

# TENBY CIVIC SOCIETY

Registered with Civic Trust Cymru

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## Newsletter October 2016 Summer Trip

In cooperation with Tenby Historical Society we arranged a successful coach trip to Bath on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July.



The trip left Tenby at 8.30am, arriving back in Tenby at about 8.00pm. We had just under 20 people on the trip, more than half of whom accompanied the Chairman on a brief tour of Bath, taking in the Abbey, Milsom St., the Assembly Rooms, the Circus and Royal Crescent, after which some of the party had lunch in one of the Chairman's favourite streets nearby, Margaret Buildings. People then had a free afternoon to shop and explore before returning to the bus.....

....Meanwhile, the Chairman and past Chairman retired for a cup of tea in pleasant surroundings....



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## Progress at Allens View



### A Working lunch On the new Picnic table At the southern viewpoint

Since July site maintenance has included

- -strimming grass, -trimming back the southern hedge
- -cutting back long bramble shoots and repeated weedkilling of the more intrusive banks of bramble and at the northern viewpoint to Monkstone Point.
- watering of young whip trees planted in the Coast Path hedge
- -sanding , preservative proofing, filling defects and wood staining two **picnic tables made of re-cycled wood by a local business**. One was then installed on site **by Richard Read's team from Trevayne Farm**.
- -bins have been emptied, and items separated out for recycling.

A second picnic table is still at Trevor Hallett's and awaits some further filling, sanding and staining ready for installation in the Spring.

The **National Park Ranger installed two new posts at top and bottom entrances** complete with fingers naming and pointing into the site. The funds donated for Allens View have made it easier for us to arrange better quality long lasting items like these.



### Autumn action so far focuses on planting

- Many Montbretia plants donated by Jean Rhys-Phillips have been planted alongside the main path to extend the existing good displays of montbretia under the Monterey Pines. Two Bags full remain to be planted.
- Some striking Red-flowering montbretia has also been planted kindly sourced from Murray and Gilly John front garden.

**Pictured left is the ground preparation by the main path for the red montbretia – some groups of the bulbs are on the left of the patch. Note the size of the bunches against the full sized fork !!**

- **Alf Heaven has planted groups of daffodils** to complement groups already on the site, mainly near the southern entrance.
- Harry Gardiner is part way through reinforcement **planting of more English bluebells and snowdrops** in the top glade, with more to be finished there and in the middle glade.
- **We would be grateful if anyone could donate 100 more English bluebell bulbs** to help restore the extensive showing of them in the past.
- **Tudor Thomas has transferred some medium sized bushes** to help screen the high metal fence, not an easy task with larger bushes! We have offers of other larger bushes but these are more time-consuming and difficult .

Alf Heaven has been cleaning weeds and brambles away from the young whip trees planted in the Coast Path hedge.

Further work for the autumn includes

- a donated New Zealand pine to plant
- the Trewayne Farm Team are offering to supply and plant a set of griselina whips for locations to shield the metal fence.
- The tree surgeon is providing a quotation for further felling so we can judge whether our finances will be sufficient, or whether it should wait.
- The upper section of the coast path hedge still needs some clearing and some more planting of small whip sized trees.

For the future

- The Trewayne Farm team have offered to sponsor information panels for the site – an issue to resolve for panels to be up for summer 2017.
- A local body is seeking funding for us through their national organization
- There are other funding organizations we can approach
- For the more demanding site work we face there are several organisations who have volunteers who can help
- We are investigating using the stems of trees to be felled for information panels or chainsaw tree sculptures, the latter will probably need funding sources
- We have decided to delay the idea of layering the coast path hedge so that the 100 + small whips successfully planted into the hedge to mature and to allow more to be planted this winter in the northern section of the hedge.
- Increased use of the site and remarks and questions by visitors indicate a need for more simple signs directing walkers through the site would be productive to include for 2017.

We plan to put together some of the projects above into a specific scheme for which to seek further funding, as **we are having to hold back on spending, being over £3000 short of our original £5000 target.** Sources of further funds and donations in kind look promising, so some re-phasing of what is done over longer than two years and some new ideas look attractive and practical ways to proceed.

**Donations payable to The Society via our treasurer , Albie Somsarski, are very welcome,**

**As are donations of woodland bulbs or smaller young evergreen bushes etc.. Contact the Chairman, Tudor Thomas, or Harry Gardiner in the latter case at the addresses above..**

## *Civic Society Committee Meetings*

At the May 2016 committee meeting it was felt that the work of the committee should be more open and transparent to members. The idea was for members to get a better insight into the varied activities the committee undertakes on their behalf and it was proposed that members should be invited to attend committee meetings as observers.

So, two members, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Clarke sat in on the last committee meeting to be held at the Fourcroft Hotel, on the 13<sup>th</sup> September. Mr. Clarke was kind enough to comment that ours had the reputation of being one of the more intelligent committees of societies in Tenby. I hope we managed to live up to that opinion!

Just to repeat the invitation, members are invited to sit in our next meeting to be held again at the Fourcroft Hotel, on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> November at 2.00pm. Teas and coffees available at a small charge.

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## *Planning*

Three planning applications this quarter are worth mentioning to illustrate why the Civic Society is concerned with planning matters :-

- There is an application to erect a Huff House, (Or should that be Haus as the design is German), in Zion Gardens, off St. John's Hill where there are currently a number of static caravans. This would be similar to the house at the far end of Northcliffe, nearest the sea.

We commented that this excellent design could be improved if it were resited, as at presently proposed the first floor and a second floor under the monopitched roof would overlook the original Zion House Walled Garden boundary wall and the houses on Merlin's Walk.. An amendment we welcomed was the substitution of rear first floor high windows above eye level which would reduce overlooking. However repositioning could remove the second storey, lowering the roof height to reduce the townscape impact. We pointed to the series of radically amended scheme plans that went into the successful integration of a similar large house (13 Haytor Gardens) into its setting, complementing the adjoining houses at 11 and 15 well in scale and design, on a considerably more difficult site.

On a general note, we regret that townscape/landscape seems an unimportant element of design quality, that and town character are signally omitted from a number of otherwise worthwhile schemes. These are matters the Civic Society was established to promote. On that basis the recent application for alterations to the listed building on the High Street which houses Ocean Blue is an honourable exception.

- A similar principle is in our opposition to large, inappropriate, and frequently, illuminated, signs for shopfronts in the conservation area. National chains obviously believe that corporate identity and obvious commercial presence is more important than blending in with a sensitive environment.

One example is the large signage for the new card shop, again in the High Street, next to the Market, - large, brash coloured, illuminated and applied for retrospectively. We objected that it is totally out of character and understand that enforcement action is being undertaken against the company.

- Finally there is the question of the Red Chestnut trees on South Parade, These trees have grown considerably since the last careful canopy thinning and pruning by ARB Wales some ten years ago. The work done does not include the canopy thinning done last time so the trees will grow higher and hopefully give a better view of the walls. We are pleased there has been no ugly pollarding as done elsewhere in Tenby

We understand the tree have a probable life of a further 50 to 80 years. It may be that alternate trees will be removed at some time in the future.

The Society originally urged their planting and support and welcome the careful preservation work done inside the Conservation Area doe by County and the National Park.

Trees on the South Parade divide opinion. The argument, remove or keep - and the trees, - have been bothering Tenby minds for a very long time. The photographs below show how long....



Left: Late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Note how narrow the road is and the two young men in naval uniform.. The cottages on the left are on the old garage site, now being again rebuilt as shops and affordable housing flats.

And in roughly the same position...

Right: Green's of Haverfordwest operated bus services until 1957 when they sold out to Western Welsh, now First Cymru . The bus is a Leyland Lion PLSC1 a model built from 1924 to 1927 and as the bus is registered new in Pembrokeshire "DE" and looks fresh, the photograph is probably from the late 1920's. These buses were very successful, being lighter and more powerful than the competition. This example is serving on part of the present 349 service.



## *Scotsborough House*

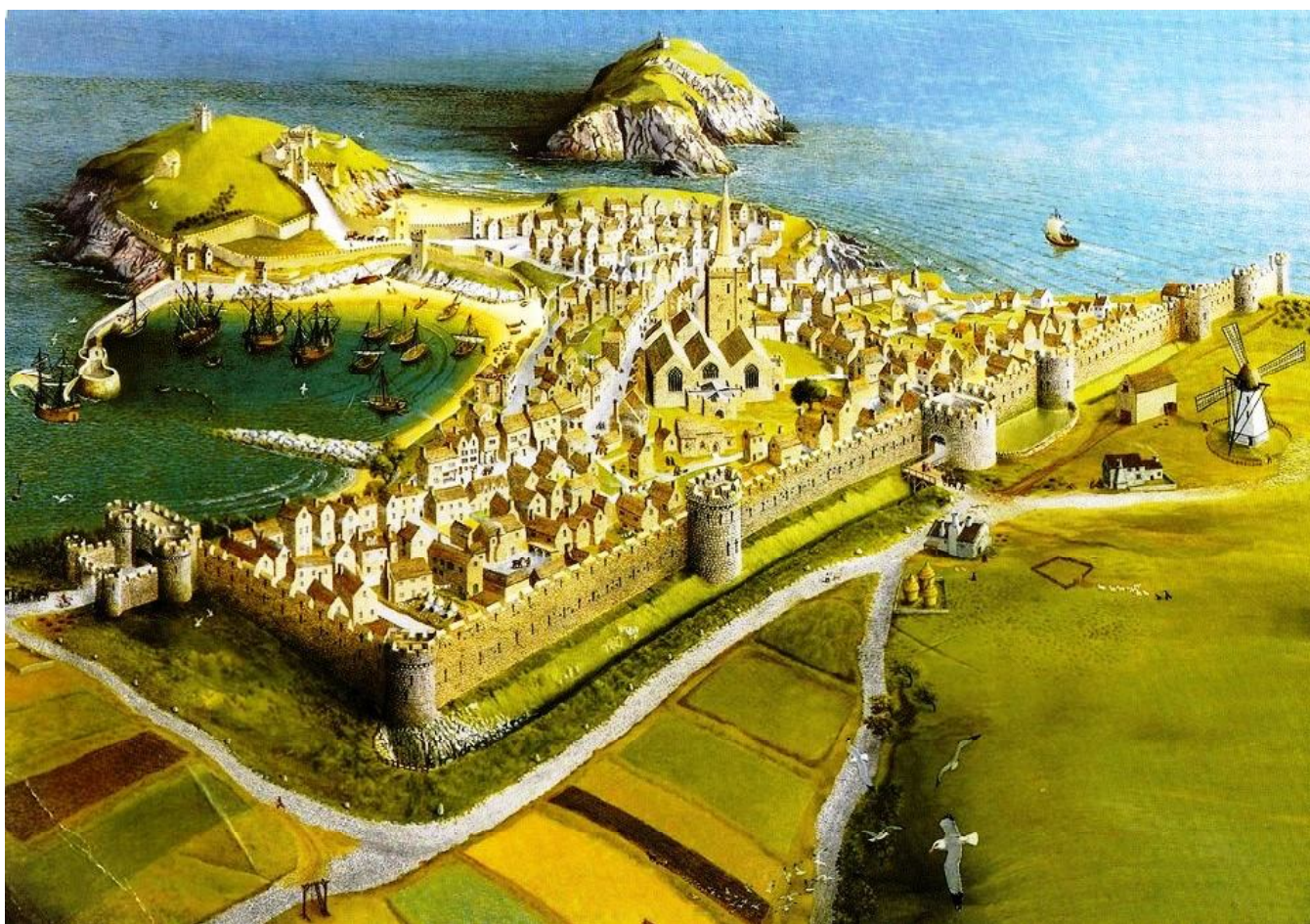
The saga of Scotsborough House rumbles on with no apparent resolution or action by Pembrokeshire County Council. This is to the despair of the Chairman and, no doubt, the increasing boredom of the membership. At the last committee meeting the question was raised as to whether the meeting felt it was worth pursuing the matter. The feeling was that it should be, The Chairman will now reapply his nose to the grindstone.

## *Heritage Blue Plaques*

The third and latest edition of our Heritage Trail Blue Plaques leaflet will need to be updated further next year. As shown in our previous Newsletter, on the 12 July a plaque was unveiled to the famous Welsh artist Gwilym Prichard, on his house in Queens Parade, Tenby. The next plaque has already been approved by the committee. This, we hope will be in Trafalgar Road to commemorate Eric Bradforth.

Eric Bradforth was born in Sheffield in 1920. He trained at Sheffield College of Art and the Royal College of Art, London. He was asked to develop a Graphic Arts department for the Royal Artillery based at Manorbier. He had an abiding affection for Pembrokeshire, having moved his family here in 1950. He died in 2012.

Eric will no doubt be remembered by members as the artist responsible for the large mural depicting Tenby history in the Market Hall. He also painted the arial view of Tenby in 1586, (Below) now displayed in Tenby Museum and Art Gallery.



## Tenby Heritage Day

It appears that Tenby Heritage Day is becoming an established success story both in numbers and participant reaction, as comments on the day and the following provisional figures suggest:

Numbers attending:-

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Lifeboat Houses	19
Tenby's oldest buildings	?
St Mary's Church	51
Town Walls Tour	89 (incl one tour the next morning!)
Harbwr Brewery	35
Tudor Merchant's House	?
Ghost Walk	16
If Walls Could Talk	3 (estimate)

People attending were a varied mix, - day visitors, visitors on a longer stay, people with holiday homes in the area and a surprisingly high number of Tenby townspeople. The Civic Society were directly involved in the Town Walls Tour in marshalling visitors for the tour of the Mayor's Parlour and stewarding visitors onto the top of the walls behind the de Valence Pavilion. The Town Walls tour was very popular, requiring two tours on the day and further tour for the overspill the following morning. The Chairman, who led all three of the tours has now recovered his voice, you will be pleased to hear. Equally popular were the visits to the Harbwr Brewery in the evening and the tour of St. Mary's, ably led by Dr. John Harrison, church musical director and Civic Society member.

Planning for next year's event will start in January..There were some difficulties with directions, liaison with the Arts Festival and the sheer numbers wanting to go on the tours. We also hope to add some other special events. Watch this space.

## Civic Society Award Scheme

Jacqui and Richard Wingfield have put forward a very good case for their proposal for an award for Clifton Rock , the house and dental surgery in Deer Park opposite the Post Office. We will now be taking this forward and hope to have an announcement in our next newsletter.

In the meantime we would be very happy to receive other nominations from members. Just as a reminder we are looking for improvements to buildings within Tenby which have an improvement to the townscape. Originally we confined the scheme to the external aspects of the building, however, a good case could be made for internal improvements which enhance or restore the original building. This is not necessarily a period restoration. Any scheme which enhances the townscape is eligible. For example, the owners could have reconfigured a building in a different or contemporary style which is an improvement on what went before.

## Tenby Nicknames

**Finally**, held over from the last issue was the article on Tenby nicknames., mostly from the 1950's. Since the original information was kindly supplied by member, Mr. Ivor Jenkins, a further list has since been supplied by Caroline Thomas, ex-Mayor and Society President. We now have enough material for a small book, so this will be just a flavor. One important point.:- Some of the nicknames

are rude, derogatory or refer to physical defects, and have been excluded. There is always a danger that the nickname has come from an embarrassing incident. If any questionable ones have slipped through I apologise in advance. No offence is intended.

First, the need for nicknames was made obvious by the limited number of surnames and first names popular at the time. For surnames we have 23 Thomases, 14 Davies, 11 Rees, 9 Williams, Richards and Griffiths, 7 Johns and 6 Lewises and Jenkins, together with a sampling of Jones, Lloyds and Harrises. First names are shared by a large number of men, - 59 Bills, Billies, Wills and Williams' 35 Jacks or Jackies, 33 Toms and Thomases, 27 Georges, 23 Edward, Ted, and Eddies and 12 Freds and Alfreds ,

The list shows what a tight-knot working community Tenby was at the time, but the addresses are not concentrated around the Harbour fishermen as you might expect. There are addresses within the town walls in St. Julian Street, Harbour Flats, Bridge Street, Crackwell Street, Tor Lane, Cresswell Street, Mary's Street Frog Street and St. George's Street, (37 in total) but there is a remarkable concentration in Trafalgar Road (16 families/addresses), St. Domingo (Again 16) and Culver Park (11)..No wonder there was such an outcry and resistance when St. Domingo was demolished, - (As shown in a previous newsletter). No doubt the houses were sub-standard but the community spirit was very strong. The other concentration was in the 19 century terraces at the back of Tenby, built to house the workers and tradesman servicing the posher addresses around the Esplanade and seafront, There are a total of 23 living in The Green, Lower Park Road, Edward Street, Park Place and Warren Street, with others along the Salterns and Marsh Road..

One particular Tenby feature is that one man's nickname was then applied to his family, Billy Aila for W R Thomas, lifeboat coxswain, Aila became the informal immediate family name so That Mrs. Thomas would become Mrs. Aila., Similarly for, Charlie Hermann for Charles Thomas, - family became Plumber/Hermann, Josh for Tommy Richards, Happy Jim for Jim Griffiths of the Salterns, Hopper for Tommy Williams of St. Domingo, Oscar for Oscar Thomas, Snell for Tom Lewis, plus one other too rude to repeat,. Jack Rees family, of Cob Lane all became known as Skeeps or Jack Spratts. A final example is that Tom Jenkins, gave his nickname, Tosh to his family in Culver Park.

A few nicknames seem to refer to favourite turns of speech, :- "Jack 'er Said" Evans and "Davies 'Il Pay" , both of Culver Park, , "Billy My Lord "(Billy Jenkins) and "Billy My Lovely" (Billy Price) a boatman and "You-aye-You" Smith of Bridge Street; Hermann Thomas, a well-known Tenby man was known as "Look Up".

Or to favourite food, :- Walter "Pea Soup" Rees, "Cod's Head" Richards, "Milk" Williams. Some connect with education or status, real or perceived;:- Top 'At de Winton, Aga Khan , - Charlie Lloyd of St. Domingo, Top Crust, -Tudor Hughes, chemist and ex-mayor,

Others clearly related to the trades followed, :-, Billy Cats Eyes for Billy Davies a council workman who lived in Jones Terrace, Teddy "Waistcoat" Howells, an ostler,, "Jack the Sweep" John and Billy "Bun" Davies, a baker.

Nor did the women escape. There was Annie the Dogs, married to Dirty Dick, Emma Goose, Flying Ada, Molly on the Hill and Natch ta Tail . News of the World, wife of Heccy Thomas is self-explanatory as is Jane Screech Murder but Rosie Trolly?

Yet more, however, relate to nothing more than masterful powers of invention. Why was George Hughes "Bees Wings"?, Billy Phillips "Baulk 'a Teal? What story or event led to James Parcell of the Green getting the nickname of "Forty Eight"? "The Wogler" John? "Jack Below" who lived in St. Domingo? Dinky December for Ben Davies. One that has a wonderful ring to it is Ernie "Persian Slippers" Taylor, but perhaps "Tickle me" is perhaps best left anonymous. Finally, Ivor Jenkins grandfather, was known as "Grinder". Why? Perhaps he can tell us.

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