

# E-NEWSLETTER

## MAY 2022

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## EDITOR'S WELCOME



I must admit that this photograph is a cheat, in that it is neither Roath nor historical. It is, however, appropriate for May Day, and I don't feel too badly at including it!

We had a fascinating lecture this month on Ruperra Castle. The society has retained copies of the Preservation Trust's books for sale, those being *War and Flames*, *Serving under Ruperra*, *Lord Tredegar's Ruperra Castle* and the *Short Story* collection; if anyone would like to purchase one please let me know. Looking forward, we have our very own Jeff Childs' lecture on the fascinating subject of Peterloo to await with eager anticipation! We also have a surprise bonus lecture on the Bacton Altar Cloth via Zoom in June – please see pages 4 and 5 for more information.

Slightly further still into our future, we have our diverse and engaging super summer programme, the details of which have lately been announced. Don't forget that the closing date for booking and payment for these visits is Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> May (the date of our last in-person lecture), so do get your forms in! Elizabeth has been very pleased with the initial take-up, so it might be advisable, before transferring money into the R.L.H.S. Account, to check that your desired events are still available, either by e-mail ([roathhistory@gmail.com](mailto:roathhistory@gmail.com)) or 'phoning (☎ 029 2048 265 📱 07801 544 823).

À l'été,

Geraint Denison-Kurg  
Honorary Secretary

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

# ROATH LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2022

## THE PETERLOO MASSACRE

**Jeff Childs** explains the background to what quickly became known as *Peterloo*, why the cavalry charged and the innocent fell as well as the legacy of this tumultuous event.



*Peterloo* by Richard Carlile, 1819. Manchester Libraries

**St. Edward's Music & Arts Centre 7.30pm start,**  
*with access from 7.00pm.* For link to live stream, please apply to  
Geraint, no later than **Monday, 9<sup>th</sup>** on:

**[denison-kurg@outlook.com](mailto:denison-kurg@outlook.com)**

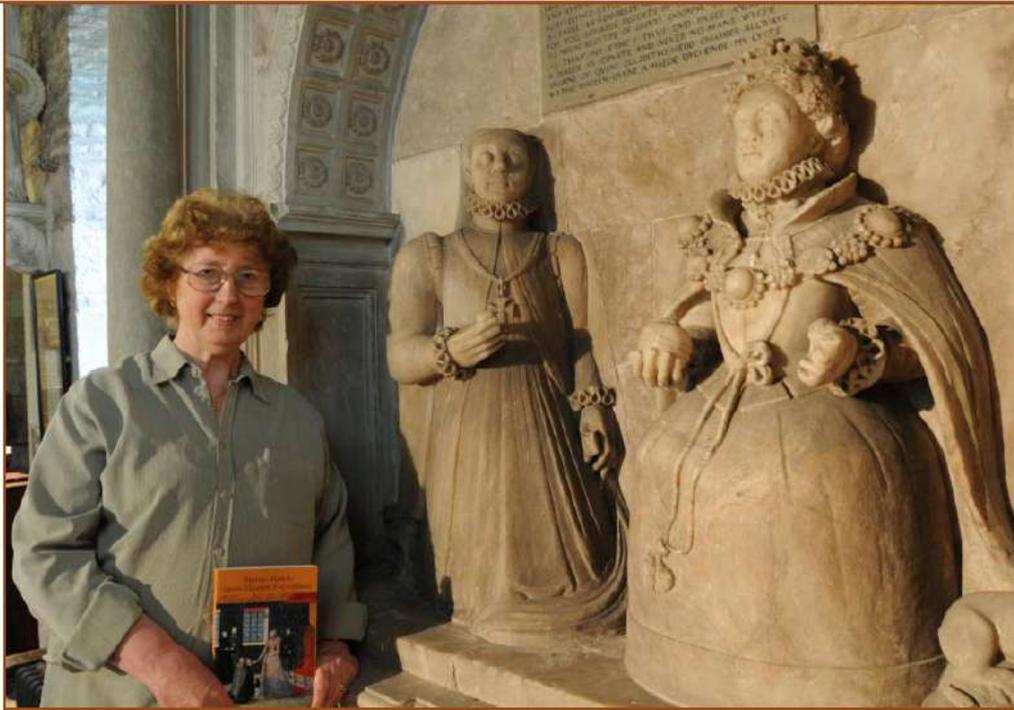
**ALL WELCOME! GUESTS £2.00 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP £10.00**

👑 WEDNESDAY, 1st JUNE, 2022 at 19.00 👑

To celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of our own  
Queen Elizabeth II

R.L.H.S. is hosting an additional online lecture,  
with a suitably royal theme:

**MISTRESS BLANCHE, QUEEN ELIZABETH I'S CONFIDANTE  
& THE BACTON ALTAR CLOTH**



Blanche Parry Monument, Bacton Church, Herefordshire

MRS. RUTH E. RICHARDSON will give a presentation, based on her revised book about Blanche Parry.

The story of the Bacton Altar Cloth will be related, and how its enthralling provenance was uncovered.

Also included, will be the discovery of a new portrait of Queen Elizabeth I . . . . . and the quest for its counterpart!

N.B. this lecture will only be delivered online - not at St. Edward's  
Register for the link with Geraint, no later than Monday, 30th May at:  
[denison-kurg@outlook.com](mailto:denison-kurg@outlook.com)

# *Cathays Cemetery Heritage Trail and Tales*

*Tuesday June 7th 7.00 - 9.00 pm  
Thursday June 9th 7.00 - 9.00 pm  
Sunday June 12th 2.00 - 4.00 pm*



*Three guided walks around Cathays Cemetery meeting some of its notable residents and hearing their tales first hand.*

*Tickets £7.00 per person from [www.a48theatrecompany.com](http://www.a48theatrecompany.com)*

*Presented by Bereavement Services, Living Lines and A48 Theatre Company*



## SOCIETY AND LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

### THE NORWEGIAN CHURCH RE-OPENS



The Norwegian Church in Butetown had a soft re-opening of its doors on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> April. It has been closed since the beginning of the pandemic! After a long wait and lots of fund-raising and applications to write, the transfer of the church to the new charity, Norwegian Church, Cardiff Bay (Registered Charity Number 1195926) is really happening. The Gallery Gift Shop (upstairs in the Dahl Gallery) will have about 11 local crafters showcasing their made-by-hand creations up until 15<sup>th</sup> May (10.30-4.30pm). The café has had some welcome TLC and has a new menu with some Scandi offerings. Come and support this iconic building which in essence is a gift from Norway to Cardiff. Did you know that Norway donated over 1m Kroner in the 1980s to move the church to its current location as well as donating all the wooden cladding of the church? Vestland County (twinned with Cardiff) also donated the terrace (they shipped in the timber and the specialist team to build it). This is currently being renovated. The official reopening of the Church will be the 17<sup>th</sup> May, which is Norway's Constitution Day. A big celebration in Norway's calendar as it represents independence, first as a nation and secondly after occupation in the Second World War. Many Norwegian seaman found refuge in Cardiff during the war and this is remembered with great appreciation by Norwegians. #LovetheNorwegianChurch

### CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR TALENTED EVENTS SECRETARY



Elizabeth Morgan, our Membership and Events Secretary, has just undertaken her first tour in her capacity as a Green Badge Guide. Having studied for the qualification throughout lockdown, her



first tour was accompanying a group arriving by train to visit Cardiff Castle. I am sure we all wish the ever-capable Elizabeth every success in her new venture!

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THE MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR OF HOLMWOOD TERRACE EXPLAINED

**Michael Clemitson**

Thanks to everyone who responded to my question about this in the February newsletter. Holmwood Terrace, a cul-de-sac off Cyncoed Road, and dating from the 1930s, consisted of semi-detached houses, and was not built as a 'terrace'. Later when the two nearby similar post-war cul-de-sacs of Caer Cady Close and Brynderwen Close, were built nearby, one of the Holmwood Terrace residents, the late Renee Minton, 1943-2010, felt that the name 'Terrace' was inappropriate (as it hadn't been built as a terrace), and that it affected property prices. After raising this with the Council, a name change was eventually agreed, and from scrutiny of the entries in the 1980 Electoral Roll, it seems that the name Holmwood Close came into effect in 1979/80, or thereabouts.

### MORE ON PENGAM AERODROME

**John Worth**



I thought the group may find the attached photograph (of Pengam Airport in the 1930s) interesting. Apparently you could fly to Weston and return via Campbell Steamer.

**THE HISTORY OF CARDIFF**  
**-PART FIVE-**  
**Deanne Pickstone**

The second marquess restored many of the Castle's apartments, the Black Tower and the castle's South Gate. It was a prosperous time in Cardiff. In 1848, he died suddenly and his heir was just six months old. Trustees were appointed to oversee the Bute estate.

In 1850, Ely Station was built to service livestock as well as passengers. On what is now Trelai Park was Ely Racecourse. Horses were brought by rail to Ely Station and stabled in Mill Road. The venue was well supported by the local gentry. The Welsh Grand National was held in 1895. Grasshopper won ridden by Keith Piggott, the father of Lester Piggott. It closed in 1939 after a huge fire in 1937. Breweries were built. Ely Brewery was built in 1855 near Ely Bridge. Ely Paper Mill opened in 1865 and was once the largest producer of newsprint in Britain. Later sold, it ceased trading in 1999. Today it is a housing development area. Samuel Chivers opened his Jam and Pickle factory in 1890 employing over 100 people. Sold in 1977, it closed shortly afterwards.

In 1853, the third Town Hall was built with its Palladian frontage in St Mary Street between Quay St and Guildhall Place, so named after the various Guilds who held their meetings in the old Town Hall. It was demolished in 1913. Outside was the Alexander Drinking Fountain donated by William Alexander, Lord Mayor of Cardiff. It is now situated above the underground passageway leading from the City Hall to Kingsway.

Cardiff is well-known for its Victorian Arcades with their diverse and individual shops and cafés. The first to be opened was the Castle Arcade, quite unique with its balcony walkways above the shops. Between the Castle Street entrance and High Street is a Georgian building. The Furniture Maker P. E. Gane had his business above the present Welsh Souvenir shop in Castle Street. The small wooden chair in the our dining room was purchased from there by my Great Grandparents, Joseph and Fanny Hart. The chair has a brass plaque showing the firm's name. Tradition has it that the chair is passed to the eldest granddaughter. In the 1881 Census, Roger

Ashton, my Great Grandfather, had a Fishmongers business in the Castle Arcade.

The Royal Arcade was built in 1856 with living accommodation above the shops. The Morgan Arcade opened in 1884. Facing the passageway which connects the two arcades are two little doors which lead into the Tabernacle Church graveyard. The Tabernacle on the Hayes opened in 1865. Wally's shop has its café above. If you look out of the landing window, one can see into the graveyard. Duke Street arcade opened in 1902. High Street and Wyndham arcades are late Victorian. The Dominican and Andrews arcades are Edwardian.

There were a number of fashionable and elegant streets in the centre of Cardiff. Charles Street had elegant houses, prosperous residents and a number of religious buildings. The Quakers opened their Meeting House in 1838 and the present day one in 1888. The English Congregational Church was built in 1885. Facing it is St David's Roman Catholic Cathedral which opened in 1887. In nearby Guildford Street, the present Masonic Hall was originally built for the Methodists in 1868, while on the corner of Churchill Way the French gothic chapel of the Welsh Calvinist Methodists opened in 1878. It is now a restaurant. One of the residents of Charles Street was John Batchelor who lived in number 10. Elected as a Street Commissioner, he petitioned for the implementation of the Public Health Act, proposing a proper sewage system for Cardiff. It was rejected as too costly. The Bachelor Brothers built and repaired ships, and also had a profitable timber business. However, in 1854, one of his ships carrying timber was refused entry to the West Dock on the grounds that it was too large. In 1857 the Bachelors were forced to quit their timber yard and moved to Stuart Street. Here they established their shipbuilding and repair business. However, the Bute Trustees leased a plot of land which silted up the entrance to the Bachelors' Graving Dock. Bachelor objected publicly to what he called the "Bute Domination". The Courts ordered the Trustees to remove all obstructions.

In 1865 John Bachelor became a leading figure in the formation of the Penarth Dock and Railway Company. The Bute Trustees opposed it, as they said it took trade away from their Cardiff

monopoly. A similar situation happened to David Davies who went on to open the Barry Graving Dock.

Later in 1870 John Batchelor became Chairman of the School Boards for Cardiff and Penarth. In 1872, the *Ella Nichol* was the last ship built at Bachelors' Yard and was bought by Edward Nichol. John Bachelor died in 1883. His cortege was led by the Mayor and thousands lined the streets. His statue was unveiled on 16th October 1886 with the Epitaph "The Friend of Freedom".

Windsor Place, named after the first marquess of Bute's wife, Charlotte Windsor, was and still is a tree lined street with elegant brick-built houses, now converted into offices. Demolished in 1957, there was the huge Jewish Synagogue. Nearby, the Presbyterian Church was built in 1866 and now is the City Reformed Church. St Andrews Crescent was named after the Anglican Church in its centre. Today it is the site of the Welsh Dewi Sant Church.

Park Place was so named as it overlooked Cathays Park. It was regarded as Cardiff's most elegant road, and its most famous building was Park House designed by William Burgess. Today it is a restaurant. Those houses which have not been demolished are either offices or part of Cardiff University. At one time the BBC occupied premises facing the Museum

In 1861 came the Public Libraries Act. However the old Central Library in Trinity Street was not opened until 1882. On the top of its south facade overlooking the Hayes is a stone head of the Pallas Athene. A second library was built at a cost of £30,000 in the mid 20th century, but with the development of St David's Centre it was demolished and the present library built in Mill Lane. The Philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie donated £10,000 towards the building of the Canton and Cathays libraries, and the latter is now a Heritage library.

The houses against the castle's South Wall were demolished in 1862. The South Wall ramparts were restored and a covered walk with arrow slits built. The animal wall was erected in 1868.

In 1863, Solomon Andrews, a remarkably versatile entrepreneur, purchased his first hansom cabs as Cardiff's suburban population grew. He had come to Cardiff originally in 1850, and first hawked sweets on a wooden tray in the streets. He later had Grocery and Ironmongery shops, a Furniture Removal business and a Funeral business in City Road with its offices on the corner of The Parade. In 1873 he bought an omnibus. Cardiff Corporation awarded him five Omnibus licences. Soon he began to build and repair omnibuses. In 1882 he registered a Patent. Today in City Road one can still see the premises of S. Andrews and Sons.

In 1902 Cardiff Corporation became responsible for Public Transport. In 1904 there were 131 Electric trams servicing Cardiff town and its suburbs. From 1911 to 1941 the Council operated a local parcel service with boys delivering packages by tram to Distribution depots all over Cardiff. The Hayes Island Snack Bar is the last survivor of these depots. The last trams ran in 1949.

Retail played an important role in Cardiff's development. James Howell opened his first shop in the Hayes in 1865, and in 1867 the premises in St Mary Street with its huge display windows was opened. Later the Bethany Chapel, the site of Rawlins White's massacre, was purchased and incorporated into the store. However, some of the chapel pillars can still be seen in the store today, and the chapel outline can be seen prominently on the second floor; at the time of writing there is a proposal to restore more of the chapel as a feature for a retail and leisure development. Later, James Howell built a mansion in West Grove. The Mansion House, as it is now called, became the official residence of Cardiff's Lord Mayors.

David Morgan opened his store in 1879 and also built the Morgan Arcade. If one looks to the rooftops of both stores you can see the living quarters where staff members were housed in Victorian times. Queen Street was an important shopping area. On the corner with Kingsway was Evan Roberts where one went for school uniforms. Alongside it was Marments, with its pillared facade, while opposite was Mackross (later Alders) and the Arcade. Seccombes, which backed on to Crockerherbton Lane, was further along Queen Street. Opposite Seccombes was Littlewoods, now Next, and slightly

further along was Woolworths, which became BHS and is now Primark. It is still a main shopping area, but Marks and Spencer is the last of the original shops. Like today, there were a number of cafés in Queen Street, including the Dutch Cafe, the Kardommah, and the elegant Carlton Cafe on the corner of The Friary with Queen Street. The day before it was bombed my mother and I had lunch there.

Until the Education Act of 1870, schooling was rather inadequate in Cardiff. Wakeford's Directory for 1863 listed private schools in Charles Street, Windsor and Dumfries Place. Howell's School for Girls was opened in 1859 when Parliament decided that the 16<sup>th</sup> charity founded by Thomas Howell should be redeployed. Llandaff Court, built in 1744 for Admiral Thomas Mathew, later became in 1850 the Bishop's Palace, and in 1880 it became the present Cathedral School for Boys. There were some church schools, including St John's School in Crockherbtown, the Wesleyan schools in Working Street, the Anglican St Mary's in Bute Street, St Monica's in Cathays and St Anne's in Roath. By 1875 National schools had opened in Canton, Cathays and Roath. Two Roman Catholic schools, St Peter's in Roath and St Patrick's in Grangetown also came into being.

The first board school was opened in Eleanor Street, Butetown in 1878 followed by others: Radnor; Stacey; Albany; Severn, of which my relative William Ashton became headmaster; and Marlborough Road, where my mother Iris Lyons née Bowhey attended. I went to Roath Park in Penywain Road during WWII. Gladstone in Cathays opened 1899.

Maindy Barracks opened in 1871, so called as it was built on the land of Maindee Farm. The Regiment fought in the Boer War and 200 men were killed. Between the City Hall and the Law Courts is the War Memorial to their dead.

*Continued in June's Edition.*

## GET IN TOUCH



For general society enquiries, newsletter submissions and to request loans from the R.L.H.S. Archive, contact:  
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