

## CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

<b>LISTED BUILDING</b>	Capel Gellionnen (Gellionnen and Graig Unitarian Church) Gellionnen, Swansea
<b>Grade:-</b>	II*
<b>Date of Notification:-</b>	10.11.77 amended 23.05.03
<b>National Grid Reference:-</b>	SN 7006704150
<b>O.S. 1:10000 Sheet No:-</b>	SN 70 SW
<b>CADW Reference No:-</b>	22087
<b>C &amp; C of S Reference No:-</b>	LB:055

### **Notes:-**

#### ***Location:-***

Situated in a remote rural position high on Mynydd Gellionen reached down a track off the minor road from Rhyd-y-Gwin.

#### ***History:-***

Unitarian Chapel founded 1662 by the Rev. Thomas Thomas after his ejection from Cadoxton Church. Chapel built 1692 on land given by Bussy Mansell. Unitarian by late C18 under Rev. John Rees who died just as the chapel was rebuilt 1801-2, possibly using part of original as there is a blocked door on rear wall and gallery appears to be inserted. There has been some alteration to the interior woodwork in later C19, and windows have had to be replaced in later C20 after vandalism. The Rev. Thomas Morgan (1737-1813), to whom there is a memorial within was reputedly one of the first to use cow-pox serum to cure smallpox, before Jenner.

#### ***Exterior:-***

Chapel, whitewashed render with slate roof, Long-wall façade with two big arched centre windows, C20 glazing copying original, 2 doors and 2 outer gallery lights. Raised stucco frames with keystones. Marble late C19 plaque between centre windows replacing slate original now within. Centre windows are small-paned, with arched thicker inner divide to give marginal panes. Doors are cambered-headed, C20 cladding on later C19 panelled double doors, and outer windows are later C19 cambered-headed horned sashes with marginal glazing bars. End-wall lean-to vestry with sheet-metal roof. Rear has 2 similar big arched windows, centre blocked arched door with added buttress each side.

#### ***Interior:-***

Long interior with curved plaster ceiling, moulded cornices on long walls. Pulpit on entrance wall opposite 3-sided gallery, flat on underside with stepped open-back benches, panelled-back against walls. Gallery has deep plain cornice under low rail with stick balusters. Fourteen plain iron columns, 2x4x2 columns under gallery front and three thicker iron columns against each of three walls, indicating that gallery is probably inserted.

Ground floor has small C19 fireplaces on each end wall. Pews are in three blocks those to sides canted and curved, later C19, those to centre with panelled woodwork of c1800, altered in later C19. Plain 'set fawr' remade in later C19 with some fielded panelling of c1800, carried right around pulpit, 2 entries, curved angles. Pulpit on base of c1800, serpentine-curved sides, flat front and curved steps. Later C19 columned and panelled pulpit front and turned balusters to platform and stairs. Later C19 moulded plaster arch behind pulpit, framing marble memorial plaque to Rev. John Evans (1835-88).

On left end wall is original front wall plaque of 1801 indicating that chapel was first built in 1692 'for the use of a Society of Protestant Dissenters'. To right of pulpit, fine 3 colour marble memorial, to Rev. Thomas Morgan (d1813), signed 'W. Williams, Moribyr(?)deicit'. Fluted border of sarcophagus shaped plaque with small urn over. Plaque below to Rev. John James (d1837). Plaques to left to Rev. Josiah Rees (d1801), and Owen Rees of Gelligron, publisher in London, (d1837), the latter signed R. Brown of London. Enclosed gallery stairs up each side with C19 4-panelled doors and panelled partitions. Clock of 1873 to gallery centre inscribed 'the gift of Mr Evan Davies Llachartfach'.

**Listed:-**

Grade II\* as one of the oldest surviving chapels of the region, apparently mostly of 1801, with history back to 1692.

**Reference:-**

G. and J. Hague, Unitarian Heritage, 1986, pp 120-1;  
J. Newman, The buildings of Wales Glamorgan, 1995, p 323.