Barmouth Sailors' Institute

(Founded in 1890 by the late Canon EDWARD HUGHES B.A.)

Sailors' Institute, The Quay, Barmouth, Gwynedd, LL42 1ET

Registered Charity No. 1057490

NEWSLETTER ISSUE TWENTY SIX

(Edited & Published by Trevor Roberts)

December 2019



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Reverend Tony Hodges

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Helen Palmer, Rosemary Perry,
Peter Thompson, Alan Vincent.

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Trevor Roberts.

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Chairman's Ramblings

Once again, it's my privilege to introduce newsletter 26.

Within these pages I'm sure you will find some of the articles will bring something new or at least awaken some memories.
In this time of major weather changes with all the gales and rain a few months ago with a beautiful few weeks of sunny days I have reproduced the "The Great Storm "by Tony Iles that was printed 17 years ago. I have also reprinted a story by Les Darbyshire that covered the area in the Mawddach estuary on the left-hand side of the main road just before the Welcome to Barmouth sign.

As promised in newsletter 25 I have managed to have the agreement of our new President the Rev Tony Hodges to allow his profile to be printed. On reading his profile you will note. In the past he has been charged, chased and stalked by Hippos, Elephants and a Lion, but I think his biggest challenge will be attempting to take care of the Institute and its committee. He doesn't know yet what he has let himself in for accepting the position of President ha ha.

In newsletter 25 I said that we were having a major spruce up of the outside of the building. Sadly, the very poor weather in September and October has delayed the contractor in carrying out this work until the new year and hopefully we're now looking to have the work carried out and completed by Easter.

On the next page our Treasurer John Puddle makes an appeal.
Although he is correct in saying that our membership fee of £5 has not been raised for over 10 years and I agree that the committee should give some serious thoughts about increasing the membership fee although I'm not too sure if doubling the fee at a stroke is the sensible way forward remembering your newsletter is self financing through the adverts. The committee will have to look at other savings besides increasing membership fees. Personally, I disagree that smaller increases can't be accommodated easily but by next June your committee will have to make a decision in order that we can give all members via the next newsletter 27, a good 5/6 months' notice of the proposed increase. Of course, when replying to the Treasurer I also ask you all to email your comments to Janet our Secretary at barsail.inst@outlook.com

Finally, my thanks to all our officers who continue to give support to the institute on behalf of our members. All the very best 2020 wishing you all a Healthy and Prosperous New Year

Trevor Roberts

TREASURER'S SOUNDINGS

You may not be aware that the Sailors Institute is losing money because there has not been an increase in subscriptions for over 10 years and that ongoing costs are rising.

In addition the building itself is starting to rust and is in need of restoration at an approximate cost of £4800.

It has been suggested that the increase in subscriptions should be raised from between £5 to £10.

As some members send cash it would be difficult if the amount was between £5-£10 as you cannot send coins through the Royal Mail.

With this in mind I suggest a membership fee of £10.

Would you please send me your thoughts on this matter.

Email: pudej@yahoo.co.uk Tel: 01341280602 or 07734313506

Post: Mynyyd Yr Haul, Ffordd Pentre Mynach, Barmouth, LL42 1EN

Thanks: *John Puddle, Treasurer*





SECRETARY'S MORSEL

Here's hoping you have all had a lovely summer despite somewhat fluctuating weather.

Following on from my report in our Issue 25, summer has been interesting for our Institute.
Unfortunately, the group from Norfolk visiting in September, arrived in Barmouth later than arranged so they had to rush to fit in visiting the Institute, Tŷ Gwyn, the Lifeboat station and lunch before leaving town. There were 25 of them split into three groups. I wasn't able to be on hand to greet them, my thanks to the Committee members who did the honours.

Dr Rita Singer of the RCAHMW had a very good visit to Ysgol -y-Traeth year five and six pupils. So much so that one little boy, asked if she would talk to them again the next day!

Once again, with very many thanks to all our loyal local supporters and some visitors to Barmouth, our Coffee Morning was a success. My sincere thanks to all volunteers baking, donating table top items and raffle prizes, donations from our local Co-op and of course 'David's Angels' for their presence making tea and coffee with others persuading folk to buy raffle tickets. We raised £265 for our funds. Instead of our usual second July Friday slot, the morning had been scheduled to the 25th. to coincide with the launch of the WW1 U-Boat project panels. They proved to be interesting. We had four in the Institute Reading Room and Allison kindly had six in the Dragon's Arts Room. She also projected the four short films associated with the panels, at various events.

In September I attended a follow up workshop at the Menai Bridge Maritime Centre which was extremely interesting.
An off shoot of the U-Boat project is, that whilst the investigations into the submarines were taking place, it was a great opportunity for the likes of Bangor University marine department, to research the effects such objects have on the seabed. How the tides shift the sand, etc. creating gulleys or sand banks around the wreck. In the current days of wind farms, etc. the studies are extremely useful as to how the foundations of man made objects will be affected and also the seabed, over the years.

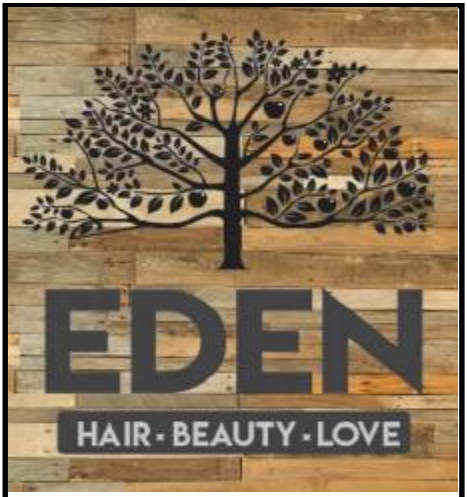
In November we are having a visiting party of around 25 from Nefyn Maritime Museum. They are a very go ahead museum set up in an old capel. Like us, they are a member of the Federation of Gwynedd and Anglesey Maritime Museums. Over the years I have witnessed their struggle for grants, etc. The museum is well worth a visit.

Unfortunately, due to the proximity of our Institute to the harbour, the outside galvanised cladding has been sand blasted during the last two winters. So much so that some parts have started to rust and the whole building has to be painted with specialised paint to protect it from future winter storms. I applied for a grant but alas was unsuccessful. We sincerely hope the job will be done before winter sets in again. Our designated painter has been beset with the weather and we are not top of the list!

As with Issue 25, I'm enclosing a GDPR consent form to allow me to use emails as part of our Newsletter distribution. If you would like to help reduce our costs, please return the form either by post or email. The Committee are very grateful to those of you who have already signed up.

All that remains is for me to wish you all the Compliments of the Festive Season which is not far off. I hope you have a happy and healthy 2020.

Janet Griffith Hon. Secretary

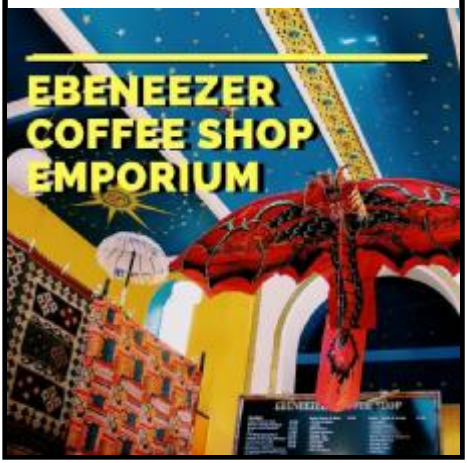


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Rev. Tony Hodges

A native of Merthyr Tudful, Tony attended St Aloysius Primary School and Bishop Hedley High School. He was trained for ordained ministry at St Marys' College, Oscott, England and St Patrick's College, Carlow, Ireland. He was ordained deacon in 1990 and priest in 1991 for the Archdiocese of Cardiff where he worked as parish priest in various parishes throughout the southeast.

Tony has been chaplain to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people since his ordination and regularly signs services throughout Wales. He has also worked at Luz - Saint Sauveur in the south of France where, with another priest, he looked after the Luz Pastoral Area comprising 17 churches.
Tony has a BA from Glamorgan University in Welsh Studies which he completed in 2006 and in 2013 he was awarded an MSc in Endangered Species Recovery and Conservation which he was able to complete in South Africa.

Tony is passionate about wildlife and nature and trained as Safari Field Guide and Trails Guide in Botswana and South Africa where he has family. He has been charged by a hippo, chased by elephants, stalked by a lion and growled at by a leopard and reassured a white rhino and her calf by talking to them in Welsh.

He worked for the RSPB as Mid Wales Area Manager for Membership Development and trained as an ecological consultant. He has his own consultancy company, Glas y Dorlan Ecology that undertakes surveys of bats and other species.

He has a keen interest in languages and is able to speak four fluently. He can also get by in several others and currently is learning Japanese. Tony does not put this down to talent but to be being incredibly nosy and wanting to know what people are talking about!

He is a proud member of the Gorsedd where not surprisingly he took the name Glas y Dorlan (Kingfisher) and was awarded the honour for his work in promoting Welsh language and culture as parish priest in Cardiff.

He began working in Bro Ardudwy as Associate Priest for the Diocese of Bangor in January 2018 and became the Ministry Area Leader in February 2019. Tony lives in Porthmadog with his civil partner Dominic who also works for the Diocese of Bangor as Director of Discipleship and Vocations. They have a house in Brittany, which they are slowly renovating, and both enjoy travel.

*** * * * ***

The Great Storm

November 26/27th this year marked the 316th year since the greatest storm that the south of the British Isles has experienced within recordable history, and I thought that as it keeps rearing it head during my shipwreck research then maybe an article was due!
The immense damage caused on land and at sea was recorded by Daniel Defoe of Robinson Crusoe fame and runs to hundreds of pages so I shall have to be very selective, but as we live by the sea we must all share an awe of, and respect for the power of nature.
Ten years or so ago (yes – time does go quickly) we can recall the storm which swept up the English Channel killing several people and laying waste to many huge trees, it was reckoned to be the severest since 1703, and for once the press had their facts right, so let us go back 300 years and recall that 'great storm'.

"It had been a very wet, mild and unsettled summer in that year with many gales and on 19th November it all started to peak and I will now quote Defoe as he does it so much better than I can ever hope to;

"It had blown exceeding hard, as I have already observed for about 14 days; and that so hard, that we thought it terrible weather: several stacks of chimneys were blown down, and several shops were lost, and the tiles in many places were blown off from the houses; and the nearer it came in the fatal 26th November, the tempestuousness of the weather increased.'……' On Friday morning, it continued to blow exceeding hard, but not so that it have any apprehensions of danger within doors; towards night it increased; and about 10 0'clock, our barometers informed us that the night would be very tempestuous: the Mercury sunk lower than I had observed it on any occasion whatsoever, which made me suppose that tube had been handled and disturbed by the children."
He then goes on to record statistics from various towns during the build up to the 'big blow' and already stuff is flying in all directions, but there follows a collection of letters from across the land with eye witness accounts of just what it was like during that terrible night of 25/27th;
"Above 100 churches covered with lead, the lead rolled up, the churches uncovered; and on some of them, the lead in prodigious quantities blown to incredible distances from the church'……..
"above 400 windmills overset, and broken to pieces; or sails so blown around, that the timbers and wheels have heat and set the rest on fire, and so burnt them down"….
"We have reckoned, including the City of London, about 123 people killed; besides such as we have no account of; the people drowned

are not easily guessed; but by all the calculations that I have made and seen made, *we are within compass if we reckon 8,000 men lost*, if we include what were lost on the cost of Holland, what in ships blown away, and never heard of, and what were drowned in the flood of the Severn, and in the river of Thames"…….

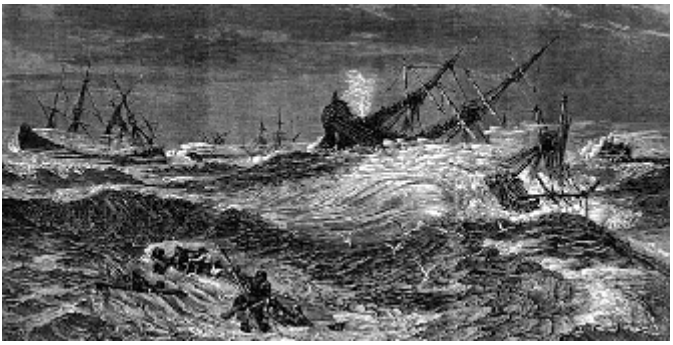
"They tell us the damages done by the tide, on the banks of the Severn, amounts to above 200,000 pounds (in 1703!!), 15,000 sheep drowned in one level, multitudes of cattle"…….
Their ships sinking in the maelstrom of the English Channel, desperate sailors try to stay afloat in the worse gale in England's history. Striking with hurricane force in November 1703, the storm killed 8,000 people and destroyed 14,000 homes.

And from Helford in Cornwall; "The small quantity of fruit trees we had in the neighbourhood about us are so dismember'd, and torn in pieces, that few or none are left fit for bearing fruit. The large timber trees, ash, elm, oak, and the like, are generally blown down, especially the largest and highest trees suffered most: few gentlemen that had trees and houses that stood in the valleys, and most out of the wind, have suffered most ……. In Helford, a small haven, not far from hence, there was a tin ship blown from her anchors with only one man and two boys on board, without anchor, cable, or boat and was forced out of the said haven about 12 0'clock at night; the next morning by 8 0'clcok, the ship miraculously ran in between two rocks in the Isle of Wight, where the men and goods were saved, but the ship lost ……. such a run in such a short time is almost incredible, *it being near 80 leagues in 8 hours time*"…….

It was that severe on land the mind boggles at what conditions must have been at sea, so here is a report from Richard Larn in his book 'Shipwrecks of Great Britain and Ireland' and it tells of the destruction of possibly one third of the English Navy which under the Command of the famous Admiral, Sir Cloudsley Shovell (they don't make names like that nowadays!) had been brought into the 'shelter' of the Downs, just off the Kent coast but inside the Goodwin Sands ……..

'As the wind changed direction and began to increase again, making the Goodwin Sands a lee shore, so several of the warships captains slipped their cable and put to sea rather that risk being blown ashore. One vessel, an unidentified Dutch craft, sailed over part of the North Goodwin, became stranded and was lost with all hands.
Next day, some of the warships returned to the Downs, when the wind quickly reached full gale force, and continued to increase until it was inconceivable that it could get any worse. All the ships

struck their topmasts to reduce 'windage', put out an extra anchor, put their best cables end to end and put their trust in God. On the smaller vessels, whole seas rolled clean over them, and a great many foundered from the sheer weight of water. During the early hours of 27th November, in pitch darkness, ships began to drag or else their cables parted. Most were forced to cut away their masts completely to reduce top weight, but by 2 am almost every vessel was adrift. Distress guns boomed out in vein, from the North to the South Foreland, but it was a case of every vessel and man for themselves. Adams (a passenger on a merchantman) witnessed the *Northumberland* and *Mary* both disappear as they went on the Goodwin Sands, but seemingly missed the destruction of the *Restoration* which, although of comparable tonnage, may have been obscured by driving rain.'



The *Northumberland*, a seventy-gun 3rd-rate, commanded by the Captain Greenway, was wrecked with the loss of her entire crew of 253 men. Slightly larger, the sixty-gun *Mary* also went to pieces on the sandbank, taking Rear Admiral Beaumont and 272 crew to a watery grave, two of her crew were ashore and survived.
The list becomes endless, with *Stirling Castle* losing 279 out of a total crew of 349; the *Restoration* losing all 386 and so the, dreadful record goes on.

Had not some of the English Channel fleet escaped to sea in the early hours of that morning the outcome would have been even worse, and up to a further 3,000 lives and many more ships lost.

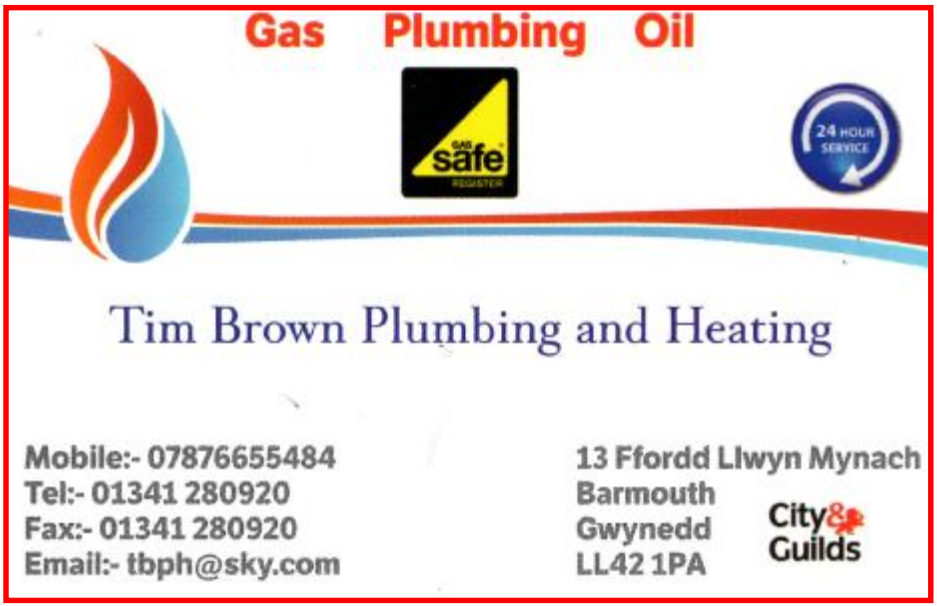
Those that escaped were blown in tatters across the North Sea, ending up in Scandinavia from where it took months to repair and return, in fact some were given up as lost, only to appear again to the great joy of their joy or loved ones, and also the Navy!

And so it was all round the coast, with wrecks reported from Yarmouth to Milford Haven and chaos in even the safest harbours. The destruction of the Eddystone Lighthouse of Plymouth is reported by Defoe thus; "That at night it was standing and in the morning all the upper part, from the gallery, was blown down, and

all the people in it perished, and, by a particular misfortune, Mr Winstanley, the contriver of it, a person whose loss is very much regretted by such as knew him, as a very useful man to his country. The loss of that lighthouse is also a considerable damage, as 'tis very doutful whether it will ever be attempted again, and as it was a great security to the sailors, many a good ship having been lost there in former times.'
So when the gales blow next winter, spare a thought for those poor souls as you turn up the central heating and complain about what is on T.V..

Tony Iles





Dr Joseph Herbert Lister - Part One

Whilst Janet Griffith was cataloguing the books which are housed in the cabinets in Barmouth Sailors' Institute, she discovered that many of them had been presented by Dr Joseph Herbert Lister, a member since the earliest days of the Institute, and who had supported it throughout his life. This article explores his participation in, and the contribution he made to the maritime community of Barmouth including the Sailors' Institute, and his close relationship with one of Barmouth's close-knit, Welsh-speaking seafaring families.

Joseph Herbert Lister was born on 26th February 1858 in Littleborough, Lancashire. His father, Bryan Lister, a surgeon, married Jane Susannah Cox Pugh in 1857, but following their divorce in May 1865, on the grounds of Jane's infidelity she emigrated, and settled in Australia.

His great grandfather Royal Lister born circa 1780 and was a free-hold farmer, and Churchwarden. Royal was not uncommon as a Christian name in Yorkshire at that time. In 1902 Joseph Lister named one of his fleet of schooners 'Royal Lister', in tribute to his great grandfather.

Joseph boarded at a boys' grammar school, New North Road College, Huddersfield, but in 1874, his father Bryan passed away. Despite this further setback, Joseph excelled at school and matriculated in 1875, having won several academic prizes, and went on to complete a Preliminary Science qualification at Guy's Hospital in 1877.

It is at this time that we find the first record of Joseph Lister being in Barmouth. An account appeared in The Cambrian News of The Annual Barmouth Regatta, which had taken place on 31st August 1877. It describes the scene as seen from the Commodore's Boat, a fresh westerly breeze, and sand blowing all over the spectators watching from the quay. The "*gallant*" Commodore was Joseph Herbert Lister, already a Barmouth Regatta Committee member at the age of 19. He took part in the "Four Oared Men's Race", a "gentleman's race" over a mile of water, taking second place with his crew-mates Messrs. Sturgess, Eiloart, Sturgess Jr., and Cox John Garnett in the "Muriel". For Joseph to be a committee member, and commodore of the regatta, he must have already been a regular visitor to Barmouth. Also on the committee was Edward Owen Jones, youngest son of William Jones fisherman of Pen-y-Cei (1804-1887). Two of William's other sons, Owen and David Jones took part in several races, and were described as "*champion rowers of Barmouth*" in the article. It was this family to whom Joseph grew close.

Joseph continued his medical studies in London, the 1881 Census listing him as an Undergraduate Student of Medicine at London University. He qualified as a doctor of medicine gaining a

First Class Degree, the BMA Register of 1883 listing him as being a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons. Dr Lister continued to live in London, presumably practising as a doctor as he was listed in the 1887 BMA Register as residing at 23 Huntley Street, Bedford Square. Meanwhile he continued to spend time in Barmouth, developing his keen interest in sailing, participating regularly in the Barmouth Annual Regatta. In September 1880 he was lodging at 1, Abermaw Terrace, the home of Owen Jones and his wife Mary. Mary died in 1885 and Owen subsequently moved to 4, Ael-y-Don, married his second wife Elizabeth in 1892 and Dr Lister continued to live with them there for many years.

Dr Lister became a member of the Royal Welsh Yacht Club, Caernarfon, and owning several sailing boats he had much success at regattas. At the Barmouth Regatta of 28th August 1880 he won an exciting sailing match in his boat 'Viking' against Thomas Garnett's 'Jolly Dog'.

The Cambrian News reported: "Sailing Match. On Saturday last there was great excitement at Barmouth due to a sailing race between 'Jolly Dog', belonging to Mr Thomas Garnett, and 'Viking', belonging to Mr J. H. Lister. The course was from the breakwater round the Bwlch Causeway Buoy, to the finish at the Barmouth Fairway buoy. Distance about twenty miles. The wind blew down the river from the east and was of nice sailing strength. The two boats got off to a very good start, 'Jolly Dog' crossing the line at 1h 25m 5s, and 'Viking' 5 seconds later. The 'Viking' was ahead, but 'Jolly Dog' luffing up on the weather side took the wind out of the other's sails and drew up. In this manner they made a very level race down the wind and jibbed round the Bwlch Buoy together, 'Jolly Dog' being just ahead. Time 1h 40m. Hauling on the wind for the beat back, 'Viking' went ahead with 'Jolly Dog' astern on her weather quarter Finding the breeze light, 'Viking' made a tack inshore in search of wind, and passed to leeward of the other, which kept on the same tack for some time. When well into the breeze, 'Viking' came about, and when 'Jolly Dog' stood in for shore she was to leeward. From that time 'Viking' increased her lead, and finally came in a winner by over a mile at 3h 32m 45s, followed by 'Jolly Dog' at 3h. 43m. The times were taken by Mr Talbot, who officiated as starter and judge."

In 1883 Dr Lister won the Yacht Race at both the Barmouth and Aberdovey Regattas in his 13 ton cutter 'Sea Belle'. His success continued in his 16 ton yawl 'Lily' crewed by several of the Jones brothers, together with Evan Lewis Jones, husband of their sister Jane. On 22nd August 1884 he again won the yacht race at the Aberdovey Regatta in 'Lily'.

On 11th September 1885, at Barmouth Annual Regatta he won 10 guineas by winning the main Yacht Race, under Yacht Racing Association Rules, coming in first in 2h 3m 2s. Another competitor was George Q P Talbot, in his yawl 'Kismet'. He also won the Single

handed Open Sailing Boat Race for boats under eleven and a half feet in keel, in 'Daisy', and won first prize in Single Oared Sculling in 'Lily', against George Q P Talbot in 'Kismet'. There was, however, a sad end in store for 'Lily', as described in reports on 26 May 1888 in both the Manchester Courier and The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald: "Narrow Escape of a Manchester Doctor: Much excitement was created at Barmouth by a report that the pleasure yacht 'Lily', belonging to Dr J. H. Lister, of Manchester, which left Barmouth harbour on Tuesday morning, had sunk in Cardigan Bay, with Dr Lister and the crew on board. It appeared that Dr Lister was cruising in the bay, and whist sailing near the causeway the beams of an old wreck were discovered high above water. Dr Lister crossed the bay to report the discovery to the Board of Trade officials, who were fixing a few buoys some miles distant. In returning past the spot during the high tide Dr Lister inadvertently sailed across the wreck of the 'Eulomene', which the yacht struck heavily. It sank almost immediately. The boat was put down, and Dr Lister and the crew narrowly escaped from the yacht. After being out all night in an open boat they came ashore on Wednesday morning."

Living in the midst of the Jones family gave Dr Lister an insight into the pressures and worries faced by those earning their living as fishermen, and he knew that it was becoming harder for them to catch and sell enough fish. He also had a wider concern for the well-being of the people of Barmouth. The future of sea fishing in Cardigan Bay was seemingly a much discussed issue around this time, as there had been a serious depletion of fish stocks over the previous twenty years. Dr Lister had attended a conference on the matter, and so on 15th March 1889 had written a long, detailed letter to the Cambrian News and Merionethshire standard, in which he related an account of the state of the fisheries, as told to him by an "old Barmouth fisherman" (William Jones, Pen-y-Cei), with whom he had spent "several long years". This explained how circumstances over the previous sixty years had led to this depletion of fish. Dr Lister suggested ways of improving this situation in future.

Shortly after his letter was published, on 19th April 1889, an article appeared in The Cambrian News and Farmers' Gazette entitled "Cardigan Bay Fishery. Mussel Beds at Barmouth" It described the local economy, and a meeting convened by Councillor Lewis Lewis, Hillside, Mr Griffith Griffiths, Chemist, and Dr Lister, where they invited former and present experienced Barmouth fishermen to explain the difficulties they faced. They responded by telling of over-fishing and destructive fishing methods by crews from outside the area. Dr Lister also noted that an important issue concerned the railway rates, which meant paying as much for the carriage of fish to the Midlands, as would be received for the fish. Their aim was the setting up of a Fisheries

Board for the development and regulation of Cardigan Bay, and they presented a petition to the County Council of Cardigan asking them to apply to the Board of Trade for the formation of a Sea Fisheries Committee for the Cardigan Bay Fishery District.

Entries in the Rate Books at this time show that he rented a warehouse on the quay from the Barmouth Harbour Trust. It was around this time too that Dr Lister used to go trawling with the Jones brothers in his 12 ton burden boat 'Pansy', and his 7 ton burden boat 'Scout', once even catching a 7ft 8in shark!



He continued to be involved in various Barmouth community events, such as the very popular Eisteddfod at the Assembly Rooms in St Anne's Square, where in 1898 he adjudicated the competition "Model of a Three-masted Schooner".

In 1891 to 1893 Dr Lister was registered at Lloyds as being the owner of the Fife 14 ton cutter 'Kite', which he sold in 1904. He also owned 'Chotah', a vessel of the "trawler yacht" type. From the official log book of 'Chotah' we see that Dr Lister was the owner from 1892, using her for pleasure cruising around the Welsh coast. The crew included sons of William Jones (Pen y Cei), namely Griffith (Fron House), who was coxswain of the Barmouth Lifeboat from 1922 to 1930, David (Pen y Cei) and William (Victoria Place). An interesting sequel regarding 'Chotah' after she had been sold by Dr Lister in 1900 is that from 1907 she was owned by Sir Thomas Myles of Dublin, Hon Surgeon in Ireland to the King, who volunteered her to drop arms in Ireland for the uprising.

Another of Dr Lister's yachts was 'Mussel', an open sailing centre -board boat which had been built by Mr Hugh Evans, native of Abersoch, but then living in Barmouth. To quote from Mr Evans' obituary in 1901 "A boat which he built for Dr Lister from the owner's own design (Dr Lister being an expert in boat designing) has never yet been beaten and probably there is not a boat of its

class in Cardigan Bay that can sail with it."

Dr Lister won many races in 'Mussel', including the "Boats not over 17ft keel" at the 1899 Abersoch Regatta, and 1st prize of £4 at the Barmouth Regatta of 8th September 1900, where the race was reported thus: "Open sailing centre-board boats, under 20 ft keel, In this race the 'Mussel' (Dr Lister) was leading from the very start, and maintained its position to the end, winning by at least five minutes' time." He also won in the same category in 'Mussel' at the Barmouth Regatta in 1901.

Dr Lister sailed the 'Mussel' for several years but on the 21st August 1908, the following report appeared in the Cambrian News: "A timely rescue was effected to the occupants of the open centre board boat 'Mussel' on Wednesday. The 'Mussel' left the harbour about 9 a.m. in charge of its owner (Dr Lister) and Mr David Jones Pen y Cei -than whom no better yachtsmen can be found on the coast-and proceeded seawards for a distance of about three miles. When on the return voyage and about three-quarters of a mile from the shore in front of the Recreation Ground, the bow of the boat was suddenly caught by an easterly whirlwind which afterward turned free. With great presence of mind, Mr David Jones let go the sheet held by him. The boom, however, caught the water and down sank the 'Mussel' into about eighteen feet of water, throwing its occupants into the, water. In going under, the ballast carried by the boat shifted to the bow with the result that the 'Mussel' lay perpendicularly. Dr Lister managed to get hold of the stern and to rest on a cork-dust cushion and oar. Realising the fact that the boat would sink lower still if he again availed himself of the support offered by its stern, Jones pluckily remained in the water, and noticing another boat about 250 yards away making for the scene of distress, he swam towards it and was picked up. The boat was in charge of a local boatman (Mr John Morris) and soon afterwards Dr Lister was also rescued from his perilous position."

The 15th April 1904 edition of The Cambrian News reported that Dr Lister had been elected as a Member of the Barmouth Harbour Trust. Shortly after this, in 1905 he purchased his last yacht, 'Kittiwake' a 43ft cutter of gross tonnage 13.04, built in 1905 at Crossens, Southport. Dr Lister was listed as her owner on the Caernarfon Shipping Register in 1910, but had sold her by 1915.

Ian and Meriel Haynes

The concluding part of this biography will appear in our next newsletter.

ED.

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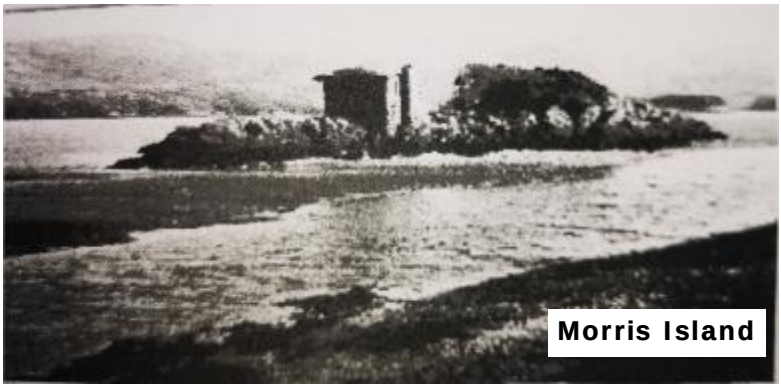
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Ynys Morris (Morris Island)

Morris Island lies approx. halfway between Barmouth Viaduct and Glan Dwr Hall. It is only a stone's throw from the mainland but is cut off by the Mon Dwynant (two stream river). The islet itself is small comprising mainly of large rock formation and further upstream there is another small islet of rock outcrop. Both Islands are in the ownership of Mr. Ken Jeffs who lives 199 yards away in Arian Fryn Coach House. Ken does not require his experience as one time coxswain of Barmouth Lifeboat to navigate to his island, as at low tide it is possible to cross the Dwynant and walk carefully


Morris Island

across. The writer however thought prudence was better then valour and stayed on firm ground.

The Mon Dwynant enters the Mawddach Estuary near Glan Dwr Hall and surprisingly not many people today realize that the Dwynant feeds into the Mawddach Estuary. Five hundred yards upstream of Glan Dwr Bridge the Dwynant splits into two separate streams, one tributary veers in north westerly direction towards Sylfaen and the other in north easterly towards Goetre, Cae Tudor and the Uwch Mynydd area. A road bridge crosses the stream not far from Goetre, the catchment area of the these streams and their individual books feeding into them would provide a Water Authority with plenty of water without any problems.

When the Dwynant enters the Estuary it meanders everywhere. A new road was built at the beginning of the last century and Dwynant course changed, not for the good according to local fishermen, but nature seems to be taking a hand and the Dwynant is slowly reverting to its odd course in the Estuary. It seems originally the Dwynant was on the south side of the island which meant that it was possible by means by stepping stones to cross over from the island to the mainland, some of the old stepping

stones can still be seen at low tide.

I am told on good authority by Mr. William Morris, "Nysfor" and I am extremely grateful for his help and information that the Island is Ynys Morris, (Morris' Island) so called after a fisherman who had lived there.

On the island there is a stone built oblong structure with a low pitched roof, it has three narrow windows, a door opening and a fireplace with a chimney. The roof is constructed of a mixture of concrete, stones and reinforcing material, whether this was the original roof is not known, the floor is also of concrete and it does suggest that at one time it was inhabited.

The photograph below which is reproduced by kind permission of



Gwynedd Archives, shows a fisherman gathering mussels in the Estuary. It is thought that this photograph was taken around 1885 during the construction of Barmouth Bridge. It is also stated that this fisherman lived on the Island and that his name is Morris. But this cannot be verified.

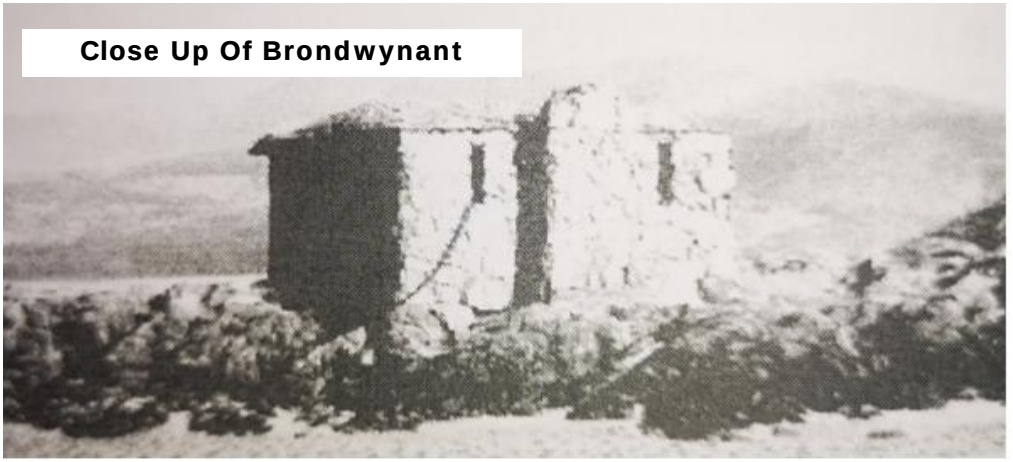
During the same period Cei Newydd was occupied by the Morris' family, they were Carriers by trade. They were a large family and one of the sons ran away to sea at an early age and spent most of his life abroad. He eventually returned back to Barmouth.

His homecoming was not good news for the family as they had assumed since they had not heard anything from him over the years that he had died abroad and now there was no place for him at Cei Newydd. Undeterred he went and built his house on the Island which lies nearly opposite his old home and on completion

lived there and made a living gathering mussels etc.

Its is interesting to note in the 1871 Census, Ceinewydd is occupied by a Williams' family and the nearest property listed after Ceinwydd in the Census is called Bron Dwynant and that is was uninhabited. There were no other buildings in that vicinity at that time, one can assume that the house on the Island was named

Close Up Of Brondwynant



Bron Dwynant. It is not known whether the Island was inhabited after this date. Mrs Coote of Arian Fryn had come to the area to live and had the Coach House built not far from the Island and it was the place of residence for the Coach Man, 1 Boatman, and 1 General Handyman.

In the 1950s the late Meirion Rowlands held this job. Cllr. Cadwalader Williams, as a lad used to go and help Meirion look after the boats etc. and remembers Meirion telling him that the Nuns from Caerdeon Hall used the Island as a retreat or place of solitude to meditate on their own.
If this was so it brings events into present day memory.

Caerdeon Hall was built in the early 1850s by the Rev. W. E. Jeff. He later built Caerdeon Church with the financial assistance of his wife and her brother, the Rev. John Petit. The Estate was sold and bought by Samuel Holland, M.P. for Merioneth and at his death the estate was split up and sold to various families, with the Hall itself being bought by the Basford Court Mental Welfare Hospital from the Worcester area.

In 1968 the Sisters of Notre Dame bought the Hall for their College in Liverpool for approx. £8000 for use as a Centre for Field Studies. Subsequently Plas Caerdeon was developed as an outdoor

Education Centre with resident staff replacing the Sisters, who had provided the domestic backup. The full story of Caerdeon makes interesting reading and could be worth researching.

I have been unable to confirm the story about the Nuns retreat and somehow it lacks conviction as by all accounts, the islands then belonged to Mrs Coote of Adrian Fryn. Recently I was told that there is mention of the Island in some old documents and it is referred to as Ynys y Pab (Pope Island) and that it had special links with Cymmer Abbey.

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Old Boat meets New Boat

On Sunday, 10th March 2019 a very rough cold day (40 mph winds), Barmouth welcomed the new RNLB Shannon Lifeboat 13-30 Ella Larsen which was greeted by the RNLB Mersey Class Lifeboat 12-26 Moira Barrie which has been stationed at Barmouth since 1992. The Barmouth Coxswain and volunteer crew then gave a display of the boat's manoeuvrability before beaching and being recovered onto the Shannon Launch Recovery vehicle. By this time the weather turned to very strong winds and rain and the hundreds of people that turned up retreated back to the boat house to wait for both the Mersey Class and Shannon Class to be towed to the front of the boathouse - this then gave me great photo opportunities to photograph both lifeboats together for the first time in front of the boathouse.



RNLB Mersey Class Lifeboat 12-26 Moira Barrie - Barmouth lifeboat from 24th September 1992 until 10th April 2019 when the RNLB Shannon Lifeboat 13-30 Ella Larsen took over as the Barmouth Lifeboat. The two lifeboats are very different to each other with their launch and recovery systems as the Mersey Class lifeboat uses the Talus - Launch and recovery tractor and trailer while the Shannon Class Lifeboat uses the SLARS - Shannon and launch and recovery system.



On 26th April 2019 the Barmouth Lifeboat crew and supporters said a final farewell to the RNLB Mersey Class Lifeboat 12-26 Moira Barrie left Barmouth for the final time and yes it was another wet and wild day weather wise. The Coxswain and volunteer crew took the Mersey class lifeboat to Conwy Marina to be retired from service where today it can still be found but is now for sale. At Conwy Marina there are other ex-lifeboats and some lifeboats which are still in service which are having maintenance carried out on them.



Update on the two retired Barmouth lifeboats:

The Chieftain ex Barmouth Liverpool Class lifeboat – Served Barmouth between 1949-1982. Sold in July this year and now can be found moored at Faversham Creek but hope to bring to Whitstable, Kent to open for viewing and for trips

Princess of Wales ex Barmouth Rother-class Lifeboat – Served Barmouth between 1982-1992. For sale on the Nelsons Boats website and has been for the past few years

Carys Roberts

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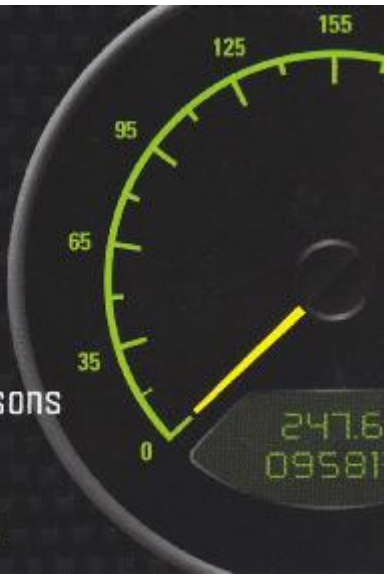
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