

# Capel

CYMDEITHAS TREFTADAETH Y CAPELI  
*THE CHAPELS HERITAGE SOCIETY*



TAFLEN WYBODAETH LEOL

CAS-LLWCHWR A GORSEINON

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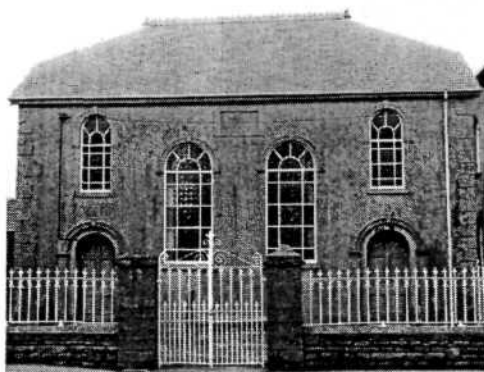
*LOCAL INFORMATION SHEET*

*LOUGHOR AND GORSEINON*

## **Moriah Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Loughor**

Howell Harris visited this area in 1739 and shortly afterwards a small congregation began to meet in the kitchen of Ty-fry Farmhouse, Loughor, as a branch of Goppa, Pontarddulais. Numbers grew, and by the 1820s the need was felt for a meeting house. Accordingly, a barn standing opposite the farmhouse was converted for use as a chapel and opened on 11 October 1828. Like many local buildings of the time, it was thatched, hence its name 'Capel To Gwellt' (thatched roof chapel).

Numbers increased still further during the Revivals of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and by



*The old chapel, built 1842*

the 1840s the congregation had outgrown the little chapel. In 1842 a new chapel was built on the same plot of land and named Moriah, with a graveyard attached. Chapel records indicate that it was whitewashed. A gallery was added in 1849, and later a chapel house and stable were built at the eastern end. During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the church was involved in the establishment of Bethel, Gowerton in 1873 and Libanus, Gorseinon in 1890.

As the population of the locality grew, so did the membership at Moriah, and by the 1890s the old



*The new chapel, built 1898*

chapel, which seated three hundred, was inadequate for the congregation. It was decided to rebuild the chapel once again. The new chapel was opened on 12 September 1898, and seated 650. In 1903 the old chapel was restored and converted into a schoolroom.

### **Evan Roberts**

Moriah Chapel is probably best known through its connection with Evan Roberts the Revivalist. His parents, Henry and Hannah Roberts, had been members at Moriah since 1873. Evan was born in 1878 and baptised at the chapel soon afterwards. The family lived



*The Evan Roberts memorial*

at Island House in Bwlchymynydd. From the age of twelve he worked locally, first as a collier and later as a blacksmith, and became a member at Moriah in 1891. His dramatic experiences in the meeting at Blaenannerch, whilst



away studying at Newcastle Emlyn, are well documented elsewhere, but it was here at Moriah and nearby at Pisgah and Libanus chapels, that he conducted his first week-long mission in October and November 1904, before embarking on his wider ministry. After his death in 1951 he was buried here and there is a prominent memorial to him in the chapel grounds.

### **Pisgah Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Loughor Road, Bwlchymynydd**

The cause at Pisgah began on 15 January 1893 when the owner of the local Broadoak Colliery, Samuel Thomas, instituted a Sunday School in a room above the colliery offices. After two years he decided that a permanent building was desirable, so he set aside a plot of land nearby and asked Evan Roberts, who worked at the colliery and was involved with the Sunday School, to



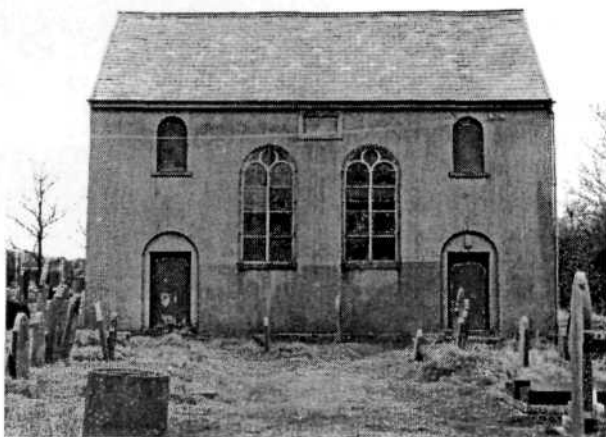
superintend the construction of a schoolroom. This was named Pisgah, and served both as a schoolroom and as a place of worship for a branch congregation of Moriah chapel. Evan Roberts continued as overseer of the Sunday School here, and it was one of the places where he conducted his mission in October and November 1904. It continued to receive financial support from its mother church for many years, and in 1914 a new organ was purchased at a cost of £15 10s.

### **Brynteg Independent Chapel, Gorseinon**

The cause here began in the 1690s when a branch of the church at Tirdwncyn (which was later to grow into Mynydd-bach Independent Church), began to hold meetings in Loughor. These were held at a farmhouse in the Upper Town area of Loughor, believed to be Ty-fry, where Moriah had its beginnings some fifty years later.

Over the next two centuries the congregation grew steadily and successively outgrew one home after another. First of all they moved to an area about a mile from Ty-fry, at Rhyd-y-maerdy, which was later to become part of Gorseinon. Here a meeting house was built and the surrounding land used as a burial ground. This was to remain their home for nearly a century, throughout which time the membership grew gradually, until in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the chapel was too small for the congregation. Accordingly a new chapel was built nearby at Penyrheol, and named Brynteg. Two cottages stand on the site of the old meeting house today, but it is unclear whether it was demolished before they were built, or whether it was converted into houses.

In 1847, Brynteg Chapel was found to be too small once again and it was rebuilt on the same site. Later on, the growth of industry in this area during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century brought about a great many changes, as the population expanded massively and the town of Gorseinon spread across what had once been open countryside with sparse habitation. As the population grew, so did the church membership and some fifty years later Brynteg Chapel was once again found to be too small to



*The old Brynteg Chapel, built in 1847*

