





# The Llandaff Society

## Cymdeithas Llandaf

Founded 1977



Patron: Capt sir Norman Lloyd-Edwards KCVO, CGStJ, RD, LLB, JP (rtd)

2022-3 Future events	Newsletter No 145	AUTUMN 2022	Contact: info@llandaffcity.co.uk
		Ar gael yn y Cymraeg hefyd	
Unless otherwise stated sessional meetings take place in the memorial Hall High street Car Park At 7.00 pm Admission charge £3: Non-members £4 ? Date in September ↓	<h2>DEDICATION OF THE PAULINE GRAINGER RAILINGS</h2> <p>On Wednesday August 24<sup>th</sup>, during a rare rainy break in the dry summer weather, a generous crowd assembled to dedicate the ornamental railings set outside The Pound in memory of The Society's past vice-chair, Pauline Grainger. Our President, Sir Norman Lloyd-Edwards, introduced the Project-Leader, Geoff Barton Greenwood, who read an eulogy to Pauline before asking Diana Lambert, the retired leader of the ladies choir, 'Oriana' to unveil the railings, by dropping the Ddraig Goch to the ground and revealing the memorial plate. Oriana then sang three Tudor songs, beginning with an arrangement for female voices, of "If you Love Me" by Thomas Tallis – a favourite of Pauline's that is symbolically represented in the design of the railings.</p> <p>The design decisions of this project were the work of a Llandaff Society team led by Geoff Barton-Greenwood, comprising Ruth Dow, Jackie Askey and (sadly missed) the late John Bethell. Fabrication was by Jess Phelps of Llandaff Garden Metalwork.</p>		
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September ↓			
QUESTION THE COUNCILLORS			
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> October ↓			
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	Sir Norman Lloyd-Edwards introduces the proceedings and (below) Geoffrey reads the eulogy.		
FRIDAY 11 <sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER ↓			
ARMISTICE COMMEMORATION			
FRIDAY 25 <sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER ↓	Pauline's Brother Michael (Rt) and Cousin Robert Lawrence, with the design team in the rear.		
Talk by Jackie Askey "THE FORGET-ME-NOT CHOIR" for dementia sufferers and their families	In preparation for this event, committee volunteers had also repainted the Lisbeth David railings and the adjacent bollards		
Friday 2nd December ↓			
Annual Dinner Speaker: Baroness Finlay December (date TBA) ↓			
Christmas service In st Michael's chapel			
January	Both of these memorial railings have been installed and adopted by Cardiff Council.		
Dr Chris Turner "The Rebecca Riots"	They are a good example of the Society's work of seeking to promote civic pride in our village city.		
February	We are resisting, with support from the Conservation Area Advisory Group, the growing tendency for them to be used as occasional advertising sites.		
TBA			
March			
Dean Powell "Gwald y gân" (Land of Song).			
April			
TBA			



John Bethell – an appreciation



We are saddened to have lost a dearly loved and respected founder-member of the Llandaff Society in our friend John Bethell, who passed away on May 26<sup>th</sup>, pictured here with Rhian, his eldest grand-daughter.

Having grown up in Newport (and remaining loyal to Newport County FC throughout his life), he and his dear wife Margaret set up home in Vaughan Avenue in 1964. There they raised their family, living out their lives together, deeply rooted in Llandaff for nearly 60 years, until John found himself sadly having to live without Margaret for the last three years of his life.

As is well-known, John bore with distinction the role of Architect to the County of South Glamorgan; leaving his mark around our city in the form of schools, leisure centres, fire stations, law courts, County Hall - and in Llandaff of course (in Cllr Jack Brooks’ day as Council leader), the “lavish” refurbishment of the East Wing at Insole Court to accommodate the Co-operative Development body which caused something of a political storm-in-a-teacup at the time.

The most frequent description people have shared with us of John, is that he was a gentleman - in the best sense of the word – a truly **gentle man**; a man of distinction, yet whose instinct was to avoid becoming the centre of attention.

John and Barbara were devoted to the Cathedral, a devotion that went far beyond their personal worshipping life. With Eric Traherne he looked after the Cathedral Archive before handing over to John Kenyon, with whom he served in the 1980s as a Foundation Governor of the Llandaff City Church in Wales Primary School, with Dean Alun Davies in the Chair. John Kenyon recalls that “John always made quiet and extremely pertinent comments about all aspects of the school, and especially where the buildings were concerned when redevelopment was on the agenda - as one would expect from a former county architect”. He also sat on various internal Cathedral fabric committees chaired by whoever was Dean at the time; and successive clerks found his wise words of great help. It is fair to say that a long line of clergy – right up to our current Chancellor Jan and Precentor Mark – had access to and welcomed, John’s most wise counsel.

The last word perhaps, comes very close to our cover story. John remained fully engaged in Llandaff Society affairs to the very last – always to be relied upon in our sessional meetings to provide a vote of thanks to a visiting speaker, never simply limiting himself to expected politenesses but adding both grace and further depth to our proceedings. His mark is also upon the Pauline Grainger memorial railings, which we have so recently dedicated outside the Pound. As an expert member of Geoffrey’s working group, he contributed massively until just weeks before his death, to the aesthetic evolution of the design. His presence was sorely missed at the dedication ceremony on August 24th.

Our thoughts are with Sue, Andrew and their children, in their loss of wonderful parents and grandparents; a loss in which we share, having lost someone who (notwithstanding his unending devotion to Newport County FC) we will remember as long as memory lasts, as a wonderful Llandavian. (JP-M – Ed)

EDITORIAL - Interim Chairman, John Prior-Morris

It seems appropriate, as our AGM approaches, to give a resumé of what your committee has and has not achieved during the course of the year.

The year began with the resignation from the leadership, after eighteen years, of Geoff and Jenny Barton-Greenwood, and my election as interim Chairman in the absence of any alternative candidate. It was a precarious time for the Society, with other officers feeling the need to be soon relieved of their duties. My declared aim was (and remains) to fill this role only on an interim basis, the main priority being to find a successor better able to carry us through the twenties. There was also at the time, a felt need to find successors for the roles of Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

Whilst I cannot yet report success in the search for a new occupant of the Chair, I can report a stay of execution when it comes to Officer-Posts. Jenny’s position of Secretary remains unfilled. However, one of her previous roles, the planning of speakers for the sessional meetings, has been taken on by Alun Morgan, while I deal with the correspondence, and editing this newsletter. I am grateful to Donna Howard for remaining at her post as our treasurer, and Gaynor and Alun Morgan are soldiering-on; Gaynor as Membership Secretary and Alun – (*pethau Cymraeg* and Talks planning). Your committee is also fortunate to have the continuing benefit of Geoffrey’s experience, as an active and energetic Vice-President.

Some progress has been made in bringing new blood into the committee’s work.

We have co-opted **Norma Jarboe**, the previous Director of Cardiff Marketing (Bridge Street), retired solicitor **Alun Rees** (Cardiff Rd), and **Henry Jones**, the youthful tech-savvy new owner of St Cross.

In addition to these committee-members, others; namely David Smith, Richard Dawson, Ruth Dow, Bee Norris, Sian Griffiths and Blodwen Lewis are offering help with projects that do not involve taking on committee-membership.



Alun Rees



Norma Jarboe



Henry Jones

We have made progress the on the bi-lingual front, thanks to Dafydd and Meri Griffiths (Greenwood Road), who are now providing us with a professional-standard complimentary translation service, and keeping us up to the mark on this front. We are most grateful to them, and we hope our Welsh-speaking members appreciate this service which might otherwise have been unaffordable for our small society.

We continue to be able to punch above our weight in the scrutiny of, and commentary on, what used to be called “planning” but which now uses the more defensive term “Development Control”, which is itself something of a sign of the times. Our deputy chair, Kay Powell leads on this and brings the authority of her distinguished professional career in this field to bear on your behalf. You will see from her report below that hers will be another hard act to follow.

I am sorry to have to report that sadly we have lost the services of our minute-taker, Rosemary Scadden, who has had to retire on health grounds. Llandaff’s thanks are due to Rosemary for her service not only to this committee but also her untiring work over many years in the Friends of Insole Court’s campaign. I am grateful to Sheelagh Lloyd-Jones for volunteering to take this task on, and she is easing herself into this role.



## “PLANNING NATTERS” - by our planning consultant, KAY POWELL

I will be giving my usual overview report to the AGM on the year, but in the meantime you may like to know that... The Representative Body of the Church in Wales (RB) applied for permission to demolish the garage on Court Lane at the rear of “St Andrew”, one the splendid Grade 2 Listed Minor Canonries fronting High Street, and replace it with a new gateway plus parking bays and large tarmacked turning area in the back garden. However this is a very sensitive location, with access from Court Lane alongside the Bishop’s Palace, so the Society’s Committee agreed to object to the proposal. We suggested a smaller and less intrusive scheme. Pleasingly, the Representative Body responded by amending its plans accordingly, and these have now been approved. We hope that comprehensive renovation of St Andrew will follow.

The historic name “St Andrew” had disappeared some time ago, when the gate was renewed, and since historic names are not protected by conservation area rules, we have been fearful that the name might disappear forever. We approached the RB with our concern that it should be reinstated before any sale; and with their agreement we have had a new oak name-plate carved to match its neighbour “St Cross”, by Mr Dave Povey of the Cardiff Woodworking Club and it is now happily installed on the gate.

We are also delighted to hear that the RB is now to place a covenant on the house preserving its name.



**The Llandaff Conservation Area Advisory Group** –comprising individuals from the various bodies interested in protecting and enhancing our three Conservation Areas - is the only one left operating in the City. It used to be attended by a City Conservation Officer but budget cuts have meant that has not happened for many years. Our group is chaired by one of our Ward Councillors, with Greg Owens as our very diligent Secretary. New Councillor Peter Jenkins has taken over as Chairman from Philippa Hill-John, and we have resumed meeting face-to-face in Insole Court, having ‘met’ on-line for the last two years. This ensures that a “Llandaff Voice” continues to be heard by City Planning! (Kay Powell)

*[Members may be surprised to learn that there appears to be no protection for traditional or historic house-names in Conservation legislation. Nothing it seems, protects building names enshrined in historic records from being altered in name or language at the whim of owners, whether innocently ignorant, or simply uncaring]. (Ed)*

## COACH TRIP TO BROADWAY - Alun Morgan

On July 28, after a gap of three years, Llandaff Society were back on the road!! The coach trip this time was to the beautiful little Cotswold town of Broadway, and then on to nearby Snowhill Manor & Gardens. Thirty one people punctually boarded the very comfortable coach as it left the Green at 09:05. We arrived in Broadway just before 11:00, staying there for two hours. This gave plenty of time for coffee, looking around the gift and antique shops as well as enjoying lunch in one of the many coffee shops and restaurants.

### Broadway’s High street



The short journey to Snowhill enabled us to have over two hours to explore the Manor and gardens, of the unconventional home of the eccentric Charles Wade, who delighted in creating a stage for his life and passions. We were also able to enjoy refreshments and cake in the Tea Rooms.

The dry and mild weather was ideal for sightseeing and walking the grounds at Snowhill. We left there at 15:30, arriving back in Llandaff at 18:00. Jesmond, our driver, was both very skilled (Driving a large coach on the narrow lanes between Broadway and Snowhill is not easy!) and also most helpful.

The consensus seemed to be that all concerned had enjoyed a varied and interesting day out.



## Snowhill Manor and Gardens – with just one of it's many eccentric interiors



Many thanks to Alun for organising this trip (Ed)

## SESSIONAL PROGRAMME 2023 - Alun Morgan

Members may be interested in the way the sessional programme is taking shape for next year. As always certain months are already earmarked for annual business or long-established social events. These are the summer coach trip in July (venue as yet undecided), the meeting with the two local councillors (September), the AGM (October) and the Christmas Dinner (December). Outside of these three speakers have already agreed to come and speak to the society. These are Dr Chris Turner, who will speak to us in January about the Rebecca Riots. In March, Dean Powell will share his expertise with us in his talk, *Gwald Y Can (Land of Song)*. This will draw on Dean's recent publication, *A Royal Choir for Wales*. The Lisbeth David Lecture for 2023 will be by the great-granddaughter of the 3rd Marquess of Bute, Marietta Crichton Stuart. She will speak about the Bute family in South Wales including her grandfather, who was the Cardiff MP 1910-15. This will take place on April 28th.

I hope the above information is already generating interest. I am confident each of the three lectures will be of very high quality. However, I am also aware that there is a strong historical bias to the programme so far. I hope to be able to secure more of a balance in the coming months. I wish to emphasise that I welcome suggestions for speakers/topics from the members, so please don't hesitate to contact me if anyone comes to mind.

My e-mail address is: [alunmorgan47@gmail.com](mailto:alunmorgan47@gmail.com)

## LLANDAFF 50+ AT THE POUND

The Pound is at 2 Cathedral Close, next to the Bishop's Castle and has been re-purposed and refurbished by Llandaff 50+, to be an Activity Centre for Older People.

A formal ceremony took place in June, when it was opened by Patron, Baroness Finlay of Llandaff. She welcomed supporters from Llandaff Society, Cardiff Council and other local organisations.

The Pound's architect, Carolyn Merrifield; Llandaff 50+'s Chair, Yvonne Apsitis; and Pound Founder and volunteer, Tim Egan, explained the aim, purpose and use of the refurbished building.

Two days later, the doors were opened for the big public celebration. However, it was the Saturday when it poured with rain all day, so only the truly hardy ventured to take the tour, but the volunteers all had a very enjoyable day as there was plenty of cake to go around and good friends to talk to. The event was opened by Councillor Sean Driscoll, and activities were compèred by Llandaff Society's Vice-President, Geoffrey Barton-Greenwood. There were stalls to buy from, a Treasure Hunt to puzzle over, and storytelling from Richard Berry to be heard.

By late afternoon, the rain stopped and there was a spontaneous visit of Welsh folk dancers from Gwyl Ifan, who performed around the medieval cross.



Baroness Finlay opening the Pound



Cllr Sean Driscoll opens the doors for the public celebration, and is welcomed by compère Geoff Barton-Greenwood

The Pound was offered to Llandaff 50+ as a Community Asset Transfer on a 99-year lease. It has taken more than three long years to fully open the building during which there have been many public consultations and lots of community support. It has been funded by: the Welsh government Community Facilities Programme; local Pound Founders' paying £10 a month; and community donations. Delays were caused by the unexpected discovery of a high-status Medieval Hall House beneath the building by Dr Tim Young and a team of volunteer archaeologists, and also by the decision to make the building eco-friendly and sustainable before it was the 'thing to do'!

However, due to the unfaltering professionalism of architect, Carolyn Merrifield of Downs Merrifield Architects, and the hard work of Mike and Garry (and team) from A&N Lewis, the derelict little building has grown into a comfortable and welcoming Centre for Older People. And, now that energy prices are soaring, it can be seen as having been an insightful decision to fit the air source heat pump, heat exchanger, solar slates and panels, light tube, underfloor heating and rainwater harvesting tank. They are all being monitored to gauge their efficiency and savings.



The purposes of Llandaff 50+ charity are: to help prevent loneliness and social isolation in the over 50s, and to promote volunteering opportunities.

It is hoped that The Pound will be a space where those with skills or a passion for a subject, may pass them on to others in the community in a sociable and friendly environment. There are, currently, groups meeting to share Tai Chi, Watercolour Painting, Weekly Talks, and History Research. In addition, there are ‘Heritage Room Volunteers’, a new venture where trained volunteers will help visitors to Llandaff by explaining its history, and telling them what’s where in the village. If you see them outside The Pound, please pop over for a chat. The Pound is an innovative model to test whether ‘older’ people can provide activities for ‘older’ people and is being carefully observed by Welsh Government and Cardiff Council. It’s a place with energy, eco, education and exercise; so The Pound is truly a Centre for the future.

If you would like to volunteer or attend an activity session, you can complete the form available from volunteers in the Heritage Room, contact [info@llandaff50plus.com](mailto:info@llandaff50plus.com) , post to: Llandaff 50+, 2 Cathedral Close, Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2ED, or drop a note into the mailbox. More details are on the website: [www.llandaff50plus.co](http://www.llandaff50plus.co)

[Thanks to 50+ for this article Ed]

DESPITE THE MANY THINGS WE CAN BE PROUD OF, OUR CITY-VILLAGE SHOULD LOOK SO MUCH BETTER

A recent visitor from Canada was heard to remark:  
“It’s picturesque but it needs some TLC”

The Society wishes to press for improvements in the care and maintenance of the historic fabric of our village city.

**Special clean-ups for Royal Visits and occasional emergency capital measures are no substitute for regular maintenance.**

Whilst we are most grateful to His Majesty for the temporary tidiness his visit produced, the return to normal was dramatic. And whilst we pay tribute to the work in the vicinity of the Cathedral done by the voluntary group led by Graham Van-de-Lely, and that of the voluntary litter-pickers recruited by Cllr Driscoll; (not to mention our own committee-efforts) there are limitations to what can be achieved by this kind of voluntary work. In this edition we draw particular attention, to

- the medieval Bishops Palace
- the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Campanile
- the strangely nameless downhill route from the Preaching Cross to Arles Field

**THE BISHOP’S PALACE IN CITY COUNCIL DAYS WAS A SWEET-SMELLING HERB GARDEN, LOVINGLY TENDED**

However, today its planting is degraded, and these doors, though not medieval, are of sufficient antiquity to be valued and looked after; but the iron gates are rusting \* and distorted. The wicket-gate is all but falling apart. Graffiti is tolerated and the hinges and ironmongery are being allowed to rust away.



Wicket gate falling apart



Graffiti unattended



Gate rusting



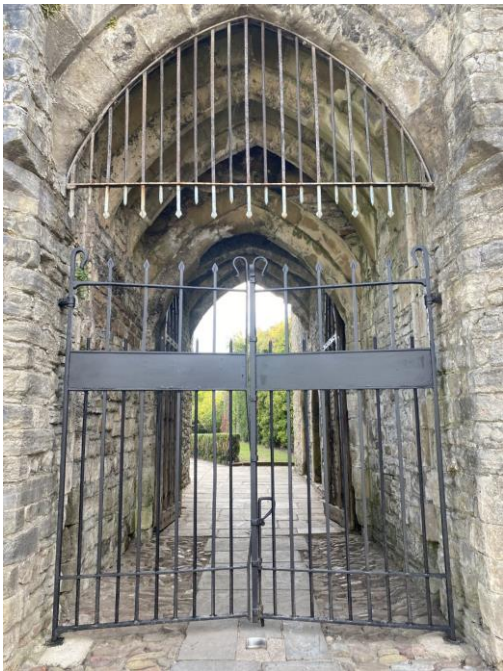
Guardroom and dungeon attract  
litter-infested rubble

Budleia may be attractive to butterflies; but left to grow uncontrolled it can destroy stonework.

Yet no consistent battle is being waged against its rock-busting work amongst our listed buildings and boundary walls.

The fact that it is not ‘scheduled’ under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, may be cited as an excuse, but simply look at this picture and estimate how long it may be before it destroys this centuries-old arch.

*(Answers on a postcard to your Councillors please)*



\*This gate was ‘blacked’ for the Royal visit – but only as high as the man could reach!

Vandalism and graffiti go unchecked.  
The condition of this ancient building shames the City



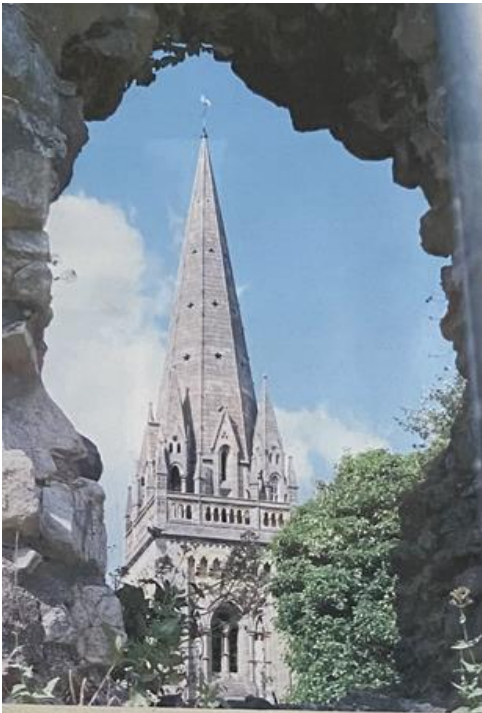
# SIMILARLY WITH THE CAMPANILE



The welcome capital contract undertaken some years ago was never followed up with a programme of annual maintenance, so uncontrolled weed-growth is back with a vengeance. Our committee-volunteers’ repainting of the railings in 2021 had cosmetic value, but the destructive work of buddleia, bramble, ivy and sycamore continues to eat away the structure.

A notice on the western side warns people to beware of falling masonry, while on the eastern side, a padlock preventing children from wandering into the crumbling structure has been removed!

The only obstacle to entry is (as a by-product of this neglect) an overgrowth of rampant and unsightly grasses bindweed brambles and of course the butterfly-frendly but stone-wrecking buddleia.



This popular framing shot



is now denied to photographers by a weed-sycamore.



Another sycamore is near the 75mm girth that gives Conservation Area protection!

It should be remembered that this ancient structure once housed ‘Great Peter’, a 5 ½ ton bell which was sent to Exeter in 1488 at the behest of Jasper Tudor, in exchange for 5 smaller bells to be hung in what then became the “Jasper” Tower. It later became concealed within the “Red Lion Inn”, and when that Inn was pulled down, the campanile was restored to view and conveyed to the City in October 1924 as a War Memorial and “open space for ever”. It should be respected as such and protected against the ravages of time by regular maintenance, not occasional emergency measures.

## THE ROUTE DOWNHILL PAST THE WEST FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL .

This (curiously nameless) road only appears to attract maintenance when a Royal visit is imminent.... as we have just seen – but take a look at the state of the retaining wall on the left, as it slowly crumbles. Does a stone have to bruise a royal foot before this is maintained ?

**“A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE” REMAINS A USEFUL MAXIM. THIS WALL NEEDS MAINTENANCE.**



THE END OF TARMAC  
NO ROYALTY COMES DOWN HERE



# THE ROUTE DOWNHILL PAST THE WEST FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL (Continued)

## At the foot of the hill you need to tread warily in winter.

In earlier times it would have drained naturally into the mill-stream which passed below the Prebendal House on its route from the weir to Llandaff Mill. The stream is now a distant memory, but no replacement drainage arrangements have ever been made; and so the footpath at the bottom end is constantly inundated with run-off rain-water with nowhere to go; accumulating a build-up of muddy soil around the kissing gate into the transpontine graveyard, and rendering the Oak Avenue footpath across Arles Field a slippery quagmire, useless without recourse to wellington boots!

The Arles Field path between the avenue of oak-trees was resurfaced by Cardiff Met after the conversion of the meadow into a football field; but being now a concave rather than a convex surface, water stays on it and it becomes a muddy bog in winter, that walkers have to by-pass making the surrounding grass muddy too. A proper gully and drain is urgently needed to render this area usable by normally-shod pedestrians in wet weather.

*N/B Any suggestion that this might be resolved by routing one of the new paved “cycle super highways” through the Oak Avenue will be resisted by the Society with as much strength as can be mustered.*



## DO YOU HAVE MEMORIES OR STORIES ABOUT LLANDAFF INSTITUTE?

Roger Martin is researching its history, and he asks anyone with information or memories, including stories, events, personalities or pictures they are willing to share, to kindly contact him on 07791 149532



## Bishop June Announces the Next Dean of Llandaff



Bishop June has announced the appointment of the **Rev'd Canon Richard Peers** as the next Dean of Llandaff. Richard is currently the Sub-Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.. We look forward to welcoming Richard and his partner Jim to Llandaff in November.



# ROOKWOOD HOUSE

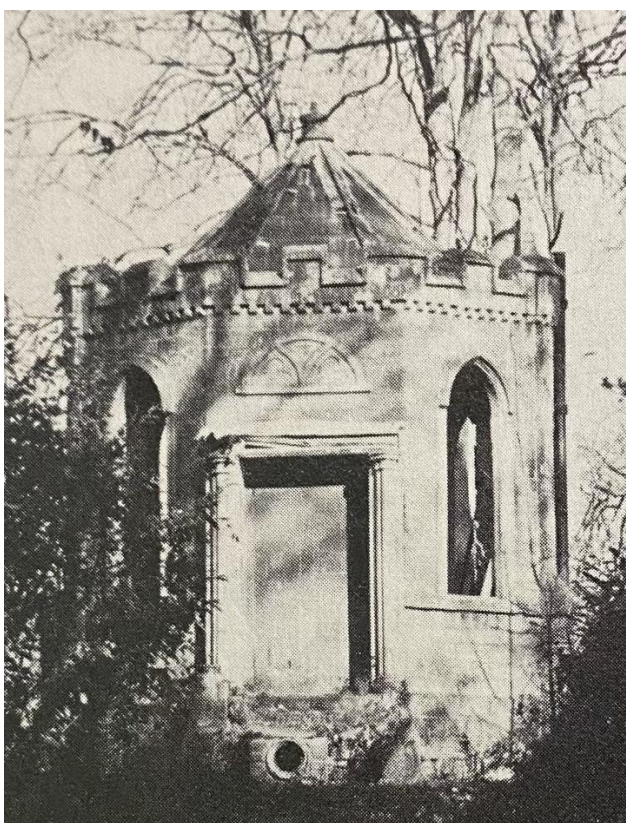
The following was written in the Llandaff Society's publication "Llandaff" in 1996



*"Rookwood house in the 1880's. Built in 1866 by Col Sir Edward Stock-Hill 'near the old summerhouse where Dean Conybeare wrote his sermons'. It was extended in 1881 by John Prichard. Early in 1918 it was taken over as an officers' convalescent home, and after the war was purchased by Sir Lawrence Phillips Bart. MP, and presented to the nation as a home for wounded ex-servicemen for as long as needed, and thereafter for the use of the University of Wales."*

**Most of the Rookwood Hospital site is now scheduled for disposal by the University Health Board. This brings the fate of this fine Victorian house to the foreground of our attention.**

Members who attended Matthew Williams' talk at our sessional meeting in May, will be aware of the importance of this listed house, which is argued to be of far greater architectural integrity than Insole Court. We had hoped that it would be possible for Matthew's talk to have been conducted in the house's chapel, but the degree of withdrawal of staff, seating, and security made that impractical. Subsequently we asked for it to be part of this September's "Open Doors" programme. There was neither refusal nor reply to this application in time for anything to be done, but we live in hope of persuading the Health Authority to allow the Society access in due course before it passes to a developer.



As recently as 1978, John Hilling was able to publish this picture (L) of the "Gothic" Summer House standing in the grounds of Rookwood, without expressing any alarm over its safety.

In 1995, Matthew's Llandaff Society paper *"The 18<sup>th</sup> Century Gothic Summer House"* drew attention to its deterioration, but the work of nature been allowed to continue unabated, to the point at which (pic rt) approaching it today is as formidable a task as would have faced Prince Charming seeking to rescue the Sleeping Beauty with his trusty sword!



We believe it is desirable that Llandaff's 'sleeping beauty' should be saved; and also that an economically viable use be found for Rookwood's historic listed house that would allow some continuing form of public access.

**Anyone with thoughts or potential energies on this subject are invited to contact the Society  
by emailing [info@llandaffcity.co.uk](mailto:info@llandaffcity.co.uk)**