

Rhwydweithiau Cymorth Cymunedol/Community Support Networks

Mae Llandudno wedi bod yn gartref parhaol a dros dro i Iddewon ers tro byd, er bod diffyg cyfleusterau lleol fel bwyd kosher yn gwneud defodau crefyddol yn heriol. Cododd y niferoedd yn sydyn yn y 1940au gyda dyfodiad faciwiſ, ffoaduriaid, a milwyr yn hyfforddi yng Ngwersyll Parc Cinmel, gan ysgogi penodiad y Parch. Berry yn Gaplan Cynorthwyol i Filwyr Iddewig yng Ngogledd Cymru.

Cynyddodd y galw am le addoli. Ym mis Tachwedd 1940, roedd gwasanaethau'r Uchel Sanctaidd yn Neuadd Masonaidd mor orlawn fel bod angen tocynnau mynediad, gyda gwasanaethau gorlif wedi'u trefnu gan Morris Wartski yng Nghapel Ebeneser y Wesleaid. Y gwanwyn canlynol, mynychodd tua 400 o bobl y Pasg yn Neuadd y Neuadd Masonaidd, a darparwyd prydau bwyd drwy gydol yr ŵyl i 80 o westeion faciwî.

Ym 1941, sefydlwyd Pwyllgor Lles Ffoaduriaid, a gefnogwyd yn eang gan y gymuned Iddewig a ddim Iddewig. Cadeirydd y pwyllgor oedd y Parch. Dr N. Popplewell, gweinidog yr Eglwys Gynulleidfaoel Saesneg a ffigur adnabyddus yn Llandudno hyd at ei farwolaeth ym 1961. Casglodd a dosbarthodd Gwasanaethau Gwirfoddol y Menywod blancedi a dillad gyflenwadau o ddepo ym Mae Colwyn, tra bod 'Cylch y Pedwar Rhyddid' wedi trefnu sgysiau cyhoeddus i gryfhau cydlynant cymunedol.

Mae cofnodion yn Archifau Conwy yn datgelu profiadau amrywiol Iddewig ifanc a gafodd eu symud; cyrhaeddodd rhai gyda'u rhieni a pharhau i fyw fel teulu. Cyrhaeddodd rhai gyda'u rhieni a pharhau i fyw fel teulu. Arhosodd eraill, fel Arnold Benson, gyda pherthnasau (Arnold oedd cefnder i Israel Croop). Daeth rhai gyda brodyr a chwiorydd, ac eraill ar eu pennau eu hunain. Roedd nifer fach o'r rhai a gafodd eu symud, gan gynnwys Marianne a Werner Rosenbaum, hefyd yn ffoaduriaid rhag erledigaeth y Natsïaidd, gan brofi ail aflonyddwch yn eu bywydau ifanc. Cofrestrwyd yr holl blant hyn yn Ysgol Uwchradd Mostyn neu Ysgol Lloyd Street.

Os lleolwyd plentyn Iddewig gyda theulu Iddewig, parhaodd i gysylltu â'i dreftadaeth, ond nid oedd hyn bob amser yn bosibl, felly cynhaliodd y gymuned Iddewig ddigwyddiadau, darparodd brydau bwyd a sefydlodd grwpiau ieuenctid i sicrhau bod cysylltiadau'n cael eu cynnal.

Enghraifft ddiddorol yw Leslie Finkle, a oedd yn byw gyda gwraig Bresbyteraidd o'r enw Eleanor Drew Hitchings yn 35 Trinity Avenue ym 1941. Roedd Eleanor yn nyrs gymwysedig, ac ym 1911, roedd hi'n byw gydag Emanuel a Harriette (g. Wartski) Snowman, gan ofalu am eu merch fis oed, Flora. Efallai trwy'r gwaith blaenorol hwn, llwyddodd i helpu Leslie i aros mewn cysylltiad â'i dreftadaeth.

Cefnogodd teuluoedd Iddewig fyfyrwyr Iddewig lleol, gan eu gwahodd i brydau Saboth a gwyliau. Roedd Evelyn Dresner yn fyfyrwraig yng Ngholeg Hyfforddi Athrawon Normal Bangor o 1963-1966. Fel menyw ifanc grefyddol o Lundain, roedd bywyd mewn cymuned Iddewig fach yn heriol. Mae Evelyn yn cofio ei harhosiad gyda theulu Lazar yn Llandudno ym 1964: *“Dydd Sadwrn 16 Mai 1964 - Aethon ni i'r shul [synagog] y bore yma, ond yn anffodus nid oedd minyan, felly dim ond gweddio'n breifat y gallem ni.”* Byddai'r coleg yn darparu diet llysieuol yn lle bwyd kosher. Dechreuodd Evelyn ei chymdeithasau Iddewig ei hun ym Mhrifysgol Bangor a'r colegau hyfforddi lleol. Un o atgofion mwyaf annwyl Evelyn yw myfyriwr Mwslimaidd o Brifysgol Bangor yn ymuno â'r Gymdeithas Iddewig, gan ei fod yn teimlo y byddai'n fwyaf tebyg i'w anghenion a'i ddiddordebau crefyddol.



*Y Parch. Popplewell. Delwedd trwy
garedigrwydd Archifau Conwy
(CP253/10).
Rev. Popplewell. Image courtesy of Conwy
Archives (CP253/10).*

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*Cofrestr Derbyniadau Ysgol Lloyd Street, 1938-1944.
Delwedd trwy garedigrwydd Archifau Conwy
(CE22/1/2/6).*

*Admission Register for Lloyd Street School, 1938-1944.
Image courtesy of Conwy Archives (CE22/1/2/6).*



*Evelyn a'i darpar ŵr Roger, y tu allan i Hostel
Alun ym Mangor, 1966. Delwedd trwy
garedigrwydd Evelyn Kennedy.
Evelyn and future husband Roger, outside the
Alun Hostel in Bangor, 1966. Image courtesy
of Evelyn Kennedy.*

Llandudno has long been a permanent and temporary home for Jews, though the absence of local amenities like kosher food made religious observance challenging. Numbers rose sharply in the 1940s with the arrival of evacuees, refugees, and soldiers training at Kinmel Park Camp, prompting Rev. Berry's appointment as Assistant Chaplain to Jewish Soldiers in North Wales.

Demand for worship space surged. In November 1940, High Holy Day services at the Masonic Hall were so crowded that entry required tickets, with overflow services organised by Morris Wartski in the Wesleyan Ebenezer Chapel. The following spring, around 400 people attended Passover at the Masonic Hall, and meals were provided throughout the festival for 80 evacuee guests.

In June 1941, a Refugee Welfare Committee was established, widely supported by both Jewish and non-Jewish communities. The chair of the committee was Rev. Dr N. Popplewell, minister of the English Congregational Church and a well-known figure in Llandudno, who died in 1961. Local Women's Voluntary Services gathered and distributed blankets and clothing from a Colwyn Bay depot, while 'The Four Freedoms Circle' organised public talks to strengthen community cohesion.

Records at Conwy Archives reveal the varied experiences of young Jewish evacuees. Some arrived with their parents and continued living as a family, while others arrived with siblings or alone. Arnold Benson (Israel Croop's cousin) stayed with his relatives. A small number of the evacuees, including Marianne and Werner Rosenbaum, were also refugees from Nazi persecution, experiencing a second upheaval in their young lives. All these children were enrolled in Mostyn Secondary or Lloyd Street School.

If a Jewish child was placed with a Jewish family, they continued to connect with their heritage, but this was not always possible. Hence, the Jewish community held events, provided meals and established youth groups to ensure connections were maintained.

An interesting example is Leslie Finkle, who lived with a Presbyterian lady named Eleanor Drew Hitchings at 35 Trinity Avenue in 1941. Eleanor was a qualified nurse, and in 1911, she lived with Emanuel and Harriette (née Wartski) Snowman, looking after their one-month-old daughter, Flora. Perhaps through this former work, Eleanor helped Leslie stay connected to his heritage.

Jewish families supported local Jewish students by inviting them to Sabbath meals and festivals. Evelyn Dresner was a student at Bangor Normal Teacher Training College from 1963-1966. As a religiously observant young woman from London, life in a small Jewish community was challenging. Evelyn recalls her stay with the Lazar family in Llandudno in 1964: ***“Saturday 16 May 1964 - We went to shul [synagogue] this morning, but unfortunately there was no minyan, so we could only daven (pray) privately.”*** The college would provide a vegetarian diet in place of kosher food. Evelyn started her own Jewish societies at Bangor University and the local training colleges. One of Evelyn’s fondest memories is of a Muslim student from Bangor University joining the Jewish Society, as he felt it would best meet his needs and religious interests.