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Dublin Core

Title

Holyhead Women of the Great War | Menywod Caergybi yn y Rhyfel Mawr

Subject

Women

Menywod

World War 1

Y Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf

Holyhead

Caergybi

RMS Leinster

Creator

Holyhead Maritime Museum

Publisher

Ports, Past and Present Project

Date

2023

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Relation

https://perma.cc/WBX4-WXYP

Format

Curatescape story

Language

English

Welsh

Coverage

53.31663452942742, -4.635734654763771

Curatescape Story Item Type Metadata

Lede

This post is one of a continuing series to showcase some of the special objects of Holyhead Maritime Museum's collection. The full series can be viewed on the website, Holyhead: Stories of a Port. Thank you to Barry Hillier for sharing the story with *Ports, Past and Present.*

Lede (Welsh)

Mae'r blogbost hwn yn un mewn cyfres barhaus i ddangos rhai o wrthrychau arbennig casgliad Amgueddfa Forwrol Caergybi. Gallwch gweld y gyfres lawn ar y wefan, Holyhead: Stories of a Port. Diolch yn fawr i Barry Hillier am rannu'r stori gyda Phorthladdoedd, Ddoe a Heddiw.

Story

There are a number of memorial plaques on view at the museum. These were made of bronze and issued to the next of kin in remembrance of those lost during the Great War of 1914-18. Each one is inscribed with the name of the person who died. Over one million were issued.

Only 600 memorial plaques were issued in memory of women who lost their lives due to the war. The plaque shown in the image gallery below is in the name of Stewardess **Louisa Parry** from Holyhead, who died in the torpedoing of RMS *Leinster* in October 1918. Whilst the ship was rapidly sinking she went to a lower deck to the aid of a woman and child but became trapped with them in their cabin as the waters rose.

The sinking of RMS *Leinster* resulted in the loss of over 650 lives including another Holyhead Stewardess, **Hannah Owen**. Both she and Louisa worked in hospitals before being employed by the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company. Hannah was 36, unmarried and had worked for the CoDSPCo for 12 years. She lived with her family at 2 Tower Gardens, Holyhead. Her Memorial Plaque was sold at auction in 2006.

Louisa, aged 22, was one of nine children, two of her sisters were also employed as Stewardesses, one of which was ill on that day and Louisa sailed in her place. The family lived at 5 Fairview, Holyhead. It is believed that Louisa was engaged and soon to marry an Army officer.

Hannah and Louisa were among a number of Holyhead women who worked as Stewardesses on the Irish Sea vessels operating out of the port. Each crossing had its dangers not only from the forces of nature but as the war progressed enemy submarines began to hunt and attack vessels of both the CoDSPCo and the LNWR. The official crew lists for 1915 include the

names of 16 Stewardesses from Holyhead. Their duty, if the vessel was attacked, was to attend to the safety of women and children passengers, probably putting their own lives at risk. The Great War also claimed the lives of two other Holyhead women. **Margaret Williams** was lost in the tragic sinking of the LNWR vessel, SS *Connemara,* at Carlingford Lough following a collision with SS *Retriever.*During a fierce storm and under restricted wartime lighting, this was one of the ship's regular crossings from Greenore in Ireland to Holyhead. It is believed that this voyage was meant to be Margaret's last before leaving to get married. She was then aged 32.

Annie Roberts from 6 Ponthwfa Terrace, Holyhead joined the WRAF in May 1918 and was based at Hooton Hall, Cheshire. Aged only 20, she was one of many who sadly succumbed to the influenza epidemic.

The 1920 book 'Holyhead and the Great War' by R E Roberts records that 62 women from the town served in uniform – WRNS (4), WAAC (12), National Army Catering Board (8), Land Army (12) and Munitions (26). In addition, close to 40 women served as part of the Red Cross effort in the many hospitals and convalescence homes of the area.

Not all Holyhead's losses are recorded on the town War Memorial (The Cenotaph). **Catherine (Katie) Evans,** from Bryniau Llygaid Farm, Holyhead, was a volunteer nurse for the Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) based at Holyhead during WW1. Katie served with the No. 8 Anglesey Detachment but sadly died on 16 October 1914. Although not commemorated on the Holyhead Cenotaph, she is listed on one of the panels in York Minster commemorating members of the nursing services. Katie was unmarried and only 34 years old when she died following an operation for a perforated ulcer. On the day after her funeral, her sister Pollie Evans volunteered for the VAD.

With special thanks to Simon and Jon McClean who donated the memorial plaque of their great-aunt, Louisa Parry, to the museum and also allowed her photograph to be published.

Story (Welsh)

Mae nifer o blaciau coffa i'w gweld yn yr amgueddfa. Cafodd y rhain eu gwneud o efydd a'u rhoi i'r perthnasau agosaf i gofio'r rhai a gollwyd yn ystod Rhyfel Mawr 1914-18. Ar bob un gwelir enw'r sawl a fu farw. Cafodd mwy na miliwn eu dosbarthu.

Dim ond 600 o blaciau coffa a roddwyd er cof am fenywod a gollodd eu bywydau oherwydd y rhyfel. Mae'r plac yn yr oriel ddelweddau isod yn dangos enw'r Stiwardes Louisa Parry o Gaergybi, a fu farw pan drawyd yr *RMS Leinster* ei tharo gan dorpedo ym mis Hydref 1918. Wrth i'r llong suddo'n gyflym, aeth Louisa i un o'r deciau islaw i helpu menyw a phlentyn ond aeth yn sownd gyda nhw yn eu caban wrth i'r dyfroedd godi.

Pan suddwyd yr *RMS Leinster* fe gollwyd dros 650 o fywydau gan gynnwys Stiwardes arall o Gaergybi, Hannah Owen. Bu hi a Louisa yn gweithio mewn ysbytai cyn cael eu cyflogi gan y City of Dublin Steam Packet Company. Roedd Hannah yn 36, yn ddi-briod ac wedi bod yn gweithio i'r cwmni ers 12 mlynedd. Roedd yn byw gyda'i theulu yn 2 Tower Gardens, Caergybi. Cafodd ei Phlac Coffa hithau ei werthu mewn ocsiwn yn 2006.

Roedd Louisa, 22 oed, yn un o naw o blant. Roedd dwy o'i chwiorydd hefyd yn cael eu cyflogi fel stiwardes, ac roedd un yn sâl ar y diwrnod hwnnw ac fe hwyliodd Louisa yn ei lle. Roedd y teulu'n byw yn 5 Fairview, Caergybi. Credir bod Louisa wedi dyweddïo ac am briodi swyddog yn y Fyddin yn fuan.

Roedd Hannah a Louisa ymhlith nifer o fenywod o Gaergybi a fu'n gweithio fel Stiwardesiaid ar longau Môr Iwerddon a fu'n hwylio o'r porthladd. Roedd peryglon ym mhob croesiad nid yn unig o du grymoedd natur ond hefyd wrth i'r rhyfel fynd yn ei blaen dechreuodd llongau

tanfor y gelyn hela ac ymosod ar longau'r CoDSPCo a'r LNWR. Mae rhestrau swyddogol y criw ar gyfer 1915 yn cynnwys enwau 16 o Stiwardesiaid o Gaergybi. Eu dyletswydd nhw, pe bai yna ymosodiad ar y llong, oedd gofalu am ddiogelwch y menywod a'r plant a oedd yn teithio, gan beryglu eu bywydau eu hunain, mae'n debyg.

Cymerodd y Rhyfel Mawr fywydau dwy fenyw arall o Gaergybi hefyd. Cafodd Margaret Williams ei cholli pan suddwyd llong yr LNWR, *SS Connemara,* yn Llyn Carlingford yn dilyn gwrthdrawiad trasig gyda'r SS *Retriever.* Yn ystod storm ffyrnig ac o dan oleuadau cyfyngedig cyfnod y rhyfel, roedd y llong wrthi ar un o'i chroesiadau cyson o Greenore yn Iwerddon i Gaergybi. Credir mai'r daith hon oedd un olaf Margaret i fod, cyn gadael er mwyn priodi. Roedd hi'n 32 oed.

Ymunodd Annie Roberts o 6 Ponthwfa Terrace, Caergybi, â'r WRAF ym mis Mai 1918 a chafodd ei hanfon i Neuadd Hooton, Swydd Gaer. A hithau'n 20 oed yn unig, bu'n un o'r nifer fawr a gollwyd, yn anffodus, yn epidemig y ffliw.

Mae'r llyfr o 1920 'Holyhead and the Great War' gan R E Roberts yn cofnodi bod 62 o fenywod y dref wedi gwasanaethu mewn lifrai – WRNS (4), WAAC (12), Bwrdd Arlwyo Cenedlaethol y Fyddin (8), Byddin y Tir (12) ac Arfau Rhyfel (26). Yn ychwanegol, bu bron i 40 o fenywod yn gwasanaethu fel rhan o ymdrechion y Groes Goch yn ysbytai a chartrefi ymadfer niferus yr ardal.

Nid yw holl golledion Caergybi wedi'u cofnodi ar Gofeb Rhyfel y dref. Roedd Catherine (Katie) Evans, Fferm Bryniau Llygaid, Caergybi, yn nyrs wirfoddol ar gyfer Adran Cymorth Gwirfoddol y Groes Goch (VAD) yng Nghaergybi yn ystod yr Ail Ryfel Byd. Bu Katie'n gwasanaethu gydag Adran Rhif 8 Sir Fôn ond yn anffodus bu farw ar 16 Hydref 1914. Er nad yw wedi'i choffáu ar Gofeb Caergybi, mae wedi'i rhestru ar un o'r paneli yng Nghadeirlan Caerefrog sy'n coffáu aelodau o'r gwasanaethau nyrsio. Roedd Katie yn ddi-briod ac yn 34 oed yn unig pan fu farw yn dilyn llawdriniaeth ar gyfer wlser tyllog. Drannoeth ei chynhebrwng, gwirfoddolodd ei chwaer Pollie Evans ar gyfer y VAD.

Gyda diolch yn arbennig i Simon a Jon McClean a roddodd blac coffa eu hen fodryb, Louisa Parry, i'r amgueddfa a hefyd caniatáu i'w ffotograff gael ei gyhoeddi.

Factoid

When the memorial plaques were first designed it was not envisaged that they would be needed in memory of women and modifications were necessary to change the 'HE' into 'SHE'. To enable the 'S' to be added a much narrower 'H' was inserted to make space for it.

Pan gafodd y placiau coffa eu dylunio am y tro cyntaf, ni ragwelwyd y byddai eu hangen i gofio menywod a bu'n rhaid eu haddasu i newid yr 'HE' yn 'SHE'. Er mwyn ychwanegu'r 'S' cafodd 'H' lawer culach ei chreu i wneud lle iddi.

Related Resources

Philip Lecane, *Women and Children of the RMS* Leinster*: Restored to History* (Ireland: Elm Books, 2018).

'Holyhead Women of the Great War', *Holyhead: Stories of a Port*, archived at https://perma.cc/Q6FF-CA9F.

'Louisa Parry - Lost on RMS Leinster', *RMS Leinster 1918-2018*, archived at https://perma.cc/93K2-CCHY.

'Welsh Women of World War One programme shows changing roles', *BBC News*, 12 July 2016, archived at https://perma.cc/BU95-RGP8.

Women's Archive Wales, *Women, Wales and War,* archived at https://perma.cc/22EC-TPEF.

Official Website

https://perma.cc/NVE7-YJEW