWYS SANTES JULITTA

## FRIENDS OF ST JULITTA'S CHURCH

Rhif Elusen Cofrestredig/Registered Charity Number 1068756

### ANNUAL REPORT 2005 & FRIENDS' NEWSLETTER 11 NEWS

Dear All,

“Warmest congratulations! The assessors were very impressed and decided to make an award for the splendid work that the Friends have carried out”. I start our annual report and newsletter this year with a few kind words written by Michael Gaches the secretary of the Conwy Valley Awards Civic Society awards committee. Yes all our hard work that has gone into the wonderfully old church building that we have today has been rewarded by the Conwy Valley Civic Society. As a footnote to this report I have included the assessors comments for ref, I'm sure you will be pleased to read them. Also we produced a booklet briefly covering the restoration, for the assessor's information, which is available from HL £2 50. I have added the introduction to this booklet as an Appendix to this report.

Anyone who will have been able to visit the church in the last 3 months will have noticed a remarkable difference compared with its previous appearance. Last year in my report I was having a whinge about Will Pearce our builder – progress was slow - at a stop – and generally optimism was at a very low level. Well, as is the way of the world (even in Snowdonia!) Will showed up with a stack of scaffolding and a lot of other equipment and cracked on and completed the contract. Wow! Many thanks Will, we are indebted to you.

We then had to put an exhibition together in an unpainted church, but the main work was complete, all that remained was for the volunteers to finish off the detail. This part has progress through the autumn / winter until in January we felt happy that phase three was complete. This allowed us to enter the church into the CVCS biannual award scheme, and the opening sentence of this report then says it all! How do we thank everyone for everything? I suggest a visit to the church – what you see is a small monument to enthusiasm, dedication and hard work! A visit should raise a little “buzz” within you, make you feel good – just what could be better thanks?

The completion of phase three of the restoration is with us, what can we do next? Well a closer look at the site still reveals a crack or two in the inferstructure of the restoration of St Julitta's Church, which leads into phase four. The committee have decided to seek permission to put a disabled toilet on the site. Initial response to our idea suggests that it probable would be easier and cheaper to install one on the moon, but that may be phase 5! Together with this we have continual work in the graveyard/stone walls/copse; not to mention our exhibition for 2005, but more of this later.

Perhaps at this stage a mention of what we achieved in 2004 is worthwhile. Our events diary, put together by Jan did not produce the support that we hoped for. We really did have some ambitious evenings planned, and sadly the support was not in line with our hopes – a particular low point was when only three people turned up to the Story Telling evening in September. This year we have cut back on our plans, and hope that more support will be forthcoming.

But to balance the minuses we had the Exhibition, Two Hundred Years of Mountaineering in Capel Curig. This was a success all the way along the line. Bringing things together was educational and fun, the support from a wide cross section of persons was very encouraging, seeing interest and support in the Friends was motivating and using the church building to its full potential was gratifying. In putting together the exhibition we clearly did not reinvent the wheel as far as the history of mountaineering in Capel was concerned, but as I would say “A person on a flying trapeze could see it was worth while!” I must also mention Jim Perrin who despite being under a great deal of pressure writing a very important book ( The Villain, the life of Don Whillans, details from HL), came along and gave us a inspiring talk entitled Welsh Hills and other wild places, in which he spoke about the work contained in the book. To all those willing people who so generously answer the call Very Many Thanks for assistance - I have prepared a report on the exhibition in booklet form, in which you might even get a mention, if anyone would like a copy please send £2 50, £3 30 post free and I will be very happy to circulate it.

It would be wrong of me not to mention our Get Stuck in Weekend in October, although I have already written a report (available from yours truly). This year again we thank the Snowdonia Society and The CAE fund for funding us a Skip to dispose of our unwanted rubbish and all the members who sent in donations to cover the cost of all the materials we used. We had a grand time (who worries about the weather in Capel Curig!) giving the inside of the church a coat of paint and tackling many other jobs. We are having two goes at it this year, one in June mainly targeted at the Church yard and one in September; this means we need more volunteers, please come along if you have an hour or two to spare. The Snowdonia Society was very kind again to us by basing their Painters Challenge at the Church in July for which we again thank them. Keith Bowen was available to help the painters, and delivered a very interesting lecture in the evening.

The closing event of the year was the Carol Evening, immediately before Christmas, organised by Peter Smith and others in the village, again magnificently supported.

What for “This Year - Next Year”? Well one could say we are in the thick of it! I have already mentioned the toilet project. We hope to position it “Semi Attached” to the Bier house; plans are in the proposal stage! After a great deal of thought, debate, time, effort, phone calls and letters we have a Tea towel! Yes the committee have set the wheels rolling and come up with a nicely designed personalised tea towel for the Friends. We now need all the Friends to buy 5

each; this will empty the two very large boxes that we don't have a home for and ensure we reorder another batch! Very many thanks to Tony Rankin for the drawing of the church that is central to the design. We do hope to push on with the publication of Evan's Book; we now have £2500 in the fund which gives us a strong position. But fund raising is the name of the game, can anyone help, perhaps with a barbeque, or dinner party in the summer/autumn?

All members will have received a copy of the events diary. Please try to support at least one of our evenings, how wonderful it would be if we had the same response as the carol evening for our other musical events. Further details from Jan.

So we get to the Exhibition for 2005, The Committee has agreed that again this year we will hold an Exhibition in the Church. It will be based on the work of a selection of poets writing in Welsh who have written poems about specific places in Snowdonia. The working title adopted for the present is:

## Beirdd Eryri - Snowdonia's Poets

The bilingual Exhibition will be held 10<sup>th</sup> July – 29<sup>th</sup> August (closed on Tuesdays) & 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> September 2005. At this stage the final format of the main display is currently being developed. However we plan that the section on each poet selected will have a photograph of the individual, a bilingual biography and the poem itself displayed in the original Welsh complemented wherever possible with an English translation. Completing the display for each poem will be a high quality photograph of the scene the poem illustrates, taken by Pierino Algieri.

We also hope it may be possible to have an ancillary display of memorabilia associated with the poets, perhaps associated pictures / photographs or other items will be brought together. Anyone help in this field? The exhibition will be open during the period that the National Eisteddfod is on in Bangor (31<sup>st</sup> July – 7<sup>th</sup> August). We will hold a formal opening on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July at 3 30pm. On the evening we again wish to promote a lecture at Plas Y Brenin covering the subject matter. We will have bilingual stewards on duty whilst the exhibition is open particularly during the Eisteddfod week. We hope that there will be a strong link into the Eisteddfod, with publicity etc., at both the exhibition and the Eisteddfod for each event. We have approached the **Welsh Department of the University of Wales, Bangor and will be working in partnership with them** to put together the exhibition. Dr Rod Hughes, a committee member, is our main link with the University department.

Also it is hoped to hold a Poetry Workshop in Capel Curig sometime during the period when the exhibition is open. It is clear that we need to get the support of persons interested and involved in poetry in the area, for the exhibition to be a success. We are also considering the publication of a book based on the exhibition material.

***We are sure the exhibition will be a very memorable event for the village of Capel Curig, providing an attraction for both the residents of the area and the tourists that visit the area.***

I wrote last year about the challenges that we faced with the exhibition being different from previous. Well again we cross boundaries and find ourselves in

uncharted lands. This year's exhibition will be so different from previous. We need better signage on the road approaching the church; we need much more national publicity; we need to break into the media circus, both Welsh and English, and shout loudly. We now have our extra exhibition space, but will need to carefully plan things so that the visitors and public can learn more about our Welsh poets and culture.

Again I wish our neighbours St Michaels Church, Betws y Coed loads of luck and many congratulations in the progress that they are making with the restoration of their very fine old building. Their project is moving on amazingly - the work involved is repointing the exterior, re-plastering part of the interior is complete and putting in a water supply and electricity is too I believe.

We have again had a generous donation from The Esme Kirby Trust. We have not made any progress with a lasting memorial to Peter and Esme in the church, the committee have agreed to this and now seek suggestions on what form it should take.

There are many more things that I could report on for you to read, the build up of the social history of the village being one of them. But please feel that this is YOUR group, we are relaxed, friendly, in it for the fun, and would so much like to see more of you, and by adopting hands on position you will learn all that is happening! I do look forward to the AGM and chatting about our project please come along if you can find some time!

We do all feel very proud of our contribution to the restoration of the old church in Capel Curig, and do hope to see it contributing to the social life in Capel. Now the church from the outside really is something that the village can be proud of. As I wrote last year we are not yet totally "there" but with your continued support we can only produce a successful outcome. Again, many, many thanks to all, especially the officers and committee, for the help and support that you all contribute

**Very best wishes**

Harvey 30 03 05

FOOTNOTE:

***Awards Scheme/Gwobrau Dyffryn Conwy 2004-5***

In the assessor's words:

*The assessors applaud the commitment and perseverance of the Friends in bringing this church back to life. Apparently undaunted by the scale of the task, they have worked painstakingly and with pleasing attention to detail. The external improvement is particularly laudable, not least the excellent repointing and the indefatigable rebuilding of boundary walls.*

*Although other phases of work are being considered – and the assessors would encourage the Friends to address further such areas as ventilation – the major*

*renovation has been done most successfully and the assessors are most happy to make an award.*

In response to the award announcement our President wrote:

*As, President of the Friends of St Julitta's, I am so pleased that the efforts of our small group of enthusiasts led by Harvey has attracted the commendation of your organisation. It makes a world of difference to find that our endeavours have been applauded by a wider audience than the good people that live in and around the village.*

*Yours sincerely,  
John Disley CBE*

## **Appendix**

### INTRODUCTION

#### **THE Restoration of St Julitta's Church Capel Curig**

1999 – 2004

In this booklet we have brought together a number of photos giving a brief background to the work that has taken place at St Julitta's Capel Curig, a redundant 14th century church building, over the last few years.

In 1996 the Friends of St Julitta's commenced to negotiate a lease with the Church in Wales to take over the management of the building. At about the same time we sought charitable status for the group. In February 1998 this was granted, and by the middle of the year we had agreed the lease agreement with the church authorities.

The Friends of St Julitta's have at times had to walk a stony path to arrive at where we are today. Many difficulties and disappointments have been faced and overcome, from the refusal of our early grant application by CADW (despite the church being listed 2\*), to just the plain simple struggle for the volunteers to find time to process the nuts and bolts of organising a charitable group whilst organising the restoration. Frustration and hard work have been the name of the game! Many, many people have contributed to the journey, both professionally and voluntarily. To the professionals who have helped we offer sincere thanks, your work is available for all to see. Without your skills a project of this type would never have made it. But without the volunteers we would have not got past the first committee meeting. The input has been tremendous; always someone has answered the call, with advice, practical help and wonderful generosity. Restoring an ancient church in Capel Curig is not the most attractive or adventurous hobby to take on, but with very little encouragement a band of people have come together that have near achieved the impossible. The committee, the village and the future have a lot to be thankful for. Sincere thanks are extended to all that have been involved.

One could say that a large part of our difficulties have been self inflicted; for as the restoration progressed the committee continued to present each year a programme of cultural events at the church. By so doing we made a positive statement that the church building has a use both within the community and the area.

The Friends of St Julitta's trust that some satisfaction has come the way to all that have contributed, and the committee also trust that they will continue to be able call on your support in the future, there are still lots to do!

HL 12 03 05

Ysgrifennyddes/Secretary: Jan Hughes, Isallt, Borth y Gest, Gwynedd, LL49 9TP 01766 515300

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