

The Father Ignatius Memorial Trust

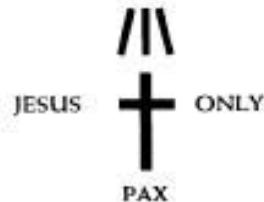
NEWSLETTER

NO. 50 SPRING 2022



The ecumenical Father Ignatius Memorial Trust was established in 1967 and organises an annual Pilgrimage to Llanthony & Capel-y-ffin. The Trust has in its care the statue of Our Lady at Capel-y-ffin Monastery as well as the ruins of the adjacent Abbey Church, and the nearby Wayside Calvary. The Monastery was founded in 1870 by Fr Ignatius OSB (Joseph Leycester Lyne 1837-1908), first restorer of monastic life for men in the Church of England and popular mission preacher. Fr Ignatius' body is buried within the Abbey Church; further information about him can be found on the Trust website: www.fatherignatius.org.uk

Y GWIR YN ERBYN Y BYD



Charity Commissioners'
Registration No. 253225

Trustees

Caroline Woollard (Hon Chairman)

Hugh Allen

Dr Peter Davies (Hon Secretary)

Revd Canon Philip Wyn Davies ssc

Revd Jeremy Dowding ssc

Andrew Knill (Hon Treasurer)

Stanley Knill

Rachael C. Rogers (Curator,

Abergavenny Museum)

Rev Bernard Sixtus

Revd Richard Williams

Michael Woodward (Newsletter Editor)

Consultant: Philip Chatfield

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Update on the Work of the Trust

WELCOME TO THE 2022 Fr Ignatius Memorial Trust Newsletter; we very much hope you will enjoy reading it and learning more about the work of the Trust.

Although the Abbey Church is now sadly unsafe for public access, the Trust continues to maintain its lower west wall, outside which the annual Pilgrimage ends, as well as the site of the Wayside Calvary, and the statue of Our Lady outside the monastery.

In addition, we hope you will be able to join us for the annual Pilgrimage to Llanthony and Capel-y-ffin organised by the Trust (see back page for details).

From the Chairman...

Ascension Day 2022

AS I SIT DOWN TO WRITE, the world around is in turmoil. There is war in Ukraine, another mass shooting tragedy in the USA, people are worried about the cost of living, and there are still ructions going on about standards of behaviour in public life.

It is all getting to be a bit too much. And yet, even with all the madness going on, there are still small pockets of calm, of fellowship and prayer. One of those must surely be our pilgrimage from Llanthony to Capel-y-Ffin, which this year takes place on September 3.

Last year's pilgrimage was a great success, albeit we were unable to gather at Llanthony because the road

between there and Capel-y-Ffin had partially collapsed. Instead, we started with Mass at St Mary's, Hay-on-Wye, by kind permission of Fr Richard Williams, who presided at the service, with Fr Jeremy preaching.

The opportunity to share a picnic lunch was curtailed by the appearance of the Sussex Police Band who were playing a concert in the church later that afternoon. So it was over the Gospel Pass to Capel-y-Ffin, only to find that St Mary's was unusable as work was being carried out to make it safe to conduct a wedding there later that year.

Undeterred, we sat on the churchyard wall and listened to Fr Ben Rabjohns preach before processing to the Calvary, Statue of Our Lady, and a welcome cup of tea at the Monastery, organised by Sue and Andrew Knill.

A somewhat unusual annual pilgrimage but, in its own way, harking back to the early days when the little church

at Capel-y-Ffin would have overflowed with pilgrims who might very well have sat on the churchyard wall themselves. The good news is that the road is now passable so we'll be returning to the normal programme, albeit the pilgrimage will now take place on the first Saturday in September, returning to a date within the period of the 1880 apparitions of Our Lady (August 30 to September 15) rather than earlier in August. This was always when it was held in the 1950s and early '60s. Full details are on the back page.

Farewells

This last year or so has seen some farewells among the trustees. Sadly, our trustee emeritus Deborah Lyne died in August, aged 65. Younger daughter of Douglas (1921-2010), who was a distant connection of Fr Ignatius and Archivist to the Trust, she first became drawn into its affairs in the mid-1980s through her professional expertise in the field of fundraising. Between 1995 and 2015 she served as an active trustee, although distance from South Wales and pressure of work eventually caused her to transfer to "emeritus" status.

Debbie with her sister Jules and husband Julian Hall, together with their beloved labradoodle Inky, almost always made the journey to Capel-y-Ffin on Pilgrimage Day, on one occasion bringing a portion of her late father's ashes; these were discreetly scattered around the Calvary while the procession continued to the statue and abbey church ruins. Her passing severs a link not only with Fr Ignatius's family but with the formative years of the Trust. Memory eternal!

...the Chairman continues

We remember too Joan Wheeler, a stalwart member of the Trust for many years, who died on May 25th this year at the age of 95. Joan would regularly help with serving tea and cake to Llanthony pilgrims on the monastery lawn in earlier years, and was a familiar and welcoming figure behind the tea urn. Again, memory eternal!

We also lost our thurifer and trustee Andrew Downey and I leave it to fellow trustee Fr Jeremy Dowding to write more about him on page

May Andrew, Deborah and Joan rest in the peace of the Lord they served so faithfully.

We did also lose two other trustees, thankfully this time through retirement and moving jobs.

Former Archdeacon Fr Martin Williams decided to retire from the Trust, having been a trustee for around 15 years. His wise counsel and calming voice at meetings, which can get lively, will be much missed, as will his succinct and pertinent intercessions at Mass in the morning of the pilgrimage. Fr Mark Soady moved on from St Mary's, Abergavenny, after eight years to take up a post in Lancashire, too far away to travel to meetings. He too will be missed for his insight.

We hope to see them both at subsequent pilgrimages if they can make it.

Vestments

Over the years, the Trust has acquired a great many artefacts but perhaps the latest is one of the most special.

Last year the Trust was given vestments consisting of a rose-pink chasuble plus

a stole and maniple (photo on p.7) .They were made c1890 and are believed to have been used in Fr Ignatius's Abbey Church at Capel-y-ffin. One of the monks at the time of Ignatius's death in 1908 was Basil M Stannard (Brother Dyfrig), who may have removed the vestments when the community disbanded. Passed down through several priests, they came to the Trust from the Revd Ian Cook, Prebendary Emeritus of Lichfield Cathedral and one-time Rector of St James, Wednesbury.

Given these vestments are well over 100 years old, the opening for the priest's head is somewhat smaller than is needed today. Mrs Sheila Davies, of St Mary's, Abergavenny, has kindly altered the chasuble very sympathetically so they can now be used at the pilgrimage's morning Mass.

Looking forward

So, as with life, this last year has seen some good news and some sad news. I can't promise that, by the time you read this, the war in Ukraine will be over, or that somehow this country's money worries will be eased, or that some of those in public office will realise that behaviour matters. But what I can promise is that, come

September 3, in a quiet corner of Wales, we will sing, we will pray, we will worship the Lord and we will walk the Llanthony Valley, a thin place where heaven and earth touch.

I hope to see you there.

Caroline Woollard

Chairman



Fr Ignatius Memorial Trust is at: www.fatherignatius.org.uk
Our Facebook page is: www.facebook.com/fatherignatius

Family & Other Matters

Hugh Allen

FR IGNATIUS WAS the second of seven children born to Francis Lyne (1801-88) and his wife Louisa Genevieve Leycester (1815-77). Of the four sons he was, despite life-long delicate health, the last to die, towards the end of his seventy-first year, and was survived by all three of his sisters.

His next youngest brother, Augustus Adolphus, was born on 9 February 1841, and joined the Royal Navy. The 1861 census lists him as a “Clerk’s Assistant, R.N.”, both he and his newly-deaconed brother “visitors” at St Peter’s vicarage in Plymouth, in which parish Joseph Leycester/Ignatius was serving as a supernumerary curate.

Five years later, when Ignatius was in retreat from the collapse of his Norwich venture, they met in Malta, posing for a studio photograph of “The Monk Blessing the Midshipman” (reproduced in Calder-Marshall, *The Enthusiast*, opposite p 80). Ten years after that, in 1876, having passed through theological college (Chichester) and the normal single-year diaconate, Augustus Adolphus was at the age of 35 ordained priest and would have been able to return the compliment. He had married Elizabeth Boys, daughter of a Margate solicitor, and was on the move from a first curacy



in Eastbourne to his second in the ancient parish of St Laurence on the Isle of Thanet. From there it was but a short step to the major challenge in his priestly ministry, the founding of the new parish of St Saviour, Westgate-on-Sea, which began life with a temporary iron church in 1880.

Work on its permanent successor came to a halt when the local development company went bankrupt, its promised contribution to the cost of building church, vicarage and school vanishing into thin air. Fr Lyne was on the point of abandoning the half-built church when he received an anonymous message quoting the advice of

King David to his son Solomon: “Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the Lord God, even my God will be with thee...” [1 Chronicles 28.20]. Having sufficient financial resources of his own he was able to act as guarantor for loans to complete the work, only revealing that he had done so some years later when the debt had been paid in full.

Augustus Adolphus died on 8 December 1900 from septicaemia, apparently the result of an insect bite. Physical resemblance apart, characteristics he shared with his brother were a tendency to have his own way and difficulty in working with others—not uncommon traits among Victorian pioneers, both religious and secular.

Licensed as his honorary curate was the Reverend Herbert Arthur Bull (1854-1928), founding headmaster of nearby Wellington House preparatory school. In Alfred Field’s album the original of last year’s Newsletter cover photo has the caption “Fr Bull” above the priest standing second right. I wondered whether this might have been Herbert Arthur, but it turns out to have been neither he nor indeed either of the Fathers Bull who became well known members respectively of the Cowley Fathers and the Community of the Resurrection – all were much of an age. Although the figure in our group photo seems to have a

rather less prominent chin (perhaps because his head is leaning forward) there is a close resemblance between him and Herbert Edward Usher Bull (1866-1944), just then nearing the end of his second curacy in the decidedly Anglo-Catholic parish of St John the Evangelist, Hammersmith, and whose later ministry included a curacy at Tring (1910-1918). It may be significant that George Swain, one of the witnesses of the 1880 Llanthony Apparitions, was Stipendiary Lay Reader in that parish during the preceding decade. For five years following his time in Tring Fr Bull was Vicar of Barnet Vale: I’m most grateful to the Reverend Tristan D. Chapman, its present incumbent, for use of the photograph.



Andrew Downey RIP

Jeremy Dowding

LIKE MANY OTHERS, I was saddened by the news that Andrew had died on Christmas Day, 2021.

A faithful Christian and loyal churchman through and through, Andrew was a familiar face to many in the Church in Wales and beyond. He was a faithful pilgrim to Walsingham, Glastonbury and, of course, to Llanthony and Capel-y-Ffin.

Brought up in Alma Street, Abertillery, as a boy Andrew became a server at St Paul's, Cwmthillery, under the influence of a great teacher of the faith, Fr Ralph Bowden, and was a churchwarden in his early twenties.

Andrew served the church in the parish and beyond for the rest of his life, notably as a sacristan and server – for many years thurifer for our pilgrimage – he also ran bingo in the church hall to raise much-needed funds for St Paul's.

I first met Andrew as a member of the servers' guild GSS; he took over the role of treasurer from me in the early 1970s and was much better at it.

When our late trustee and MC Malcolm Gould became terminally ill and passed away in 1991, it was Andrew who inherited his mantle as MC and eventually also became a trustee.

A great asset to our trust and pilgrimage, Andrew was totally dependable and could always be relied upon for good sense. He will be much missed.



Andrew on Pilgrimage duty



The recently bequested
rose-pink Chasuble, c.1890
(Details on p.4)

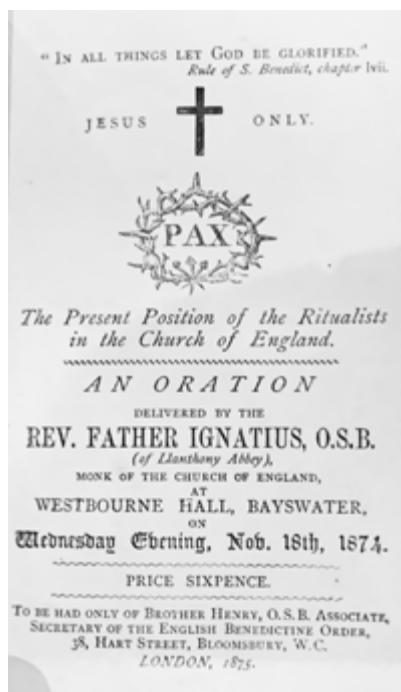
New Acquisitions for the Archive

Hugh Allen

THE TRUST ARCHIVE, housed at the Abergavenny Museum, has recently acquired a small collection of extremely rare pamphlets: 25 individual items bound into four small hardback volumes. An additional volume, similarly bound, is the autograph copy of Sister Mary Agnes's 'Nunnery Life in the Church of England' (1890), originally a softback, containing marginal notes and amendments in which she retracted some of the more extreme criticisms of the Convent régime she had been encouraged to make by the protestant agitators into whose hands she fell after her return to 'the world'.

All but two of the pamphlets date from before 1880, and as well as reprints of sermons include tracts issued from Claydon and Norwich in 1863-4 and Llanthony in the early 1870s. Of the few not composed by Ignatius himself the most interesting is 'Fair Play for Brother Ignatius' (1864), an open letter to the Bishop of London by the Reverend Edward Stuart of the pioneering ritualistic church of St Mary Magdalene, Munster Square, the Bishop having withdrawn his permission for Ignatius to preach and officiate there.

The earliest item is a tract published from Claydon the preceding autumn. It is optimistic in tone, and includes the suggestion that owners of pre-Reformation monastic sites might 'give the ruin to God again, to be restored to holy uses'. He already had his sights on (old) Llanthony ('a most neglected district'), as well as on the former Cluniac priory



at Much Wenlock, becoming quite excited by the fact that both of them had habitable sections and that those of the latter were rarely occupied. Alas, in neither case was he to be granted his wish; the ever-changing and rarely extensive body of men at his command would anyway have scarcely been equal to putting it into practice.

Imagination was perhaps Ignatius's strongest suit, as is borne out in the first of the Llanthony Monastery Tracts, undated but probably from 1872. It is entitled 'Why are you not a monk?', and takes the form of a dialogue between two Oxford undergraduates

ates—Ralph, a pious if conventional believer, and rationalist Walter, who rejects Christianity because none of its adherents appear to take the Gospel precepts seriously. If it is true, he says, the Christian should act upon Christ's command to renounce 'the world, its pleasures, its honours, its hopes, to shew that Christ is all to him'—i.e. by becoming a monk.

In the ensuing dozen or so pages Walter (who has evidently taken considerable trouble to inform himself of such matters) challenges Ralph with quotations from the Psalms ('Blessed are that that dwell in Thy house, they will be alway praising Thee') and St Bernard ('To occupy one's self with God is the greatest of all occupations'), as well as with the absence of monastic life in the contemporary Church of England. Ralph answers him by admitting with initial reluctance that there is in fact just one Anglican monastery, Llanthony, and the story ends – after the author's sideswipe at parents who dilute their children's Christian formation with 'balls, theatres [and] worldly frivolities of every kind' – with the discovery in both young men of a vocation to Ignatius's community. Our last sight of them is as they make their way there together on foot, followed by the all-important question to the reader: 'Why are you not a monk?'

The same themes are developed in Llanthony Tract No 2, 'The Monks and Hermits in England Again' (it would be a few years before Ignatius would realise that his monastery was actually in Wales). The dialogue here is between

the author and a young correspondent, whose letter quotes his spiritual director's negative comments on Ignatius's foundation, contrasting his attempt to revive an extinct form of religious life with the more practical version (as well as more successful, and more acceptable to the ecclesiastical authorities) established at much the same time by Fr Benson at Cowley. Ignatius's answer is that for all their monastic spirit the Cowley Fathers are 'preaching friars' rather than monks dedicated to ceaseless prayer, and that they are 'totally dependent' on the prayers offered at Llanthony.

He has, however, to admit that his community has yet to achieve stability. 'Plenty of young men come here and go, saddening and grieving my heart... They go out into the world with broken vows, and having lost all sense of honesty and truth, invent every conceivable calumny against us, for the amusement of people who choose to believe them... In God's time we shall have "true saints". I know that such men will be sent to us, and I am quite contented to wait on, even as a hermit,—single-handed, if it so pleased God.'

This was not far from how things were when Ignatius composed this pamphlet in early 1873. Whether any of his monks were 'true saints' it's impossible for us to say, but of those who subsequently joined the community only three were still pursuing a monastic vocation at the time of their death—none of them at Llanthony, which didn't long outlive its founder.

Rachel John

Catholic Historian, Cornish Bard, Servant

PHILIP CHATFIELD designed the memorial for RACHEL JOHN, Donald Attwater's daughter, at Lostwithiel in Cornwall. This affectionate memoir outlines her many connections.

EARLY LAST YEAR I was asked by Fr Robbie Low, Catholic priest in Lostwithiel, to design and carve a memorial to the late Catherine Rachel John. She had passed away in 2013, but for various reasons a memorial had not yet been erected at her grave.

Rachel John was the daughter of Donald Attwater, the distinguished church historian and author of a down-to-earth biography of Father Ignatius of Llanthony published in 1931. Donald and his wife Dorothy had been lay associates of the Catholic Benedictines on Caldey Island before moving to Capel-y-ffin with Fr Joseph Woodford in the early 1920s. It was Attwater who, with Peter Anson, had suggested that the former monastery at Capel might be a suitable new home for Eric Gill, who at the time was looking to move from Ditchling.

Rachel was born in Abergavenny in 1926. At Cambridge she read English and the early history of the British Isles. Much later she was elected a Bard of the Cornish Gorsedd: her mother came from a well-known family of engineers in Hayle, hence her long and deep links with that county. In her last years she lived in Lostwithiel, where I visited her on several occasions when working in Cornwall. I had been carving a memorial for the church of St Samson in the village of Golant near Fowey. In that church is a lovely alabaster carving of the head of Christ



Rachel John in 1989
(courtesy of Jonathan Barker, Cornishmemory.com)

commemorating the first public sermon given by Father Ignatius. In fact there are several links with Father Ignatius in the area. It was lovely to talk to Rachel about all of this and of all the things I had done in stone and also surviving a shipwreck north east of Padstow. She told me she had made her First Communion in the chapel of the new Gill community at Pigotts in the Chilterns. Later, she used to sit on the rocks at Mousehole, near Newlyn, with her mother, and watch white sea gulls settle on St Clement's island. This set her mind to wonder about who this saint was. In 1995 she published a new edition of her father's book *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints*.

I decided to make a memorial out of granite with a relief carving of the 'Lamb and Flag' set above the

inscription. This was a symbol dear to her heart. Rachel owned a painting by the Newlyn School artist Harold Harvey (1874-1941) who specialised in working class life and landscapes of Cornwall. This painting was titled 'Rest on the Flight into Egypt,' and shows a contemporary Our Lady and Saint Joseph with the Child Jesus resting outside a pub called the 'Lamb and Flag'. The painting was most likely based on the pub at Canonstown on the road from Hayle to Penzance.

On my last visit Rachel gave me a signed copy of her book *The Saints of Cornwall: 1500 Years of Christian Landscape*, published by Tabb House

of Padstow. This is a lovely book and essential reading if you want to know the finer points of the lives of the wandering Celtic saints such as St Petroc and St Endelienta. Many of the saints, like St Samson, made the journey from Wales to Brittany via Cornwall.

I was pleased to have played a part in creating a monument to her life, which was finally dedicated by Fr Robbie Low on Candlemas Day, 2nd February 2022.

An appreciation from the Lostwithiel news site is online: <https://www.lostwithiel.org.uk/news/items/rachel-john-rip>



PILGRIMAGE PROGRAMME

Saturday 3rd September 2022

11.30AM

Sung Eucharist at St David's Church, Llanthony.*

Preacher: Fr Philip Wyn Davies

1.30PM

Assemble outside St David's Church for Pilgrimage Walk. Stout footwear is essential and weather-proof clothing recommended.

3.30PM

Evensong at St Mary's Church, Capel-y-Ffin.

Preacher: Fr Sam McNally-Cross

Followed by a Procession to the ruins of Fr Ignatius' Abbey Church with 'stations' at the **Wayside Calvary** and at the **Statue of Our Lady of Llanthony.**

*After the Eucharist pilgrims are invited to a Bring & Share Lunch in the picnic area next to the car park at Llanthony.

CAR PARKING is available for the Evensong at St. Mary's, and for the afternoon programme at Capel-y-Ffin.



At the end of the afternoon service, tea and cakes are served at a modest charge on the Monastery lawn, courtesy of Mr & Mrs Knill.

Please note:

Next year's pilgrimage will take place on Saturday, September 2nd, 2023.

[To be confirmed]

PLEASE SEE WEBSITE
www.fatherignatius.org.uk

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Unable to travel this year?

THE VIRTUAL PILGRIMAGE & SERVICE
prepared to replace the cancelled
2020 Events is on YouTube
at: <https://bit.ly/3eIbPZs>

