

Historic Wales Report

Dataset Cadw Listed Buildings

Title	Capel Peniel
Type	Listed Building
Dataset UID	4442
Community	Porthmadog

Location

Set back from the road at the S end of Tremadog.

Date Listed	3/30/1951
Last Amendment	9/26/2005
Grade	I

History

Peniel, a Calvinistic Methodist chapel, was built in 1808-9 under the patronage, and perhaps also the general design, of William Madocks, founder of Tremadog. It immediately attracted attention and was noted by Richard Colt-Hoare in 1810 and Richard Fenton in 1813. The building is remarkable for having a gable-end front in an accomplished classical style at such an early date. In style it was strongly influenced by Inigo Jones' St Paul's Church, Covent Garden, London, of 1631, and has been credited with introducing the classical idiom to Welsh chapel architecture. It is also a remarkably large chapel for its date. Later alterations were made inside the chapel, such as a new gallery and later a set fawr and pulpit. A vestry and schoolroom were also added at the rear.

Reason for Listing

Listed grade I as an exceptionally early and accomplished large classical style chapel, unlike any Welsh chapel of the period, retaining a well-detailed interior with work of the later C19, and for its important contribution to the historical integrity of Tremadog.

History

Beazley, Elisabeth, Madocks and the Wonder of Wales, 2nd ed 1985, pp 82-94, 99-101;

Fenton, Richard, Tours in Wales 1804-1813, 1917, p 234;

Jones, Anthony, Welsh Chapels, 2nd edition 1996, pp 31-3, plate 6.

Thompson, M (ed), The Journeys of Sir Richard Colt Hoare through Wales and England 1793-1810, 1983, pp 263-4.

Interior

Doors lead into vestibules with closed-string gallery staircases. Panelled doors under margin-glazed overlights open to the main chapel, which has scribed plaster walls and a ramped floor. The boarded ceiling has large panels with moulded ribs and central ornate ceiling rose. A 3-sided raked gallery stands on fluted cast-iron piers and fretwork scrolled brackets. The gallery itself has a panelled soffit, panelled front and clock to the centre. The main floor retains numbered box pews. The late C19 set fawr has a panelled back. The pulpit, of similar date to the set fawr, has steps R and L with turned balusters and newels, and an ornate front with fluted pilasters under consoles, 2 round-headed panels with relief foliage, a blind balustrade and dentil frieze. The reredos has fluted pilasters with foliage capitals, and a round-headed moulded arch with enriched keystone.

Panelled doors to the R and L of the pulpit lead to the vestry and schoolroom. The schoolroom on the R side has a panelled wainscot, and a central ceiling rose.

Exterior

A classical chapel with a temple-like, gable-end E front of scribed roughcast painted cream, with side walls of coursed, quarried rubble stone in large blocks, and slate roof on projecting eaves. The 3-bay front has a Tuscan portico, angle pilasters and a pediment. Details within the pediment may be later and are in a different idiom: radial-glazed bullseye window incorporating rounded and pointed trefoils, flanked by large triangular panels. Entrances in the outer bays have fielded-panel doors, flanking a 9-pane hornless sash window. Above, the gallery is lit by three 12-pane hornless sash windows. In the 3-window side walls are 12-pane hornless sash windows in raised cement surrounds, lighting the main floor and gallery. In the rear, above lower additions and offset to the R side, is a 3-light round-headed window with Gothic glazing bars.

The earlier of 2 parallel gabled additions at the rear was the original vestry. Its 2-storey S front is pebble-dashed, and in the lower storey are 2 small-pane sash windows in which the lower sash has been boarded over. In the upper storey is a 12-pane sash window to the L and two 2-light casement windows, replaced in earlier openings, to the R side. On the R side is a lean-to against the rear of the chapel, which has a replacement half-glazed door and window to its R. The gable end of the vestry is rubble stone. The later schoolroom projects beyond the N side wall of the chapel. Its N front has a boarded door and overlight to the L, and three 4-pane horned sash windows. In its W gable end are 2 fixed 3-light windows with thin Gothic glazing bars.