

History of Deganwy Group .Walk Around Deganwy: Part 1

Deganwy Castle Hotel, originally a farmhouse called Treganwy. In the 1850's when the railway came, then owner John Lloyd Jones insisted that the railway went near his house & so this part of Deganwy developed with the station being situated here. The Tritton family established the hotel, later the Ferranti family owned it & during the 1960's the TV presenter Jess Yates lived here.



Over the railway line (opened in 1858), immediately to the left was the point that the **Trefriew steamers** picked up the Deganwy passengers to go to Trefriew & the spa there.



Further along is the **Promenade**, built on the sand dunes which extended along this coastline. Opposite on **Conwy Morfa** was the site used for building part of the **Mulberry Harbour** during World II under much secrecy (see Conwy Mulberry Harbour by Mark Hughes for a detailed account). Out to sea is the legend of **Llys Helig**, the story is that the sea covered the kingdom of Helig ap Glannawy which in the 6th century extended from Morfa Rhiannedd to Puffin Island.

Returning back to the main road, walk towards Llandudno & the housing estate 'Traeth Melyn'. Here roughly was the site of the '**West Shore Lido**' which opened in 1934 & was owned by the Brown family & built at a cost of £26,000. It was a very up to date facility & many bathing beauty pageants were held here but in the 1950's it closed.



Up to your right on the hill are the remains of **Deganwy Castle**, of the scant remains much date from the early & mid 13th century. Maelgwyn, the King of Gwynedd, is thought to have occupied this site in the 6th century. The site was occupied & reoccupied over a long period by the Welsh, including Llywelyn Fawr, & the English, including King John & Henry III. In 1263 the Welsh demolished the castle so it could not be taken again. Later in 1284 Edward I built his castle over the river at Conwy, perhaps having learnt the lessons of his forefathers' defeats at Deganwy.

Below this hill is the Vardre Park Estate of houses, individually built by the Whitley brothers, area is known as **Gannock Park** & remains an exclusive area. Arts & Crafts style houses along the main road were designed in 1932 by **Herbert Luck North**, a well known architect, worked under Edwin Lutyens, North returned to North Wales & established himself in Llanfairfechan where there are several other houses designed by him.

Returning back to the village, just on the corner of York Road, is a red brick building, now occupied by Robertson Geologging. This was once a **skating rink** and a Deganwy resident, Mary Quinn, became the World Champion Skater in 1933.

The station buildings of **Deganwy Station** have been demolished some years now. The building was built in 1866 with the branch line from Llandudno Junction to Llandudno being opened in 1858.



© Elan Rivers May 2010. History of Deganwy Group

See History of Deganwy Group's website for more information on Deganwy
www.deganwyarchive.co.uk

History of Deganwy Group. Walk Around Deganwy: Part 2

Deganwy Village Shops. As many of you will remember there were a lot more shops in Deganwy than we have today...however what has remained are the wrought iron 'awnings' providing shelter from the weather whilst shopping. One particular shop frontage is that of 'J.E. Jones' which was a grocer's shop which also served as Deganwy Post Office for some years.



As we walk towards Ty Mawr Rd, we pass **Garrick House**, once a Temperance Hotel. The last house before the library was '**Mordon Telephone exchange**'. Previously on the site of the library stood a building, half timbered, this was **Deganwy Free Library** & later on (possibly after 1WW) became the **Deganwy Men's Club**. Obviously at some point the present day library replaced this building. If you wish to find out more about shops & houses then a good source of information is the old street directories (some are at Llandudno library & some are at Conwy Archive office).

After the library stood **St. James's church** which was a mission church built in 1800. The church was built by the exertion of the Revd. Arthur Jones with much local voluntary labour at the cost of £800. When the building was complete, it was first used as a Church school as the local children at that time attended Llanrhos. In 1884 the Bishop appointed the Revd. Arthur Jones as Chaplain & St. James's was open for Divine Worship. The children returned to Llanrhos for schooling. Later after All Saints' Church was built, St. James's became a school again; the 1911 street directory lists it as All Saints' School. Later Ysgol Deganwy on Park Drive was built in 1939 & the children then went there for schooling.

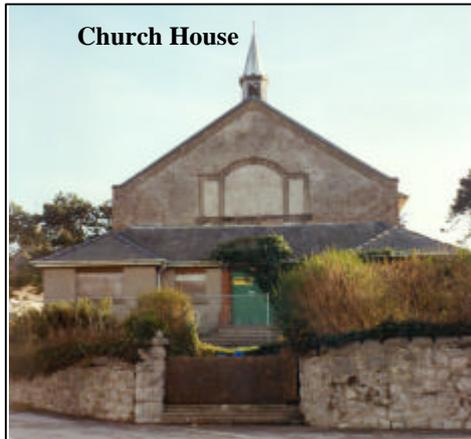
The slope below St. James's was once littered with **piles of shells**; in the 1851 census two women have pearling as their occupation. In the next census two women are described as mussel gatherers. Before the arrival of the railway, most of the mussel gatherers on Conwy were concerned with finding pearls from mussels. The railway provided an easy means of transporting fresh seafood from Conwy and rest of North Wales to the developing cities of Liverpool and Manchester. Thus pearl fishing declined and had ceased by the 1800's whilst mussel fishing for human consumption increased. The mussel industry still continues today from Conwy.

By 1890 the population had grown and thought was given to building a larger church, **All Saints'**. The site was given by the Hon. Lord Mostyn and his mother Lady Henrietta Augusta Mostyn funded the cost of building the church in memory of her parents, the Earl & Countess of Abergavenny. Messrs. Douglas & Marshall of Chester designed the church and the building work was done by local labour. The first sod was cut on November 1st 1897. When completed, the building was consecrated by the Lord Bishop of St. Asaph's on All Saints' Day, 1st November 1899.



For more information on All Saints' please see the leaflet 'All Saints' Church Deganwy; A History & Guide' available at the church.

Returning to Ty Mawr Rd, at the junction stood '**Church House**' once a focal point for local clubs & groups with dances & plays put on here. Church House was opened on October 9th 1926 by Lord Mostyn.



Opposite is **Deganwy Quay**. The river steamer wharf at Deganwy was improved to take timber and slate traffic from the Conwy Valley once the branch line was extended to Blaenau Ffestiniog in 1879. The wharf was extended in 1882 using the spoil from the Belmont tunnel at Bangor. As the quarries used narrow gauge whilst the LNWR was standard gauge, the narrow gauge wagons were carried three abreast in standard drop side slate trunks to Deganwy Quay (see attached sheet). Those from the Ffestiniog were conveyed direct to the quay in the Railway Company's Narrow Gauge Trunks without transshipping, thus avoiding breakage, an important consideration in the conveyance of slate. The first consignment from the enlarged wharf was on 1st October 1885. By 1889 the traffic had decreased and by 1914 there was only nine vessels recorded. The level of traffic was less than expected, possibly more goods were sent on the more extended railway network and there was also a trend to use larger vessels than could be handled in the Conwy estuary.

At the start of Ty Mawr Rd, formerly stood '**Bryn Cregin**', once the home of Henry Haynes who was reputed to have made his money from the opium trade in China. The house later became a hotel; at one point the Pilkington family owned it & they installed a glass floor in the ballroom.



Further along Ty Mawr Rd stood a house called **Vardre**, once the home of the artist **Joshua Anderson Hague** who was part of the Royal Cambrian Academy at Plas Mawr in Conwy. Several other **artists** lived along Ty Mawr Rd & in Deganwy such as Richard Wane, Willie Stephenson, Arthur Netherwood, John Cuthbert Salmon, Clara Knight. (a useful read is 'The Betws-y-Coed Artist Colony : Clarence Whaite & the Welsh Art World' by Peter Lord)

A bit further along is **Peniel Chapel**. The memorial stone was laid on February 28th 1884, open meetings were held in the new chapel on 24th and 25th July 1884 when the Rev. Griffith Ellis of Bootle and David Charles Davies, of Bangor preached. This chapel replaced an earlier chapel which stood on the corner of Park Drive & Pentywyn Hill. This earlier chapel was built about 1826 and was known as 'Temel Thomas'

as Thomas Jones, Bryniau was prominent in its building. The chapel was later enlarged. However, in about 1880 the chapel was given notice to quit by the landowner as the estate was to be sold. As discussions with the estate management did not get far, they appealed to the owner of the Craig-y-Don estate, General Owen Williams (owner of Marl at that time). The appeal was successful, and they bought the chapel, the house and the land freehold for £10, and this secured a property worth £150. However by then the chapel was old and they wished to build a new chapel (see leaflet on Peniel chapel 1884-1984, ask Ifor Williams for details)



The pearl industry is reflected in the name of a house on Ty Mawr Road, **Y Berlfa** (now called Hen Berlfa). This was the home of **Dr. Willoughby Gardener**; an eminent archaeologist, mainly Pre-History and worked particularly on ancient hill forts of North Wales, excavating many of them. He was also entomologist; an authority on butterflies and moths. Dr. Willoughby Gardener was the first president of Llandudno, Colwyn Bay and District Field Club. The house Emral Cottage on nearby Stamford Street is said to be built as a library by Willoughby Gardener. His large collection of books was bequeathed to the National Museum of Wales after his death; now known as the Willoughby Gardener Collection.

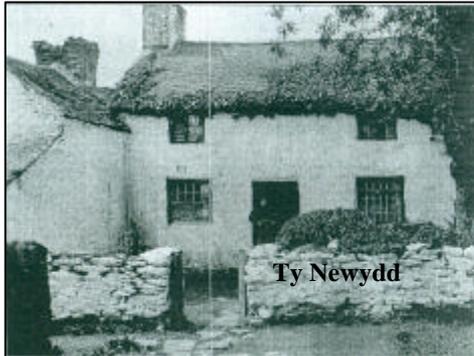
The farmhouse **Ty Mawr** stood on the present day junction of Ty Mawr Rd & Stamford St. The 1841 census lists Henry Williams, his wife Ellen and their children. Henry died in 1866 & much later his wife Ellen died in 1893. The O.S. map of 1898/99 shows the outline of the building Ty Mawr but the building is not shaded in suggesting that it was by then unoccupied. The houses on the right-hand side of Stamford Street had been built by then. It might that the Ty Mawr plot was used for Emral Cottage.

Going further along Ty Mawr Road towards Pentwyn Road this land was developed into the **Plas Newydd** estate, started in the 1930's. On right hand side (probably Rosemary Cottage) was the first post office in the area; the O.S. map of 1889/90 shows this house as a **Post Office** as does the 1871 census onwards. Later the Post office was further down on Pentwyn Hill (first at the Harbour View location & later opposite Ty Mawr Rd).

At the end of Ty Mawr Road is the pub called by its original name, '**Castle View**' but known to many as '**Maggie Murphys**'. The pub was originally a coaching stop; here horses could be changed and were stabled in a farm, 'Stablua', opposite. In late Victorian times the pub was changed to give its present day appearance. The name 'Maggie Murphys' comes from the daughter of the proprietor, Margaret Pritchard, who would sing the song 'Maggie Murphy' to the patients of local convalescent homes such as the **Edward Malam Home** on Warren Drive & the **Birmingham Saturday Fund Hospital** at Ty'n-y-Coed.



To the side of the pub stood a terrace of three cottages, sometimes called California Terrace (can be seen in Fon Tom photo). To the side of the 'Castle View' stood **Victoria Cottage** which burnt down in the 1990's. Next to this is **Gorphwsfan** and the corner is **Lavender Cottage**, formerly **Ty Newydd** (this gave its name to the Plas Newydd estate). The original 'Farmer's Arms' was in this vicinity, possibly it was Ty Newydd. Later the Farmer's Arms was built further up the hill but now has been demolished.



Ty Newydd



Farmer's Arms

At the bottom of Pentywn Hill, on the triangular plot of land, stood a shop with some cottages to the side. The shopowner, John Davies, produced a 'cure-all' balm which was very successful & gave rise to the name 'Fon Tom' or 'Tom's Stick' as it supported his business so well (the bus stop there is still known as Fon Tom'!). The shop etc were demolished when the road was widened.



Fon Tom



Tywyn Village



Bethel Chapel, built in 1905

© Elan Rivers & Fiona Richards June 2010 History of Deganwy Group
 See History of Deganwy Group's website for more information on Deganwy
www.deganwyarchive.co.uk

