

Colwyn Bay Heritage Group Annual Report 2016

I'm pleased to report on another year of activity in which the heritage group continued to enhance its reputation in the town. The group was able to make the town's history and heritage more accessible through publications and digital outlets, it continued to collect valuable memories and it contributed to consultations and reviews relating to the development of the town.

Walk booklets and Walks

The English version of the Old Colwyn Walk booklet was produced early in the year and we were able to distribute copies at the Annual General Meeting. The booklet followed the same format as our previous publications and was well received. The Welsh edition was published in the early Spring. An inaugural walk based on the booklet was postponed to the summer when 15 people participated including the Vicar of Old Colwyn who opened up the redundant St. Catherine's Church, a rare treat. The walk was led by David Masding and David Birch, to whom we are grateful. A second walk took place in the Autumn under the auspices of Conwy Walking Week and the Health and Well-being project. Over 20 people participated.

A short but well received walk around the centre of Colwyn Bay was held during the Inspire Day in the late Summer, using the Town Centre Walk booklet, again thanks to David Masding.

Oral History

Continuing the focus on Old Colwyn a series of interviews were recorded with people born and brought up in the locality. Ten interviews were completed and will be uploaded to the Group's website in the not too distant future.

An e-book of people's memories of the Pier was published for purchase through the Amazon digital book-store. Contributors were given free printed copies and a few printed copies were made available for sale. Thanks are due to Cindy Lowe for the research, transcripts and production and to Eunice Roberts for finding the means to print copies at reasonable cost and for assembling them.

Cindy is now collecting memories of school days in Colwyn Bay and is moving towards producing our second e-book having obtained recordings or transcripts from 32 people.

Exhibitions, Information, the Timeline and Publicity

The Group is often asked to contribute to exhibitions, conferences, fayres and town promotion days. With help from the Townscape Heritage Initiative we were able to purchase a set of exhibition boards and two pop-up display posters and to produce a number of information leaflets. We were also able to reconfigure our website to enable it to be downloaded onto mobile phones and tablets.

Eleven exhibition displays (texts and photos), in Welsh and English, were prepared for the exhibition boards and these are now with the printer.

The Timeline was uploaded to the Group's website and is slowly being modified to display information by category in addition to the chronological displays.

The Groups Facebook page and Twitter accounts continue to attract visitors from across the United Kingdom and sometimes further afield.

Consultations and presentations

The Group was invited to provide information and offer its opinion on a number of new initiatives in the town. These included:

- > The suggested 'postcard' information paving sets for the new promenade
- > The Colwyn Bay Conservation Area Management Plan
- > The Prince Madoc Project
- > The Rhos Point development proposals with specific reference to retaining the Rhos pier toll house.

We promoted the work of the group through exhibitions at the Colwyn bay Inspire Day and Forties Festival and attended initial meetings exploring the establishment of a countrywide Heritage Forum and a Colwyn Bay Heritage Forum.

Acknowledgements and appreciations.

The Group continued to receive support from a number of organisations throughout the year including the THI and the Colwyn Bay Town Council, for which we were grateful, but I want to thank the Colwyn Bay Library particularly for the expert advice and encouragement we received on a very regular basis through Eunice Roberts. The Group only exists through the partnerships it has with the local authority departments and its link with the library is a fine example of collaborative working.

Thank you, to all those who gave their time and effort to the Group in 2016.