



AutumnNewsletter

2009

THE PRESIDENT WRITES

Within this newsletter members will be able to read interesting accounts of the wide range of activities and work in which the RISW has been actively involved.

Newsletter format: Council trust that members will be happy with the A5 format which will be an experiment for the next three issues. Two main advantages are the lower cost for printing and also for packing and posting. Members are welcome to write to me with any views they wish to express.

Council Meetings: Members have expressed a wish to know what matters are discussed at Council Meetings. A brief summary will be found elsewhere in this Newsletter. Since this item was written Council have purchased a painting of St. Peter's Well Chapel in Caswell Bay by Alfred Parkman (1890) a well-known local artist.

RISW Notice Board: We are grateful to Gareth El-Tawab, Curator, in agreeing to designate a section of an existing notice board for exclusive use by the RISW. The board will be headed –“Royal Institution of South Wales - Friends of Swansea Museum”.

Installation of Lift: Work is scheduled to commence on the 4th August and the installation should be completed by the 4th November. There will be some disruption within the museum but it is hoped that this will be kept to a minimum. Members are asked to be patient as this facility will be of great benefit for visitors with limited mobility.

Gerald Gabb: on his retirement from the Museum Staff members will wish to express their great appreciation of the work that Gerald has undertaken both within the museum and for the wider community. Fortunately he will continue to be a valued member of our Council.

Arts Council of Wales: I am pleased to report that an application for funding for work with young people was successful. The sum awarded was £3,800 and this will supplement monies already allocated by the RISW in funding the very successful Work Shops which Gerald Gabb has so successfully organised.

David Jenkins, Treasurer: I am very grateful to David for agreeing to be our Treasurer. He is well versed in financial and other matters and his contribution to the RISW will be greatly appreciated.

As the summer holiday season approaches may I wish you all a restful and refreshing time. *Lyndon Morris*

LECTURE REVIEWS

12th March 2009

ERNEST JONES AND FREUD'S MISSION TO THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD:

by Mr Chris Hill, who has been involved in publishing specialised psychoanalytical works

Sigmund Freud's links with Swansea and the life of his friend and biographer Ernest Jones were explored in Chris Hill's lecture. Dr Ernest Jones (1879 - 1958) was born and brought up in Gowerton and retained his links with Swansea and Gower to the end, becoming a founder member of the Gower Society and regularly holidaying in his cottage in Cheriton. The speaker considered that Jones' Welsh cultural background had inspired him in his later work and also contributed to his involvement with European culture and its minorities. He had been a member of Plaid Cymru in the 1920s, and had also studied Welsh history which he was able to compare with Jewish history, providing him with an affinity for Sigmund Freud's Jewish background. From his family's home at 'Woodlands', Gowerton, he travelled with his father as far as Lisbon, and then attended Llandoverly College and the University College Medical School at Cardiff, moving on to University College London in 1898. In 1905 he first read some of Freud's work, which impressed him as being written by 'a man who listened to every word his patients said to him' - at that time a rarity in medical work. This led to Jones' personal interest in psychoanalysis, and in the great man himself. He first met Freud in 1908 at a conference in Salzburg and soon formed a close working relationship with him which was

to lead in due course to Jones' monumental biography of Freud (1500 pages), which has been described as much "a monument to Ernest Jones as to Sigmund Freud". After many years working in America and promoting Freud's work and stature, Jones returned to London in 1938. He was just in time to arrange and undertake the rescue of the great man from almost certain death in Nazi-dominated Vienna. Chris Hill had commented in his opening remarks that it was a sad thing that the fiftieth anniversary (1958 - 2008) of the death of Ernest Jones, disciple, biographer (and saviour) of Sigmund Freud, had lately passed almost un-noticed.

9th April 2009

ARCHAEOLOGY IN SWANSEA SINCE 2000.

By Dr Edith Evans and Mr Neil Maylan, of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust

This well-illustrated presentation by two senior members of the Swansea-based Trust provided us with a comprehensive overview of the work of their organisation and of recent discoveries in local archaeology. The Trust, which is one of several set up across Wales in the 1970s, undertakes excavation and recording of sites and structures of historical and/or archaeological interest where these are likely to be damaged or destroyed by modern developments, whether large or small.

The Trust is consulted as part of the processing of planning applications, and, where necessary, archaeological work is made a condition of planning permission, the cost being then borne by the development. The aim is to avoid damage to our heritage,

but when this is unavoidable, full records of what is to be lost are made and published. The Trust also carries out emergency work when sites are discovered accidentally, and it has recently recorded on the beach near Brynmill details of a prehistoric track made of brushwood hurdles radio-carbon dated to around 2,000 B.C.

The newly-discovered Roman site at Church Hill in Gower (initially found by our member Mrs Philippa Grove) was excavated in 2008 by a consortium involving the Trust and has already yielded much Roman pottery and building debris. In central Swansea the Trust has carried out extensive work in Princess Way in advance of the new block which has replaced the David Evans store, and this revealed the western ditch of Swansea Castle, as well as traces of four medieval burgage plots, once part of houses fronting Goat Street. A large area of the early town near Salubrious Place, Wind Street, was also excavated prior to development and has produced evidence for the town defences having been extended into this area.

Amongst further areas of archaeological potential with which the Trust has an involvement are the site of the former Cambrian Pottery in the Strand, the Hafod Copper Works, land between High Street and The Strand, and Swansea Castle itself, which extended far beyond the present ruins.

Bernard Morris

LUNCH TIME TALKS 2009

Revd Andrew Vessey ; Rector of St. Mary's Thursday 5th March

Revd Andrew Vessey kindly rescheduled his talk to accommodate the commitments of the First Minister who had originally planned to speak on this date. Under the title "Is there a role for a City Centre Church?" he outlined the importance of communication and of partnership in listening and learning which are as significant in civic life in this city of diversity as in the life of the Church. In the confusion which city life causes for many people the Church may offer an oasis of quietness. He explained that St. Mary's Church is part of the Benefice of 5 churches which include Christchurch on Sandfields, St. Mark and St. John, and St. Matthew's in High Street. He said that St. Mary's Church is 45 miles from Brecon Cathedral and in many ways functions as a Pro-Cathedral or as an alternative to the life of the Cathedral. The congregation commutes fairly long distances so the church is geographically disconnected from its membership. It offers ministry to some of the most vulnerable in society such as asylum seekers and students away from home and often away from their own country. Part of the church's diversity is in its music and art which while enjoyed by large numbers of people still only caters for a minority in the city. Revd. Vessey spoke of the ecumenical responsibility within the Christian churches of working together on behalf of the poor and marginalised and the importance of sustainability of the environment in the planning for the church. He explained the breadth of the

ministries involved in St. Mary's College within the Prison Service, hospitals, Hospice, University and the Port Authority; responsibilities also include Disability Issues, the Welsh Community and Welsh language, the Arts and the Theatre. Revd Vessey pointed out that when he arrived at St. Mary's in 2005 there were 5 full time ministers working within the 5 churches of the Benefice and now there were only 3 each of whom was responsible for their own Church as well as sharing community responsibilities. He concluded by saying that the Church is here to point beyond the "now" to enable the city's political vision, architectural imagination and cultural expression to be seen within an even bigger picture.

The Rt Hon Rhodri Morgan AM First Minister for Wales; Friday 20th March

The First Minister recalled his early childhood staying with his grandparents in Swansea and remarked that over the past 70 years the city had gone from blitz to glitz. There had been eight or nine significant changes in Swansea since the blitz. Some had been successful and others not so good. Swansea University was one big success having received more funding over the past seven years than ever before. Universities were often not very good at realising the commercial potential of research but Swansea University has capitalised on this with the new Life Science Centre having received £52 million of investment from IBM and the Nano Health Unit. He went on to say that the city has the right ingredients to become a 21st century place-to-be, and should take advantage of the close proximity of the

waterfront to the city. Plans to redevelop parts of Swansea City centre in conjunction with developers Hammersons are not at the finance stage yet but Swansea is in a unique position to link SA1 development to the city in a way that Cardiff could not. Urban tourism and city breaks have become popular and Swansea has greater potential than any other city in the UK. The beaches are incredible and whilst not advocating building hotels in the Gower peninsular there are plenty of places in Swansea and along the M4 where such development could take place. He was asked many questions and these he answered in batches. An attentive and interested audience greatly appreciated the fact that the First Minister had made space within his busy schedule to come to Swansea Museum.

Lyndon Morris, President thanking the First Minister for his excellent talk



David Williams – Regeneration Officer, City and County of Swansea

26th March

David Williams' illustrated talk highlighted the various developments which have taken place and those which are ongoing. He made an interesting comparison with how the landscape had previously looked and the present day scene. He explained some of the thinking that had gone on in designing the new developments but recognised that with hindsight plans could have incorporated alternative aspects. Many memories were rekindled seeing the sites as they had looked formerly. He then went on to talk about current changes highlighting the former David Evans site, the retailers already committed to moving in and the upgrading of Oxford Street and surrounding areas with the provision of new paving, lighting and street furniture. The vision for the future is to make Swansea a vibrant, exciting, attractive, sustainable, cultural European Waterfront City Centre. The vision encompasses Paxton Street, St. David's Quadrant, Wind Street, Princess Way, Strand, Sailbridge Site, Parc Tawe, High Street and a European Boulevard. Currently there is an ongoing partnership with Hammersons who will prepare a detailed plan for the redevelopment of St. David's shopping area, the Quadrant, Tesco's current site and Parc Tawe. This is an ambitious programme which will revitalise the city centre. Although the present economic situation is not helpful there is no reason why this vision should not be a reality in the not too distant future.

**Iwan Davies – Head of Culture and Tourism Services,
City and County of Swansea**

Thursday 2nd April

The audience was pleased to hear the speaker emphasise the opportunities and rich quality of life offered in Swansea by its unique location having the waterfront, city centre and the nearby attractions of the Gower peninsula. For these reasons the city attracts 4 million visitors each year who contribute £278 m to the local economy. The Special Events team organise events like the Shakespeare productions in Oystermouth, the Parties and Proms in the Park, the Summer Festival and Winter Wonderland which draw in nearly ½ m people. Ongoing attractions are the Grand Theatre, Dylan Thomas Centre and of course Swansea Museum itself which alone had over 150,000 people visiting last year. Mr. Davies stressed the importance of the leisure centres and sports pitches to foster good health and talent in young people and fitness and fun for adults. Parks and gardens in the area attracted over 16m people and there are ongoing plans for continuing renovation of these facilities. The National Pool, run in partnership with the University together with the Sports Village, where the hockey pitch is the only one in Wales which is of European standard. The Liberty Stadium is a recent development and the new Central Library, with 1/2m users last year is worthy of particular praise. The City Council is proud of the large numbers of national awards for its parks and gardens as well as for the beaches and aims to be a City of Distinction by 2020. *Lyndon Morris*

ANNUAL SUMMER OUTING – THURSDAY 4TH JUNE 2009

Visit to National Wool Museum and Carmarthenshire County Museum

Eirwen Davies' suggestion to visit the National Wool Museum was an inspired choice. The weather was pleasantly warm and our group of 31 arrived in good time at the Welsh Wool Museum to enjoy a cuppa and a brief stroll around the site prior to the tour. The three guides gave a very interesting account of the history of the wool museum and the surrounding area and a detailed demonstration with the huge working machinery of how the wool was processed from the shearing of the sheep through the various stages of washing, tossing, combing, spinning, weaving and dyeing the wool before the product was finished. The cafeteria provided a range of freshly made sandwiches panini, soup and cakes and we then had a little more free time to stroll around the site. All staff members were friendly, helpful, well informed which made for a very pleasant and enjoyable visit.

It was soon time to move on as arrangements had been made for us to visit the Carmarthenshire County Museum, Abergwilli. Here we were greeted by Gavin, Curator, who gave us a brief history of the lovely house and its former occupants and the exhibits on display. Within the museum there were paintings, china, war time memorabilia, a Victorian class room, archaeology gallery, etc. Outside there were pleasant grounds to walk around. At least one member was engrossed with the

curator identifying family and friends from a collection of old photographs with the promise of further contact.

The group appreciated the expert driving, friendliness and help provided by our driver Linda who contributed to an excellent day. Our gratitude and thanks to Eirwen for making the arrangements with both museums, taking responsibility for our bookings and making it such an enjoyable day. *Lyndon Morris*

SOCIAL COMMITTEE NEWS

Our Spring into Summer social evenings are always popular so once again the Lecture Room was pleasantly full. This year we enjoyed a recital by a group of very talented musicians, Delyth Holland, Paul Brophy, Tim Soar and Barbara Brennan, who played a variety of lovely music on a range of different recorders. The ambience of the room combined with the music transported us all back to more elegant times. Our thanks and best wishes go to these very gifted musicians. Then it was time for our refreshments which were as plentiful, tasty and attractive as ever. Our very successful evening attracted new members and raised £372 for our funds.

Without our hardworking and generous Social Committee these events could not happen so our sincere thanks go to them for all their willing and generous help throughout the year. The Museum Staff are always most helpful and cooperative on these occasions and we appreciate all that they do to ensure these events to go smoothly.

Christine Morris

WINTER PROGRAMME

More accurately - the Autumn, Winter and Spring Programme - so we hope it will help to shorten the passage of time between this summer 'recess' and the next with its nine lectures, three social occasions, and our AGM. The 2008 - 2009 session, including the lunch-time lectures and the excursion to the Drefach woollen mill museum, was very well supported by our members, and we look forward to the same again for the coming session.

For the period up to Christmas we begin on the 10th September with a speaker noted for his knowledge of former gentry estates around Swansea, based both on the documentary evidence and from personally walking the ground. Mr Jeff Childs has researched the story of the Penllergare Estate for the Trustees of the Penllergare Trust, which is actively engaged in restoring and encouraging public access to the open countryside within the Dillwyn Llewelyn demesne. The form 'Penllergare' is retained by the Trust, as it is the old spelling used by the family- and also distinguishes the mansion from the village which uses the name 'Penllergaer'.

Then, on 8th October, Mr Tom Lloyd, architectural historian and author of *The Lost Houses of Wales*, as well as one of the three joint authors of the *Buildings of Wales* volumes covering the south western counties of Wales, will be coming to us, to speak on some of the buildings included in those volumes. He is also an authority on William Jernegan and other noted architects of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Our President's Invitation Lecture is always an important event in our calendar, and this year the focus will be on the vital issue of sustainability. The speaker will be Mr Peter Davies, Commissioner for Wales, U.K., Sustainable Development Commission and we can look forward to a very informative and authoritative evening.

Finally in this review of the pre-Christmas events, on 10th December we will be enjoying Christmas refreshments and this will be preceded by one of Mr Raymond Walker's gentle lectures to which he has given a very intriguing title.

Soon after Christmas the papers for our AGM on the 28th January will be sent out (to paid-up members), together with our next Newsletter and this will include some comments on programmed events in 2010.

Bernard Morris

TREASURER TALK

Perhaps I should start by introducing myself as I have been a member of the RISW for a relatively short time.

My name is David Jenkins, and I have lived in Southgate since 1969. I am a trustee of three other charities locally most notably the Gower Festival Society.

I took over from Lyndon in February this year and have just finalised preparing the accounts for our accountant. They will prepare our statutory accounts in time for the AGM in January

David Jenkins

HISTORY PROJECT

Updating the history of The Royal Institution of South Wales has been a wish of the Council for sometime. There is already a publication covering the history of the RISW up until 1935. The focus of the current project will be the period from 1935 up to the present date.

Three Council members are advisers – Andrew Dulley, Gerald Gabb and Marilyn Jones. The research for the project will be headed up by three Team Leaders who will cover the following periods – Peter East leading the research for the period September 1935 to 1961, Robert Leonard leading the research for the period September 1961 to 1986 and Vernon Williams from September 1986 to 2009.

The initial stage of the research is to identify significant developments in the evolvement of the RISW, individuals who have held office and those who have an extensive knowledge of the RISW. This information will be obtained from Journals, Annual Reports and Council Minutes etc.

The next stage will be to interview identified individuals. After the information has been collated further thought will be given as to the most appropriate way this information should be recorded so that it can be made available to a wider audience.

As the History Project progresses Council will be kept fully informed and reports will be included in the Newsletter.

Members will appreciate that this is a major piece of work and Team Leaders are already thinking about who might assist with the project in the initial stages. If you are interested would you please let me know and give an indication about how you think you could assist and I will pass on names to the Team Leaders.

Lyndon Morris

R.I.S.W. COUNCIL MEETINGS

The R.I.S.W. Council meet each month and the following matters were recently discussed:

Cabaret breakfast set with topographical views of Swansea and Neath – gilding by Thomas Pardoe.

These items were to be auctioned at Bonham's and the Museum was keen to make a bid and the V & A were willing to provide support. Your Council also agreed to support this bid and it was successful. This set will be displayed in the museum.

Equal Opportunities Policy and Child Protection Policy – Council approved both policies which demonstrate good practice and will facilitate future applications for grants from funding bodies..

RISW Website – Council agreed that future editions of the Newsletter should be posted on the website.

Grant Murray painting of Bryn Gwas Farm, Cilonnen 1933est This painting was listed for sale and Council agreed to support a bid. It was purchased at auction and the cost covered from a bequest. It will be framed and displayed on stairs.

Hand rail on front steps of Museum – after representations City Council are hopeful to erect a hand rail.

Links with the Swansea Civic Society – a suggestion from the Civic Society to work more closely together and hold joint events was fully discussed. Council concluded that the core function of each Society is very different and there were already sufficient links between both societies and there would be little to gain from agreeing to the suggestion.

Installation of Lift at Museum – work is scheduled to commence on Aug 3rd and to be completed by 4th Nov. There will some disruption for visitors, meetings etc but it hoped this will kept to a minimum

The following matters were also discussed by Council and reported elsewhere in this Newsletter:

RISW History Project; Social Committee Events: Annual Outing; Youth Workshops and application for funding;

Lyndon Morris

10th July 2009

SWANSEA HISTORY JOURNAL (MINERVA)

The Journal will be launched later than usual this year, at the RISW Book Fair in November – but still in time for Christmas presents! This delay is, of course, due to the installation of a much-needed lift in the museum.

The new edition features a major illustrated research article on the Swansea Cabaret Set, a recent and beautiful addition to the museum's ceramic collection. Other topics include the Social History of a Postcard which demonstrates how much history can be inadvertently packed into a few lines, the daughters of Pascoe St.Leger Grenfell, the marine artist Charles Dixon and some very interesting local scenes he painted, the engineer and entrepreneur Louis Gustave Mouchel, the extraordinarily heroic career of a remarkable native of Mumbles, and the museum memoirs of Gerald Gabb, who retires from over 25 years as Education Officer during which time he has welcomed hundreds of thousands of schoolchildren to the museum. And that is not all!

Don't forget to order your copy using the special members' order form, which will save you £1 off the usual price, and you can order extra copies for presents at the same price.

Jenny Sabine.

MUSEUM NEWS

Swansea Museum will be partially closed to the public from the beginning of August, possibly through to the beginning of November to allow a passenger lift to be installed.

I am still hopeful that at the same time we will be able to alter the public toilet arrangements to ensure they are equally accessible for all our visitors.

It is hoped that throughout the contract period the library, education room and temporary exhibition gallery will be open. There may be the odd day when it will be really noisy and we will have to close and staff will also evacuate the building.

The exhibition entitled Crime and Punishment is now open and will stay open up to the end of the year. Many thanks to everyone who has helped with the research for this exhibition.

The Swansea Pottery cabaret set is now on display in the new acquisitions case – without the support of the RISW, Victoria and Albert & Museums, Libraries and Archives Purchase Fund and Art Fund the purchase would not have been possible. Conservation work on the set was completed with the aid of a grant from CyMAL.

The museum held a thank you party for all its volunteers in July, a great opportunity for friends old and new to mingle and exchange their experiences of working with staff. It was also an opportunity to celebrate Olga, the Bristol Channel Pilot Cutter's centenary.

A new member of staff joined the team in May – Matthew Senior; as Assistant Maritime Technician. Matthew has been sailing the oceans for the last 11 years

and finally made the decision to return to his roots in Swansea. Matthew has successfully captained Olga to win her first race at the Bristol Channel Pilot Cutter's race meeting in Milford Haven.

Two longstanding members of staff Fred Evans, Maritime Technician and Gerald Gabb, Senior Education Officer will both be retiring this summer. Swansea Museum owe them both a huge debt for all their hard work and dedication over the years – they will be sorely missed – but hopefully will return from time to time to advise and mentor.

Staff have attended a wide range of seminars and course to promote continuous professional development and keep the museum's standards benchmarked with national guidelines. From Pod casting for Museums to the Social History Curators conferences – our thanks to CyMAL for grants to support these learning opportunities.

Lots of change in the months ahead but lots of opportunities over the summer months to take the museum forward!

Gareth El-Tawab

MUSEUM WORKSHOPS

The Museum has been full of activity these last few months. At Easter our "Heritage Huts" took shape – they were decorated in a series of workshops held then and in May. At the time of writing, one hut is in Oystermouth Library, and then both go to the Civic Centre Central Library on 28th July for a month. Adult Learners Week in May was a great success, with pottery, spinning, weaving and felt-making in the museum, and an art class at the

Collections Centre at Landore – if you missed it last year, look out for May next year.

“Stick him in the Stocks” was the name of the sessions run by Rhiannon Morgan in conjunction with our Crime & Punishment exhibition at the end of July.....and I am currently looking forward to the guided walk around Penllergare on 25th. Then August there is a display and workshops with Swansea Comics Collective....and MAST.

The RISW has been very important in making sure all this fun and learning goes on – it brings life to the place. This is especially true with regard to MAST – Making Art in the Summer Time. We bring in professional artists to work with groups of 11 to 19 year olds for 5 whole days. After a look at the display galleries, they get their ideas together as a group and produce two and three dimensional work, including film. This age-group does not visit museums readily, but MAST has the sort of reputation which makes it fill up very quickly. The Royal Institution funded the Easter MAST, and then took the lead in a four way partnership to apply for an Arts Council grant – and succeeded. It gives us enough money to run sessions in August (a fortnight), two weekends in the Autumn, two next spring, and a week at Easter halfterm!

(From the end of August I shall be retiring as Museum Education Officer; it will be quite a break – I have been here since 1983 I have been exceptionally lucky to have

had a job which has given me so much. I will still be concerned in RI things, though, so you won't be rid of me completely!

Gerald Gabb

IS THIS THE END OF AN ERA?

At the end of August Gerald Gabb will retire from his post of Senior Education Officer in the Swansea Museum Service. I'm sure all members who know Gerald will wish him a long and happy retirement.

Gerald has been the museums' education officer for 26 years, ably assisted until *his* recent retirement by John Upton in the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, and for the last 7 years by Barry Hughes as Assistant Education Officer in Swansea Museum. Thankfully, Barry is not planning to retire any time soon!

While Gerald will remain, we all hope, a member of the RISW for many years more, his retirement marks another break in the long-standing link between the RISW and the museum staff. Since Swansea Council undertook the management of Swansea Museum in 1991, there have always been RISW members on the staff: first Gerald and me, then we were joined by Bernice Cardy and later still by former RISW president Michael Gibbs. Gradually we have all retired: me first, then Michael, then Bernice and now finally Gerald.

Having a member of staff who is also a RISW member has been a help and an advantage to both the museum

and the RISW because, although there are formal meetings and communication between the RISW Council and the Museum Curator, the presence of someone who is familiar with both organisations and can liaise and advise in an informal way has always been invaluable. It would be sad if this excellent link, which has proved so beneficial for both the RISW and the museum, cannot be maintained.

Jenny Sabine.

**THE ROYAL INSTITUTION
ANNUAL BOOKFAIR
ON
SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 14TH
BETWEEN 10AM-4PM**

(Postponed from usual time of year because of
lift installation)

**Material for inclusion in the New Year edition of the
RISW Newsletter must reach the editor by 15th
November 2009, preferably via e-mail to;
marian.funnell@btinternet.com , or by post to ; Mrs
M.Funnell, 6, Hael Lane , Southgate, Swansea, SA3
2AP**