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Dublin Core

Title

The People's Window, Fishguard | Ffenestr y Bobl, Abergwaun

Subject

Fishguard

Stained Glass

Churches

Creator

Martin Crampin

Publisher

Ports, Past and Present Project

Date

2023

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Relation

<https://perma.cc/8AWD-HGYA>

Language

English and Welsh

Coverage

51.99427306467849, -4.9757092725941465

Curatescape Story Item Type Metadata

Title (Welsh)

Ffenestr y Bobl, Abergwaun

Lede

A stained glass window in Fishguard by one of Wales' most distinguished artists in stained glass was paid for by past and present parishioners and alludes to the winter storms.

Lede (Welsh)

Plwyfolion ddoe a heddiw a dalodd am ffenestr liw yn Abergwaun gan un o artistiaid gwydr lliw mwyaf nodedig Cymru, sy'n cyfeirio at stormydd y gaeaf.

Story

The tradition of commissioning stained glass at St Mary's Church in Fishguard began relatively late in the 1920s. The church was designed in the 1850s with an outward appearance and interior that had more in common with Nonconformist chapels than many Anglican churches. When the new vicar, Revd R. Lloyd Lloyd, arrived in 1894, he found the interior of the church unornamented and placed a cross and candlesticks on the altar, fashioning an altar frontal from his wife's wedding gown.

By 1919 it was agreed that the church was in dire need of renovation, and estimates for new windows were sought from the local ironmongers, W.R. Eynon & Co. How many plain windows by the local firm were eventually supplied is unknown, because a series of nine memorial stained glass windows were commissioned for the church by three different London firms between 1919 and 1930. All of these windows were commissioned by local families in memory of family members who had recently died.

After the Second World War more stained glass windows were commissioned, including two by the Swansea firm, Celtic Studios. Celtic Studios were the first stained glass studio to make windows in any quantity for churches, and made plenty of windows for churches across south Wales. Another Welsh artist who began making windows for churches in the 1960s was John Petts, and two of his windows now fill the east window over the altar and the large west window above the gallery.

By the 1980s the windows over the balcony at the west end of the church needed repair. It was estimated that the cost of replacing the plain glazing would amount to about £1100, but the vicar, Revd Gerwyn Morgan, had approached John Petts who quoted £3360 to fill the three window lights with stained glass. Clearly keen to get the commission, Petts stated that he was able to quote 1981 prices due to the quantity of lead that he still had in stock. Morgan described Petts as 'one of the top men in his field' and by the 1980s Petts had undertaken commissions for a wide range of religious buildings, including an impressive set of panels for Brighton & Hove New Synagogue and sets of windows and sculpture for the Catholic churches in Briton Ferry and Gorseinon.

Unlike the previous windows that were all privately financed, it was decided that the window would not be a memorial but funded by contributions of £5 from past and present

parishioners. An overwhelming response raised £3000 in the first few days of the campaign and the window became known as 'The People's Window'. It was installed towards the end of 1984.

The window shows Christ in the central window calming the storm around him, as his disciples cower from the strength of the storm. The words 'Peace be Still' are found below and Petts felt that the familiarity of the people of Fishguard with the winter storms that approach the town from the sea would resonate with the message conveyed in the window.

One further window was added to the church in 1986, which was also the work of John Petts. This was a memorial to Revd D.F. Williams, the vicar of Rudbaxton in Pembrokeshire, who was formerly from Fishguard, and it faces the People's Window from the far side of the church on east wall of the sanctuary.

Story (Welsh)

Yn gymharol hwyr yn y 1920au y dechreuodd y traddodiad o gomisiynu gwydr lliw yn Eglwys y Santes Fair yn Abergwaun. Cafodd yr eglwys ei dylunio yn y 1850au gyda golwg allanol a mewnl oedd yn debycach i gapeli Anghydfurfiol na llawer o eglwysi Anglicanaidd. Pan gyrhaeddodd y ficer newydd, y Parchedig R. Lloyd Lloyd, ym 1894, gwelodd fod y tu mewn i'r eglwys heb ei addurno, a gosododd groes a chanhwyllau ar yr allor, gan lunio llen flaen i'r allor o wisg briodas ei wraig.

Erbyn 1919 cytunwyd bod angen dybryd i'r eglwys gael ei hadnewyddu, a cheisiwyd amcangyfrifon ar gyfer ffenestri newydd gan y gwerthwyr haearn lleol, W.R. Eynon & Co. Nid yw'n hysbys faint o ffenestri plaen gan y cwmni lleol a gyflenwyd yn y pen draw, gan fod cyfres o naw ffenestr gwydr lliw coffâd wedi'u comisiynu ar gyfer yr eglwys oddi wrth dri chwmni gwahanol yn Llundain rhwng 1919 a 1930. Comisiynwyd yr holl ffenestri hyn gan deuluoedd lleol er cof am aelodau teuluol a fu farw yn ddiweddar.

Ar ôl yr Ail Ryfel Byd comisiynwyd rhagor o ffenestri lliw, gan gynnwys dwy gan gwmni o Abertawe, Celtic Studios. Celtic Studios oedd y stiwdio gwydr lliw gyntaf i wneud unrhyw nifer o ffenestri i eglwysi, a gwnaeth ddigonedd o ffenestri i eglwysi ar draws y De. Artist arall o Gymru a ddechreuodd wneud ffenestri i eglwysi yn y 1960au oedd John Petts, ac mae dwy o'i ffenestri e bellach yn llenwi'r ffenestr ddwyreiniol dros yr allor a'r ffenestr fawr orllewinol uwchben yr oriel.

Erbyn y 1980au roedd angen trwsio'r ffenestri dros y balconi ym mhen gorllewinol yr eglwys. Amcangyfrifwyd y byddai'r gost o ailosod y gwydr plaen yn cyfateb i ryw £1100, ond roedd y ficer, y Parchedig Gerwyn Morgan, wedi cysylltu â John Petts a ofynnodd am £3360 i lenwi'r tri chwarel â gwydr lliw. Roedd Petts yn amlwg yn awyddus i sicrhau'r comisiwn, a dywedodd ei fod yn gallu dyfynnu prisiau 1981 oherwydd faint o blwm oedd ganddo mewn stoc o hyd. Disgrifiodd Morgan Petts fel 'un o'r dynion gorau yn ei faes' ac erbyn y 1980au roedd Petts wedi ymgymryd â chomisiynau i ystod eang o adeiladau crefyddol, gan gynnwys set drawiadol o baneli i Synagog Newydd Brighton and Hove a setiau o ffenestri a cherfluniau i'r eglwysi Catholig yn Llansawel a Gorseinon.

Yn wahanol i'r ffenestri blaenorol a ariannwyd yn breifat, penderfynwyd na fyddai'r ffenestr yn gofeb ond yn cael ei hariannu drwy gyfraniadau o £5 gan blwyfolion ddoe a heddiw. Llwyddodd yr ymateb ysgubol i godi £3000 yn ystod dyddiau cyntaf yr ymgyrch a daeth y ffenestr yn adnabyddus fel 'Ffenestr y Bobl'. Fe'i sefydlwyd tua diwedd 1984.

Mae'r ffenestr yn dangos Crist yn y ffenestr ganolog yn tawelu'r storm o'i gwmpas, wrth i'w ddisgyblion gilio rhag nerth y storm. Mae'r geiriau 'Peace be Still' i'w gweld isod a theimlai Petts y byddai cynefindra pobl Abergwaun â stormydd y gaeaf yn agosáu at y dref o'r môr yn taro deuddeg gyda'r neges a geid yn y ffenestr.

Ychwanegwyd un ffenestr arall i'r eglwys ym 1986, a honno hefyd yn waith John Petts. Roedd hon yn gofeb i'r Parchedig D.F. Williams, ficer Rudbaxton yn Sir Benfro, gynt o Abergwaun, ac mae'n wynebu Ffenestr y Bobl o ochr bellaf yr eglwys ar wal ddwyreiniol y gysegrfan.

Related Resources

Martin Crampin, *Stained Glass in Fishguard* (Aberystwyth: Sulien, 2023)

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Donald MacGregor (ed.), *St Mary's Church, Fishguard: A Historical Miscellany* (2007)

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<https://perma.cc/2BGC-SNNY>

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