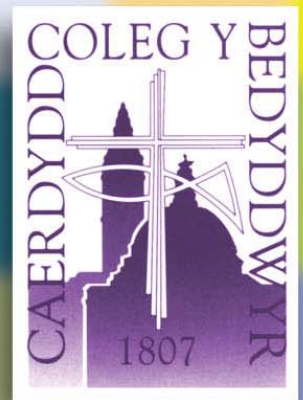


South Wales Baptist College

Winter/Spring News

2006



Moving in with the Family – South Wales Association settles in to Richmond Road



The Principal (centre) goes the extra mile welcoming Team Leader Nick Bradshaw and recently appointed office manager Mark Thomas. [Or was it just posed?].

The College has welcomed the BUGB South Wales Baptist Association to its new premises on the college site. The big move took place on the 7th December with only a few hitches. And already the arrangement is proving invaluable particularly to the college Principal **John Weaver** and the SWBA Team Leader, **Rev Nick Bradshaw**. Asked about the move Nick commented:

"I am delighted with this move, this is a fantastic environment to work in. Being here has already made a difference to our communication and opens up all sorts of possibilities for working together in partnership in the future."

Principal John Weaver, too, sees great potential in the strengthened partnership:

"There is a great opportunity for the College staff to work closely with the Association in resourcing the mission of Baptist churches in South Wales," he comments. "For students preparing for BUGB Baptist ministry, direct contact with the Association officers will be of great help as they work with local churches and plan toward settlement."

The sort of advantages expected surfaced fairly quickly at the recent college day for Newly Accredited Ministers. In between sessions **Nick Bradshaw** was on the spot and able to get around new ministers and have conversations with those who needed advice. Relationships strengthened. Work done. Time and money saved. By April we look forward to seeing the full SWBA team

around the building with newly appointed regional minister **Andy Hughes** and office manager **Mark Thomas** in place.

If you're visiting us, *please note SWBA offices should be accessed from their own entrance at the front of the building. Please note also that they have their own phone number: 02920 219691.* Entry to the college is still via the reception from the car park.

Trem yn ôl:

2. Haneswyr y Coleg

O'r dechrau, bu gan fyfyrwyr Y Fenni a Phont-y-pŵl ddi-ddordeb yn hanes yr enwad. Cyhoeddodd **Jonathan Davies** (bu f. c.1846) - Cymro uniaith pan aeth i'r Fenni o Gapel Iwan - hanes yr enwad yn Saesneg pan ymfudodd i America yn 1829. Fel yr awgryma teitl ei lyfr, *History of the Welsh Baptists from the year 63 to the year One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy* (1835), roedd ei waith yn pwysu'n drwm ar y gyfrol a gyhoeddodd Joshua Thomas yn Gymraeg yn 1778. Dichon fod **William Jones** (1790-1855), yr unfed myfyriwr ar ddeg yn rhestrau'r Coleg, wedi pwysu'n drwm ar yr hanes a ysgrifennodd Joshua am y Gymanfa Gymreig wrth lunio'i lyfr yntau, *Hanes Cymmanfa y Bedyddwyr Neillduol yn Nghymru ...* (1832); ond mae'r ffaith iddo gynnwys hefyd *Hanes y Gymmanfa Ddeddwyreiniol o'r Flwyddyn 1790 hyd 1831* yn dangos ei fod yn gallu ymgymryd ag ymchwil wreiddiol.

Roedd hyn yn wir, hefyd, am hanesydd arall a ddi-bynnodd yn helaeth ar yr hanesydd o Lanllieni am beth o'i ddefnyddiau. Canolbwyntio ar *Hanes y Bedyddwyr yn Neheubarth Cymru* (1839) a wnaeth **David Jones** Caerfyrddin (?1789-1841), gan ychwanegu defnyddiau newydd at waith Joshua wrth ymestyn stori'r eglwysi hyd at 1839, gan ychwanegu gwybodaeth hollol newydd am yr eglwysi a ffurfiwyd ar ôl 1777.

Dichon mai'r ymchwilydd gwreiddiol mwyaf sylweddol a godwyd yn y coleg yn nyddiau Pont-y-pŵl oedd **John Williams, "Rufus"** (1833-77). Cyhoeddodd hanes Ystradyfodwg, *Ystradiana* (1886), ond ei gymwynas fwyaf fel hanesydd enwadol oedd ei gyfrol fechan *Hanes Athrofeydd y Bedyddwyr yn Sir Fynwy ...* (1863). Bu ei farw annhymig yn golled anaele i'r enwad.

Lluniodd **Thomas Lewis**, Pontymister (1823-1900), nifer o fywgraffiadau o weinidogion yr enwad, ynghyd â chyfrolau yn ymwneud â hanes eglwysi unigol. Gadawodd, hefyd, hunangofiant a gyhoeddwyd ar ôl ei farwolaeth, wedi ei olygu gan Dr William Edwards. Ond dichon mai ei gyfrol bwysicaf yw ei atgofion personol, di-flewyn-ar-dafod, am ei gyd-fyfyrwyr a rhai o'r gweinidogion a adnabu. Ni chyhoeddwyd y gyfrol honno, ond fe'i gwelir yn llawysgrif yr awdur ymhlith trysorau'r Coleg sydd ar adnau yn y Llyfrgell Genedlaethol yn Aberystwyth.

Church-based students - and stirrings of change

Elim, Pontllanfraith hosts one of several college *church-based placements* designed to enable more effective student involvement with a church. The church secretary, **Olga Williams** is enthusiastic about the church's placement involving final-year student **Sue Phillips**:

"What a year it's been for us at Elim! In April, Sue came to us as our church based student and she was – and is – just what we had been praying for as a fellowship.

She has helped us with the pastoral care of members and friends and she has been available at the church during the week for anyone who wishes to see her. She has renewed our links with the local primary school and we are thrilled that she has been so keen to do so.

Our Friday night children/young people's groups have been renamed and we've had games and activities that are new to us – (ask Sue about the parachute!) and the noise level increases weekly as more new faces appear. We've done things that previously we've only talked about.

New life has come to our Sunday services and for the younger ones – we've had exotic creatures; puppets and kitchen utensils, to name but a few and I must say that I'm impressed with Sue's creativity with balloons.

The youngsters love it and so do the rest of us!

The format of the weekly prayer meeting and bible study is a little different now that Sue is with us and she is eager to share her knowledge and we are learning all the time. Thank you Sue!"



Sue herself reports on the surprising impact of a church survey which became a pointer for change:

"The survey three months after starting my church placement provided feedback much better and more detailed than I expected.

A local community survey was carried out in the streets immediately around the church. In total 160 surveys were distributed, 26 of which were completed and collected. The survey asked questions on age, sex, marital status, area problems, facilities, perception of neighbourhood, coping strategies, and perception of church.

At the same time a survey was carried out among all those who regularly attend Elim. Forty-six surveys were given out and twenty eight were completed and returned. All questionnaires remained anonymous and were given to everyone who was secondary school age and over. Questions were asked about the past, current and future life of the church.

The results were looked at and discussed by the deaconate. Several initial areas for improvement were highlighted.

The local survey highlighted that the church needed to do more to be part of the community. Elim needed to be more visible, and advertise itself better. It also highlighted the concern that children and teenagers did not have enough facilities in the area and some anxiety over the levels of teenage drinking.

It was clear that many people felt that although Elim was a loving and supportive fellowship it needed to change to prevent it stagnating and its membership dwindling further. Within the church areas that needed to be looked at included styles and times of worship, the pews, social activities, children's/youth work, and outreach.

Some preliminary suggestions were made for each of these areas and all of them will be looked at in much greater detail in the coming months as we begin to work through the survey results in more detail.

Olga Williams too was delighted with the sense of direction the survey brought:

"We are so pleased that Sue has undertaken the Church and Community survey and she has shared the results with the diaconate. We now have a much better idea of the thoughts and feelings about our church and we will support Sue in any way that we can, and work together in the Lord's service."

If your church is interested in this kind of placement why not contact Simon Woodman at the college to discuss it?

Thank-you Viv!

The valedictory service in June had the sad task of saying farewell to **Viv Byard** as he retired from work at the college. It is still difficult to think of the college without Viv's tireless work in driving various maintenance activities, looking after students in the residences and bringing an endless resource of humour and banter. We're missing you Viv and we're glad you're still nearby in Llanishen. Please send us the occasional quip.



Double-Feature Q&A

We're delighted to have Daniel Pusok and Jakab Sallai with us for postgraduate study this year. They're both ministers with the Baptist family in Romania and they've fallen prey to our celebrated Q & A feature.



Daniel Pusok



Jakab Sallai

1. What played the biggest role in getting you into ministry?

Jakab: It was the calling of the Lord, that irresistible inner voice. God made me sensitive to the huge spiritual need of the people. I still consider helping people spiritually is the most urgent and important task.

Daniel: My mother: she has told me that she offered me to God before I was conceived.

2. What do you most hope to gain from studying with us in Wales?

Daniel: Widening my horizon. And a diploma :)

Jakab: New experiences in a different culture, new ideas, deeper theological insight and friendship, and of course a degree from a University and College with a high reputation.

3. Which Welsh/UK habit or activity has given you the most amusement?

Jakab: Starting Christmas from the end of November and celebrating it all December. Christmas in Romania takes only two or three days.

Daniel: Your addictiveness to tea. (Always the first priority: put the kettle on)

4. What might Baptists in Wales learn from the experience of Romanian Baptists?

Jakab: The members in Romanian Baptist churches are more involved in the services and church activities or mission. Each individual's personal prayer is a vital part of the meetings. Lay people often preach, share their testimony, say poems or sing.

Daniel: The Romanian Baptists never experienced the advantages of Christendom. They were always oppressed by the state and by the other big denominations. Now as we talk in the West about Post-Christendom, Romanian Baptists could share their experiences about how to be active and growing when having a marginalized status.

5. What do you miss most from your home country apart from family and friends?

Daniel: The good Hungarian food and the excellent cream cakes. And the snow.

Jakab: The fellowship and worship as we do it in the church at home.

6. What public figure(s) do you particularly admire?

Daniel: I can't think of anybody in particular. If I must admire somebody it could be Adrian Plasa for his courage.

Jakab: I don't know if we can call Rick Warren a public figure, but I admire him.

7. What is your idea of sheer relaxing bliss?

Daniel: Playing football for about 4 hours and then watching a few good movies.

Jakab: Being alone in nature, in the mountains or by the riverside, or watching the sunset.

8. What do Romanian Baptists most need from Baptists in other countries?

Jakab: Better relationships, and for others to know them and about them. They need prayer support as they are more and more tempted by the materialist-inclined world.

Daniel: Learning how not to be legalistic, and how to accept difference rather than judging it all the time. And of course we are grateful for the financial help that we receive.

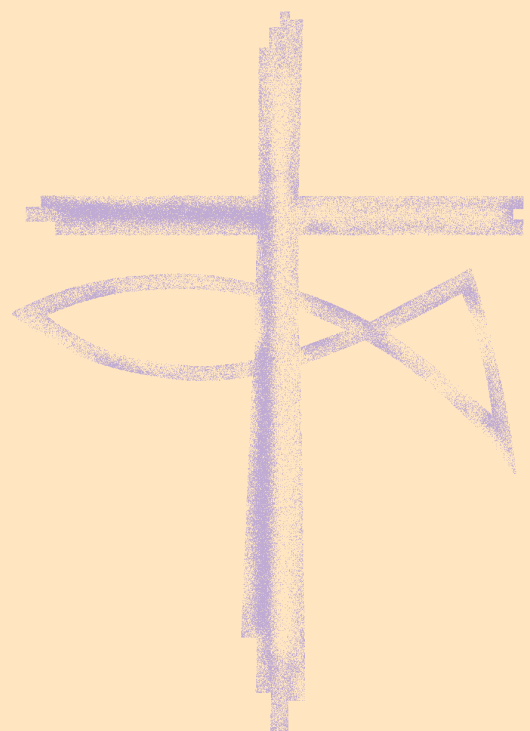
9. What epitaph would you hope for?

Daniel: I would hope that after I am gone there will be a few people who would say I miss him.

Jakab: I hope to live to see the coming of the Lord, but just in case...

'Lived 1975-2075

See you soon at the resurrection.'



Diary

Important - Principal's Research Leave: Please note that by the time you read this our Principal John Weaver, will be on research leave until the end of May.

Please do not seek to communicate with him on college business during this time as these few months mainly form a vital, and long-delayed, period of serious research and writing. All communications in this period go to The Acting Principal at the college address. The college team look forward to John's return and the tales of his work.

His plans already include visits to Belfast and Warsaw, preaching and teaching, and writing projects on 'Baptists, discipleship and the Lord's Supper,' (for a book with the other five Baptist College Principals), and 'Exploring a Theology of the Environment with Adults.' (for a European Conference on the Environment, in Prague).

Edwin Stephen Griffiths Day:

Wednesday 15th March 2006

*Break a body, save a soul –
Christians and torture today.*

Lectures by Rev Roy Jenkins

11.30am and 2.30pm

Light buffet served between sessions.

Rev Roy Jenkins is the college chairman and well-known for his long involvement in the campaign against torture. He has been a member of Amnesty International for more than 35 years, and has been involved in the Welsh churches' human rights campaign Christians Against Torture since it began 24 years ago. He currently chairs its steering group. This is a rare opportunity to hear an expert perspective and to support that campaign with your presence. We are expecting a strong attendance so come early and if you can please park at one of the nearby car parks because of limitations in parking space these days at the college. **Important: Please ring the college office if you plan to stay for lunch.**

Valedictory Service and Rev Roy Searle

Thursday June 8th at 7.30pm

BUGB President **Roy Searle**, a key leader in the Northumbria Community, is the speaker at the Valedictory this year. And he is also the leader of the June Pastoral Studies Day, taking place the same day at the University (10am-4pm – please book in advance on 029 20875297). His theme will be **Maintaining Life in the Midst of Ministry.**

College Prayer Guide

The College Prayer Guide continues to be mailed to those asking for a copy or who are registered as 'Friends of the College' If you would like to keep in regular contact with people and events of college and support us with your prayers, fill in the return slip below and we will send you the Prayer Guide quarterly. Or, if you prefer, email or write to the College Office.

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Name

Address

Return to: **South Wales Baptist College**, 54-58 Richmond Road, Cardiff CF24 3UR. Tel: 02920 256066 Fax: 02920 411566.

Please note that the college email address is admin@swbc.org.uk and the website is www.swbc.org.uk