

# **HISTORICAL INFORMATION**

## **PARISH HALL, CREIGIAU (The First 100 Years)**



## **PARISH OF PENTYRCH AND CAPEL LLANILLTERN**

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# 1. BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH HALL

## 1.1 History

The Parish Hall was built in 1913, so this booklet was created to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that event.

Pentyrch was certainly well established by the 12<sup>th</sup> century when, under the Normans, and the influence of Canterbury, the country was divided into diocese and parishes. The Diocese of Llandaff was established and St Catwg's became a parish church under its control, making the parish one of the oldest in the Diocese, with its northern boundary extending to Miskin. (*The Parish Church of St Catwg, Pentyrch: Gough 2011*).

There are two Papal Bulls of 1128 and 1129 referring to "Ecclesia Pentirech", but we know the foundation of the Parish extends directly back to St Catwg in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, the parish was, outside the village of Pentyrch, a collection of scattered farms. The village of Creigiau was established in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with the development of the quarry in 1870 and the resultant rail line needed to ship the stone to Cardiff for use in the building of Cardiff Docks and Guest-Keen Tremorfa Steel works. (*Real Cardiff: Peter Finch*) and the development of a passenger line from the Valleys to Barry. There were also drift mines that can now be seen in the woodlands at Tyn-y-coed. Creigiau, as a result, developed as a village in its own right by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Pentyrch Parochial Church Council (PCC) was spending quite a lot of money. For instance, in 1900/1901 work was carried out on the Parish Church that had not been completed in 1857 when the church was built: corbels were carved in the Chancel; terminals to the arch in the Nave were carved; a string course in the cornice and central panel of the pulpit were carved; new tiles were laid in the floor of the nave; a footpace around the Communion Table was created; memorial stones were moved from the floor to the east wall of the sanctuary. All this cost £90. In addition, plans were drawn up by Mr T.H. Sparks, to extend the vestry to accommodate the housing for the organ which was installed in 1910.

Additionally, the minutes of the PCC of 29<sup>th</sup> April 1911 states:

*"Mr J Wheatley one of the Church Wardens reported that he had been in communication with the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, who had advanced the sum of £200 under a mortgage deed dated the 20<sup>th</sup> day of January 1891 at £4 per cent per annum interest which was expended in building a Parsonage house and offices and to be repaid within a period of 20 years from the date. Subsequently the period of 20 years was extended by 16 years. The final payment of principal and interest becoming due in the year 1926."* He proposed and it was accepted that the PCC should take over the payment of all monies.

There was also in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, expenditure on the other side of the Parish with the construction of St Peter's Church, in what is now Gwaelod-y-Garth. This was essentially a tin structure, but in 1954 that part of the Parish was annexed into the Parish of Tongwynlais, and St Peter's was demolished at about that time.

So the Parish had undertaken considerable expenditure on the Parish Church and St Peter's Church and now it was looking to develop a Hall in Creigiau.

The very first formal PCC meeting in the Parish took place in the Assembly Rooms (were the Assembly rooms in the Creigiau Inn, then, I understand, a Temperance Inn) in Creigiau on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1904 at the instigation of the Vicar, Revd Henry Williams. Until this point there was no formal PCC,

but there were Church Wardens' Accounts. PCC meetings were now held on a regular basis, and in the PCC minutes of **7<sup>th</sup> January 1911**, the following is minuted:

*"Mr E. R. Marten suggested the necessity of creating a Hall in Creigiau. Resolved that each member of the Church Council be provided with a book authorising each member to receive subscriptions towards same books to be presented at the Quarterly meetings and an account to be opened namely The Creigiau Church Hall Fund".*

This then, was the first reference to the Church Hall. Mr Marten had identified the need for a meeting place, but not the need for a church: obviously, it was not too far to walk to Pentyrch or to St David's in Groesfaen, which was itself in its infancy having been built where there were very few houses, but the reason for its building does not extend to this booklet.

The next reference in the PCC minutes comes three months later at the meeting at Pentyrch Village School on **29<sup>th</sup> April 1911**:

*"The Vicar presented a letter from Messrs Warren stating that Mr Wingfield was prepared to grant a 99 year lease at a nominal ground rent of 5/- of the site north of Creigiau Stores for a Church Room to be controlled by the Llandaff Diocesan Fund. The site after taking for roads on east and south sides measures some 870 square yards and would have a road frontage eastwards of 91 feet".*

It was resolved that the offer be accepted. *"Proposed by Mr E. R. Marten and seconded by Mr C. G. Hughes that the Council's thanks be conveyed to Mr Wingfield for his generous offer".*

On **6<sup>th</sup> July 1912** at the PCC meeting in the Pentyrch Village School, the following was minuted: *"Plans of proposed new Church Hall at Creigiau were referred to Building Committee".*

There is no further mention until the meeting on **3<sup>rd</sup> January 1914** when: *"It was resolved to hold the annual jumble sale at the Creigiau Parish Hall on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1914".* This was followed by the decision to hold a PCC meeting in the Hall on **11<sup>th</sup> July 1914**.

Fortunately, I have been able to access the Building Committee Minutes at the Glamorgan Archives, and the following are extracted minutes from that small book, that will illustrate some of the detail entailed in the planning and building, and in the setting up of a management structure, once the Hall was completed. In fact the Committee was in place by Thursday **18<sup>th</sup> April 1912**, under the title; "Parish Hall Committee" and it met in the Creigiau Inn. The following was agreed:

- A Parish Hall would be built with seating accommodation for 300
- Mr T. H. Sparkes (y Gocyd, Pentyrch) would prepare plans carrying out the suggestions of the committee including heating operations, by the next meeting, and Mr Sparkes was also asked to give an estimate of costs.
- It was resolved, subject to the approval of the ladies, to hold a bazaar *"...to provide means for building"*.

The next minuted meeting was held on **31<sup>st</sup> January 1913**, at which Mr Sparkes was directed to look again at his draft plan *"with the idea of reducing the cost"*. The main suggestion was to do away with two anterooms and make a room under the stage. Mr Sparkes was asked to prepare plans for the following meeting. At this meeting also, it was revealed that cash in hand and promises made amounted to £400. The committee also resolved to look at borrowing money with *"all the committee to be guarantors"*.

Mr Sparkes' amendments were presented at the meeting in the Village School in Pentyrch on **13<sup>th</sup> February 1913**, where it showed a large room on the west side of the Hall instead of a room under the stage, as it was considered more convenient and less expensive. The proposals were approved

and Mr Sparkes was instructed to: *“prepare a bill of quantitie and specification”*. It was resolved that after the Diocese had approved the plans, Mr Sparkes should seek tenders. The Vicar was also authorised to apply for a grant of £25 and a loan of £300 from the Llandaff Church Extension Fund.

At the meeting on **31<sup>st</sup> March 1913**, the Vicar reported that a grant of £25 and a loan of £700 (I suspect that the reference in a minute at the previous meeting was wrong, as £700 was mentioned in later meetings as well) at an interest rate of 2½% for ten years had been granted by Llandaff Church Extension Society. Tenders for the building work had been submitted and ranged from £911-7-0d to £1079-10-0d. The committee decided that the tenders were too high and that a discussion should take place to *“... meet expenditure which they could afford”*.

It was then proposed that the following items should be left out:

1. The terra cotta ornamentation throughout the building
2. The north vestibule.
3. Wainscoting
4. The Gothic arches inside to be replaced by flat heads
5. Changes to the roof trusses to bring the tender to £725 plus £25 for contingencies making a total of £750.

It was further proposed that the tender of Owen and Davies (a Creigiau building firm) be provisionally accepted subject to the alterations being agreed between them and the Architect, Mr T. H. Sparkes.

In the meeting of **28<sup>th</sup> April 1913**, Mr Sparkes reported that the alterations brought the Owen and Davies price from £911-7-0d to £799 including the £25 for contingencies and the quotation was accepted. The meeting was then able to direct that the £700 loan be authorised and a further loan of £300 from the Ecclesiastical Insurance Society on the same terms, be negotiated. Mr Sparkes was asked to submit his fees for the preparation of the plans and for *“... superintending the works to a finish”*.

The contractors were given to the end of September to complete the work, and after the building was completed, a management committee would be formed whose primary function would be to ensure the relinquishing of the debt.

A site meeting took place on **9<sup>th</sup> May 1913** when, because of the nature of the ground, it was resolved to set the stage and the anterooms at the south end of the building.

A further site meeting took place on **29<sup>th</sup> May 1913**, when discussion arose out of a minute of the meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1913, when it was resolved that the contractors should be asked for a surety or a bond of £500 for the completion of the work. At this site meeting they offered the lease of a house in Creigiau as the surety, and this was accepted. The laying of a foundation stone was discussed and the Vicar said he had already been in touch with Mr Wingfield who could not attend because he was at camp for a month. It was proposed and accepted that Mrs Marten of Henstaff Court should be asked to perform the ceremony on 9<sup>th</sup> June at 6 p.m. The contractors were asked to present Mrs Marten with a mallet and the Building Committee would supply a silver trowel. The stone, measuring 3 feet by 2 feet, was ordered from J. Jenkins of Treforest.

At the meeting of the Building Committee on **26<sup>th</sup> September 1913** it seems that everything was not progressing smoothly. The builders asked for £200 on account, but that was not acceptable *“as the contractors had not complied with the wishes of the committee”* who then said the builders should receive £100.

At this meeting it was resolved to follow up those who had pledged to the building fund but had not made their subscriptions, and the bond from the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company, referred to earlier, was applied for at a rate of 4% over ten years.

On **7 October** it was accepted that the vestibule should be tiled with 6 inches by 3 inches tiles instead of wood at a cost of £4

The meeting of **6<sup>th</sup> November 1913** saw moves underway to arrange the opening ceremony. Mr Wingfield confirmed that he would be able to perform the opening ceremony at 3 p.m. on Thursday **11<sup>th</sup> December 1913** followed by tea “... and that the ladies of the district be asked to supply provisions”. A grand concert was then to be held in the evening at 7.30. 250 chairs were ordered from West and Collier of Henley-on-Thames at a cost of £1-11-0d per dozen. Four 300 candlepower Miller pendant lamps were ordered from Cross Brothers 23/6 at £1-3-6d each; one 100 candlepower at 15/6 and four bracked lamps for the cloakroom, and an oilcan. Two shelves were to be erected in the scullery and handrails in the cloakrooms. It was also resolved that an entrance would be made from the main road to the Hall.

The meeting on **22 November 1913** changed the opening ceremony from 3 p.m. to 3.15 p.m.

On Saturday **6<sup>th</sup> December 1913**, it was reported that Mr D. J. Morgan, an Estate Agent who lived locally, had paid for fencing around the Hall. A Presentation Key had been ordered at a cost of £5-5-0d. The architect had ordered gates for the entrance at a cost of £5-2-0d which would be suitable when the handrail had been completed.

And so, it was now completed and the Hall was open.



**Figure 1:** Mr. Mrs R Marten Wedding Day

**Figure 1** is a photograph of Mrs Gladys and Mr Ralph Marten on their wedding day, taken, it is thought, at Henstaff Court. Mrs Marten was the daughter of Mr David and Mrs Margaret Williams. Mrs Williams, a widow with seven children, had moved from Pembrokeshire to Merthyr where she married Mr Williams who owned the South Wales and Taff Vale Brewery and lived in Henstaff Court. Gladys was the only child of that marriage and was bequeathed Henstaff Court on the death of her father.

After the Hall had been declared open, there then followed a meeting of the Building Committee which was held on **20<sup>th</sup> December 1913** in the Hall, where it was reported that the receipts for the opening day concert amounted to £19-18-1d.

The builders had been paid their completion money. Mr Wingfield had sent a cheque for £110 that is, £100 subscription and £10 towards the cost of a piano. The Hall was to be insured for £1,000. The final costings were presented at the meeting of **13 May 1914** where final costings were

presented, considered and outstanding bills paid. Mr Sparkes showed that the total cost of the building when the necessary extras were included came to £804-13-6d. It was stated that the builders had been paid £700 and that a further £80 should be paid.

At this meeting a scale of hire charges was set out:

A dance	£2-2-0d (Today worth approximately £190 or, using average earnings as a comparison, £620!)
Whist Drive and Dance	£1-11-6d
Whist Drive	£1-1-0d
Concert	£1-1-0d
Public Meeting	15-0d
Ante Room	2-6d

Persons having the Hall free of charge were required to pay the cost of the lighting and heating.

At the **July 1914** meeting, Mr Sparkes was asked to get quotations for heating the Hall. Immediately after completion the Hall was used for concerts, war lectures, whist drives and dances, "volunteers for drilling", and many other functions. A Ladies' Committee was set up, initially to hold a sale of work, at which 1/- would be charged, including tea, at the opening time of 2.45 p.m., but 6d after 5 p.m. Children were 6d all day.

On **8 January 1926**, Colonel M. Wingfield had granted an additional piece of land on the N.E. side of the Hall.

In **1927** electric lights were installed and a plug for playing cinematograph.

At the PCC meeting of **4<sup>th</sup> October 1919**, it was proposed:

1. *"That each church should form its own committee which should have complete charge financially of the upkeep of its own church.*
2. *That each church should contribute a percentage of the amount required to pay the curate and lay reader, which should be paid to the Vicar and Church Wardens' a/c.*
3. *That the Vicar and Church Wardens be exofficio members of each committee.*

Within the minutes there is no indication whether the proposals were passed or not, but I believe separate PCCs were established, and the administration of the Parish Hall fell to St David's Church. At that time, the Parish Church was able to use the old school room in Pentyrch which was situated above the church where Cefn Llan is now.

## **2. THE RESTORATION OF THE PARISH HALL**

On **26<sup>th</sup> October 1981** the purchase of the freehold of the land was completed.

It was not until **31 January 2000** that the Parish Hall was granted a grade 2 listing for:

*"...its special interest as a small village hall of unusual Arts and Crafts design." (Cadw Listed Building Database Record)*

This is the description of the exterior of the building as set out in the Cadw database:

*"Small Arts and Crafts purpose-built village/church hall. Roughcast with roof of small slates; one wing replaced; terracotta ridge and coping; central ventilator, overhanging sprocketed eaves. Windows are all pointed arched with thick moulded wooden frames and*

*quarry glazing with margins of coloured glass. Main hall range is parallel to street with 2 short cross bays to each side in front, and rear cross wing with outshuts. The 2 bays each have matching pointed arched doorways with quarry overlight, part-glazed double doors with decorative rail, boarded below: these are flanked by lancets, all set back with an arch extending to wide slanting angle buttresses extending out from deep kneelers; further doorway on inner side of cross wing. Similar buttresses separate the wide-arched cross windows of the main range; plinth. Gable-ends have similar buttresses including two tall ones either side of wide pointed-arched windows. To rear similar arched windows and high double doors; some altered glazing to side and rear. Stamped hoppers."*

In **September 2001** a report undertaken by the Llandaff Diocesan scheme for the inspection of churches, was completed by Peter Bird FSA RIBA. This identified works that needed to be undertaken immediately and then others within an eighteen month period, and others within the period of the quinquennial (5 years') inspection: the total estimated cost was £45,485. This served to focus minds on the need for an action plan to meet the repair costs. It was bolstered by the final paragraph of Mr Bird's conclusions: *The building is essentially in good order. It is near the centre of the village and has sufficient space and accommodation to provide a useful and readily adaptable Hall for community use for the foreseeable future"*.



In many ways this was the impetus needed for action to begin. A Church Hall Management Committee was formed from members of the Parish and the Church Hall users' groups that was tasked to meet every term to focus on continued maintenance and development of the Church Hall and its day-to-day running. Time was spent clearing the grounds and cleaning the Hall, industrial cleaners were used initially, and a regular cleaner was appointed. Ways to raise money were addressed: the WI set up a series of coffee mornings, moves were made to let the Hall for children's parties, but perhaps the biggest move was to set up a committee to explore ways of raising money to enable the repairs and improvements to the Hall to be undertaken. The Heritage Lottery Fund was mentioned very early as a way forward, but I suspect, little was known of the work involved in making applications or of the other opportunities of fund-raising available. So started a long, difficult, and time-expensive process that brought the Hall to the fine condition it is in today, some twelve years after the restoration process began and 100 years after the Hall was first commissioned.



**Figure 2:** Water ingress

By **2004**, the extent of the need for repair and refurbishment became more obvious (**Figures 2, 3 and 4**) as professionals began their surveys, and the nature of the problems were revealed. The estimated construction costs in front of the committee were £161,668 for external work on the building and £127,270 for internal work. It was very quickly realised that the acquisition of such sums required applications to major fund-raising bodies. The Lottery Heritage Fund and its link with the Welsh Assembly Government became the obvious source of application and the process of detailed form-filling started. Alongside that, the Parish began its serious fund-raising process as did the Hall users; and activities such as coffee-mornings, lunches, concerts, dances, raffles all played their part. A number of local organisations donated monies and Tesco Extra in Talbot Green made the restoration one of its charities for the year (2005), and many parishioners shared the task of standing in the store selling raffle tickets for the prizes donated by Tesco.



**Figure 3:** Broken Drain

Close on £2,000 was raised in that venture. Letters were sent off to various organisations that supported such appeals and donations from £50 to around £5,000 were received.

By **2006**, estimates had been received for the cost of the initial work on the ceiling, the flooring, plasterwork, decorating and a disabled ramp costing all told £27,642 which was met in its entirety by the Welsh Assembly Government. Then came the bills for drainage, electrical work, radiator covers (£6,395.25), woodworm infestation, window repairs, further plastering (£3,217.15) and, in **2008**, a new roof for £117,618 which was met by the Welsh Assembly Government. Then followed the new fitted kitchen at a cost of £12,473.91 and the back garden to enable the small children to play outside in a safe environment £5,291.05. The grant from the Assembly to off-set the cost of these two developments was £14,739.45. By this time, we had a Hall of which we could be proud, indeed, visitors began to say what a pleasure it was to come to such a Hall.

We are, of course incredibly grateful for the grants received from the Welsh Assembly Government. A condition of the grants was that we had to match the funding, hence the need for the extensive fund-raising by local activities and by searching for other non-Governmental sources of money.

Although the bulk of the work has now been done to set the Hall able to look to the future with confidence, it has not yet finished.



**Figure 4:** Fundraising at Tesco, Talbot Green: "Every Little Helps!"

At the time of writing, fundraising is progressing to replace the lighting system that does not meet current standards. Of course, even after all the work that has been done, fundraising must continue to meet on-going costs, and, hopefully, build up a reserve to meet maintenance needs as they arise.



**Figure 5:** Alison receiving her plate from Rev. John Binny

Many people were involved over the years in creating the funds necessary to restore the building to its present state, but the bulk of the work and the management of the project came down to a small group. It would be invidious of me to mention people by name, as I would, no doubt, leave someone out and I would not want to do that. There is, however in the archives, a photograph of the committee that carried the work forward, and that photograph is enclosed, as is one of the lady whose name appears on all the grant applications and to whom the Parish presented a Rumney Potteries plate in recognition of all her work, Mrs Alison Woodley.

### **3. USE OF THE PARISH HALL AS A PARISH AND COMMUNITY FACILITY**

From the beginning the Hall (in all the planning called The Parish Hall) was envisaged as a Hall with Parish and Community use. It is believed, although documentary evidence is not available, that



services at least once a month were held in the Hall from the very beginning and certainly in very early days a Sunday School was held there. By the 1970s a bustling Junior Church was thriving with 100 or so children attending.

On the day of opening, a Grand Concert was held, as has been already stated, and the Hall soon became used for dances, meetings, whist drives and the like, and on **16 September 1919**, the Pentyrch Scout Master requested the use of the Hall on two nights a week to hold scout meetings: he was refused, but granted one night a week.

The Hall was obviously being used extensively by the Parish and the village; the following is a minute from a Parish meeting of **30<sup>th</sup> September 1926**:

*“A discussion arose as to the organising of a Winter’s programme at the Church Hall at Creigiau in connection with St David’s but in view of the already existing Creigiau District Social organisation it was felt to be inexpedient at this juncture to clash with it”.*

Throughout most of the 1930s the Church Hall account remained in credit from 6/10d in 1931, to 1/7d in 1932, rising to a credit of £4-1-9½d in 1938, but falling to a deficit of £3-11-0½d in 1939.

The Parish Ledger Book shows that in 1941 Church Hall Services took £7-5-11d rising to £10-13-11d in 1943. These were services held on the first Sunday in the month. Income for the hiring of the Hall during the same period ranged from £22-8-6d in 1942 to £70-3-6d in 1945. Soon after this period and for some years afterwards, the income from the Hall was included within the accounts of St David’s Church, and not itemised separately.

In **1956** a list was produced (probably for a Parish Vestry Meeting) of users of the Hall subdivided into Church and Community use. Church use included:

- Service on first Sunday in month;
- Junior Church on three Sundays in the month;
- Lent lectures;
- PCC meetings;
- Hall Committee meetings;
- Mothers’ Union meetings;
- St David’s Day lunch;
- St David’s Day children’s fancy dress party;
- Harvest Suppers;
- Frugal Lunches;
- Autumn Fayre.

Community use:

- Playgroup five mornings;
- Mother and toddler group, one afternoon;
- Badminton Club two evenings;
- Table Tennis one evening;
- Brownies two evenings;
- Guides and Rainbows two evenings;
- Scouts and Cubs two evenings;
- Keep Fit one evening;
- Youth Club one evening.

This makes ten evenings a week, so there must have been some activities that were held early and late evenings, as, indeed, happens now. In addition, the Women’s Institute met monthly and additional activities included Whist Drives, Concerts and Dances.

The Hall has been used then, extensively, for both Church activities and Community activities including as a polling station. Many of the activities listed have continued to the present day.

Although not primarily built as a dual-purpose building (as many churches are today), services have been held in the Hall for most of its one hundred years, on at least a monthly basis.

During the late **1980s**, however, the service was stopped for some reason that is not clear: perhaps it had something to do with the state of the building, although other meetings continued.

However, when the Revd John W. Binny was installed and inducted as Vicar of the Benefice of Pentyrch with Capel Llanilltern on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003, one of his first tasks was to explore ways that the monthly Sunday service could be restored. By September of that year the first of the whole Benefice services took place, and since then the number of Communicants from the village of Creigiau has gradually increased. It is now a popular service and one that is firmly entrenched within the service timetable of the Benefice.

#### **4. WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?**

The external and internal structure and decoration of the Hall are now in excellent condition. It is first and foremost a Church Building (not as one Creigiau website states: “a village hall known as the Church Hall”), which is used extensively by the Parish and by village organisations. There is a management committee of Church and village members which can inform the Church of its use and its condition. One of the conditions for the award of grants is that regular inspections of the building should be undertaken. It is hoped that there will be an independent inspection of its condition at least every five years, just as churches are under a Quinquennial Inspection, and any problems that arise, receiving addressed.



**Figure 6:** Welsh Assembly Plaque

It is incumbent on the Parochial Church Council to ensure that the condition of the Hall is not allowed to deteriorate as it had done previously, and that it will remain for many decades to come a Hall of which the Church can be proud, in which the village will share that pride, so that both bodies can benefit from having such a fine, cared-for structure.



**Figure 7:** All-Age Eucharist Service, October 2012

#### **Bibliography:**

- A History of the Parish Church of St Catwg, Pentyrch: Gough 2011
- PCC Minutes Book 1904 to present day
- The Church Hall Committee Minutes Books to 1978
- The Building Committee Minutes Book 1912—1914
- Parish Ledger Books 1941—1952