

= Capel Lligwy =

Capel Lligwy ( sometimes referred to as Hen Gapel Lligwy ) is a ruined chapel near Rhos Lligwy in Anglesey , north Wales , dating back to the first half of the 12th century . The chapel 's original purpose is unknown , but it might have been used as a memorial chapel or in connection with a local royal court , or as a chapel of ease in a large parish with a growing population . It was used for a time until the early 18th century as a private place of worship for a nearby house , then later fell into disrepair . The walls still remain , with some traces of render on them internally , but there is no roof .

It contains a 16th @-@ century side chapel with a vault beneath , used as a burial chamber . It is a Grade II listed building , a national designation given to " buildings of special interest , which warrant every effort being made to preserve them " , in particular because it is " a substantially 12th @-@ century structure " with the " unusual 16th @-@ century vaulted south chapel " .

= = History and location = =

The oldest parts of Capel Lligwy date from the first half of the 12th century . This was a time when many churches on Anglesey in north @-@ west Wales were first built in stone following the end of Viking raids and attempts by the Normans to gain control of the island . The reason for its construction , and the saint to whom it was dedicated , are unknown . Geraint Jones , author of a 2006 guide to the churches of Anglesey , suggests that it may originally have been a memorial chapel , or connected to a royal court nearby . Yates and Longley , authors of a 2001 guide to ancient Anglesey monuments , note that it was built in the large parish of Penrhos Lligwy and was perhaps intended to serving the expanding population in medieval times . Despite this , it seems to have remained as a chapel of ease rather than become a parish church in its own right . The chapel is sometimes referred to as " Hen Gapel Lligwy " ( " hen " being the Welsh word for " old " and " chapel " meaning " chapel " ) .

The walls were partially rebuilt in the 14th century , and the upper parts of the walls date from this time . A chapel was added to the south side of the building in the 16th century . A vault under the south chapel was used to bury members of a local family , the Pierce Lloyds . In 1999 , the vault was used to record some " atmospheres " for the album " You Have Just Been Poisoned By The Serpents " by The Serpents , a collective of Welsh musicians including members of Echo and the Bunnymen , Super Furry Animals and Ectogram that was described by one journalist as " possibly the strangest pop group of all time " .

For a time , Capel Lligwy was used as a private place of worship for Lligwy House , a " venerable mansion " once owned by the Lloyd family which came into the possession of William Irby , 1st Baron Boston , in the 18th century . After the early part of the 18th century , however , the chapel became unused and began to fall into disrepair . The walls remain to gable level , with some traces of render on the inside , but the roof has gone .

Capel Lligwy is in the Anglesey countryside near Llanallgo ; the parish church of St Gallgo , Llanallgo is about 0 @.@ 78 miles ( 1 @.@ 26 km ) away . Part of the churchyard wall remains , showing that it was originally within a mainly circular enclosure , as often found with early churches . It is cared for by Cadw , the Welsh Assembly Government body responsible for the built heritage of Wales , and is open to the public .

= = Architecture and fittings = =

Capel Lligwy is built from rubble masonry ; at about 5 feet ( 1 @.@ 5 m ) up the walls , the style changes and smaller stones are inserted into spaces between the larger blocks , showing where the 14th @-@ century rebuilding started . The doorway is on the south side , headed by a plain arch , and dates from the 12th century . There is a stone bellcote at the west end . There is no structural division between the nave ( where the congregation would have sat ) and the chancel ( where the altar would have been located ) . There are no window openings on the north side , but there is a

blocked opening to the east ( about 5 feet ( 1 @.@ 5 m ) wide ) and there are the remains of a window on the south wall . There is a blocked window in the south wall of the south chapel . The vault , which is about 27 square feet ( 2 @.@ 5 m<sup>2</sup> ) , is reached by stone steps from inside the south chapel . Limestone slabs form the roof of the vault and the floor of the chapel above . A stone in the nave , about 2 square feet ( 0 @.@ 19 m<sup>2</sup> ) with a hole in the top , might once have been used as a churchyard cross .

= = Assessment = =

Capel Lligwy has national recognition and statutory protection from alteration as it has been designated as a Grade II listed building ? the lowest of the three grades of listing , designating " buildings of special interest , which warrant every effort being made to preserve them " . It was given this status on 2 September 1952 and has been listed because it is " important as a substantially 12th @-@ century structure , with some architectural details surviving from this early period " , even though it is now in a " ruinous condition " . Cadw ( which is responsible for the inclusion of Welsh buildings on the statutory lists ) also notes the " unusual 16th @-@ century vaulted south chapel " .

The 19th @-@ century antiquarian Angharad Llwyd mentioned the church in her history of Anglesey . She said that the architecture was of " the rudest kind , [ which ] bears testimony to its great antiquity . " She recounted that a fox had once taken shelter in the ruins , and when it was dug out , the vault was discovered , " containing several human skeletons , which crumbled into dust , when exposed to the air " . She added that further exploration of the vault then revealed " a large mass of human bones , several feet in depth " .

A 1990 book about abandoned churches in Wales refers to the ancient monuments in this part of Anglesey , and calls Capel Lligwy a " medieval gesture of Christian power in a land so obviously imbued with the spirit of a pagan past " . It notes that " the wheel has turned full circle and Capel Lligwy today is just another ruined relic of a former age . " The authors describe the chapel as a " simple , square building " with a " small and ruggedly austere south chapel " , adding that the stone slabs over the vault are " almost in imitation of the ancient burial chambers which dot the surrounding landscape . "