



CYNGOR TREF Y BARRI  
BARRY TOWN COUNCIL



# FAMOUS PLAQUES

**Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery**

Barry, CF62 8BP

## Elizabeth Phillips Hughes

Born in 1851, Elizabeth's father John was Carmarthen's first Medical Officer of Health and her mother Anne, was the descendant of Jewish refugees who came to Haverford West in the late 18th century.

Elizabeth was educated at Hope House, Taunton from about the age of 13 and later at Cheltenham Ladies College where she taught for four years before being admitted to Newnham College Cambridge in 1881 at the age of 30.

Cambridge did not award degrees to women at that time although they were allowed to sit the examinations and received certificates, not diplomas. Elizabeth became the first woman to achieve first class honours in Moral Sciences and a year later, 2nd class in history.

Elizabeth believed that education was every person's birth right and made her lecture rooms available to working men and women on Sundays.

She was a mountaineer in her spare time and climbed the Matterhorn, one of the highest peaks in the Alps, at the age of 48.

After retiring from the Cambridge Training College for Women at 49, Elizabeth travelled to Japan where she was a visiting professor of English at the University of Tokyo. She had an impact on the Japanese education system, mainly regarding women's physical exercise in schools.

She then travelled across the United States lecturing and looking into issues related to prison reform. She helped promote the concept of probation when she came back to the United Kingdom. Elizabeth lived with her brother and his wife in Barry where she continued to campaign for better secondary education. She was the only woman on the committee that drafted the University of Wales' first charter and in 1920, she received an honorary degree from that university.

During the first World War when in her 60s, she was commandant of a Red Cross hospital and, in 1917, she was one of the first people to be awarded the MBE. In 1948, when Cambridge finally gave women degrees, Hughes Hall was named in her honour and is the only College named after a woman in the university.

Those who worked with Elizabeth spoke of her care for the welfare of others, as well as her intelligence, courage and vitality, qualities that inspired her students and all those around her.



**Elizabeth Phillips Hughes**

## Margaret Lindsay Williams

Born 18 June 1888, daughter of Samuel Arthur Williams who had a flourishing business as a shipbroker in Cardiff, and Martha Margaret (née Lindsay) his wife.

Margaret had private tuition before attending Cardiff School of Art followed by the Pelham Street School of Painting in Kensington to prepare for entering the Royal Academy in 1906. At the Royal Academy School she won several prizes including a gold medal in 1911 for her work *The City of Refuge*. At the time she was the youngest artist to win a gold medal at the School and the first from Wales to do so.

Also in 1911 she established her own studio at Eaton Terrace in St John's Wood. The following year she won a travel scholarship and, on the advice of John Singer Sargent, spent eighteen months studying in Italy and Holland. In March 1914 Williams held her first solo exhibition, showing some 58 paintings at the New Galleries in Cardiff.

At the outbreak of World War One, Margaret wrote and lobbied David Lloyd George for an appointment as an official war artist with the Welsh Division in France.

While Lloyd-George thought it a good idea for the regiment to have an artist attached, he would not allow a women to go that close to the front line and refused her request.

By the end of World War One, Margaret was a successful and established artist. She painted a number of imaginative works with religious overtones, notably *The Devil's Daughter*, *The Triumph*, *The Imprisoned Soul* and *The Menace*. By the mid-1920s Margaret had decided to concentrate on portrait work. She received a steady stream of commissions and although based in London, painted the portraits of several prominent Welsh families including the Morgan family and the Novello Davies family.

Among her other royal commissions were portraits of Princess Margaret, Prince Charles, Princess Anne and at least five portraits of the present Queen Elizabeth II including one of her as a young Princess. Williams visited the United States at least five times during her life and in 1922 was commissioned to paint a near life-size portrait of President Warren Harding.

Although her house in Hamilton Terrace in St Johns Wood was the location of several parties and receptions, particularly when she had new works to show, Margaret otherwise appears to have led a somewhat solitary existence and never married. A lifelong Welsh Congregationalist, her funeral took place in the Windsor Road Congregational Church. A Blue plaque commemorating her connection with the town has been placed on 9 Windsor Road, Barry.



**Margaret Lindsay Williams**

## Gareth Jones

Born in Barry, Gareth Jones' father was Major Edgar Jones, headmaster of Barry County School which Gareth attended. His mother had spent the period 1889–1892 as a tutor in the city that is now known as Donetsk, and her stories inspired in him a desire to visit the Soviet Union, and particularly Ukraine.

He graduated from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth in 1926 with a first class degree in French, and from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1929 with a first class honours degree in French, German, and Russian. In January 1930 he began work as Foreign Affairs Advisor to former British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, and that summer made his first brief "pilgrimage" to Ukraine. During the 1930s, he was a reporter for the Western Mail. In late January and early February 1933 Jones was in Germany covering the accession to power of the Nazi Party, and was in Leipzig on the day Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor.

A few days later on 23 February in the Richtigshofen, the fastest and most powerful three-motored aeroplane in Germany, Jones became the first foreign journalist to fly with Hitler as he accompanied Hitler and Joseph Goebbels to Frankfurt where he reported for the Western Mail on the new Chancellor's tumultuous acclamation in that city. He wrote that if the Richtigshofen had crashed the history of Europe would have changed. The next month, he travelled to the Soviet Union and eluded authorities to slip into Ukraine, where he kept diaries of the man-made starvation he witnessed. On his return to Berlin on 29 March 1933, he issued his press release, which was published by many newspapers, including The Manchester Guardian and the New York Evening Post.

Banned from the Soviet Union, Gareth turned his attention to the Far East and in late 1934 he left Britain on a "Round-the-World Fact-Finding Tour". He spent about six weeks in Japan, interviewing important generals and politicians, and he eventually reached Beijing. From here he travelled to Inner Mongolia in the company of a German journalist.

Detained by Japanese forces, the pair were told that there were three routes back to the Chinese town of Kalgan, only one of which was safe; they took this route but were captured by bandits who demanded a ransom of 100,000 Mexican silver pesos.

The German journalist was released after two days, but 16 days later the bandits shot Gareth Jones under mysterious circumstances, on the eve of his 30th birthday. There were strong suspicions that his murder was engineered by the Soviet NKVD, as revenge for the embarrassment he had previously caused the Soviet regime.

On 2 May 2006, a trilingual (Welsh/English/Ukrainian) plaque was unveiled in Gareth Jones' memory in the Old College at Aberystwyth University, in the presence of his niece Margaret Siriol Colley, and the Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK, Ihor Kharchenko, who described him as an "unsung hero of Ukraine".



## **Beatrice Alice Lewis**

The first woman to be elected as a councillor in Barry. She was born Beatrice Robertson in Ely, Cardiff, one of nine children. She married William Jenkin Lewis, a coal trimmer and in 1897 they moved to Barry. They lived in George Street with their children Gladys, Lillian, William, Arthur and Beatrice.

In 1918 under the Representation of the People Act women were able to vote and stand for election for the first time and 1919 Beatrice stood for Barry Urban District Council and became the first woman ever to be elected as a councillor in Barry, representing the Labour Party in the Castleland Ward.

She sat on committees covering health, education, housing and child welfare and was instrumental in improving maternity services for Barry women. Beatrice understood the community she represented and spoke up for those without a voice.

She died at the age of 52 in 1929. Her obituary described her as 'one of the leading women of the Socialist Party in South Wales, who almost single-handedly championed the establishment of a maternity clinic in Barry. She was progressive in thought and action and forceful in debate and commanded the respect of her fellow councillors during the nine years she served as a member of the authority'. A pioneering woman to be remembered - 'She believed she could. So she did'



**Beatrice Alice Lewis**

## **William James Wilde A.K.A Jimmy Wilde**

Born William James Wilde, he worked in the coal mines as a boy and started boxing at the age of sixteen in fairground booths where crowds were amazed by the toughness and ability to knock down much bigger opponents.

A Welsh professional boxer who competed from 1911 to 1923, he held the IBU World Flyweight Title in 1916, the EBU European Flyweight Title twice; firstly in 1914 and again from 1916 to 1917, the BBBOFC British Flyweight Title in 1916 and the National Sporting Club's British Flyweight Title from 1916 to 1918.

Often regarded as the greatest British fighter of all time, he was the first Official World Flyweight Champion and was rated by American Boxing writer Nat Fleischer, as well as many other professionals and fans including former boxer, trainer, manager and promoter, Charley 'Broadway' Rose, as "The Greatest Flyweight boxer ever". Wilde earned various nicknames during his career such as; "The Mighty Atom", "Ghost with the hammer in his hand" and "The Tylorstown Terror" due to his bludgeoning punching power.

While reigning as the world's greatest flyweight, Wilde would take on bantamweights and even featherweights, and knock them out. Wilde has the third longest recorded unbeaten streak in boxing history, having gone 92–0–1. Behind Packey McFarland who went 106–1–6 losing only his 9th fight and going another 104 unbeaten. His official record is 137 wins, 4 losses, 2 draws and 8 no-decisions with 100 wins by knockout, which makes him one of the most prolific knockout winners of all time.

Ring Magazine has named him as the 3rd greatest puncher of all time, the 13th greatest fighter of the 20th century and has twice named him the greatest Flyweight of all time.

In 1990 he was elected into the International Boxing Hall of Fame.







# Opening Times

Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery is open 365 days a year

During the Summer months (April - September) times are  
8am - 7pm

During the Winter months (October - March) times are  
8am - 4.15pm

Weekends & Bank Holidays

8.30am - 5.00pm

No admittance after 4.30pm to cars and pedestrians. All  
visitors must exit by 5.00pm.

Due to unforeseen weather conditions the Cemetery may  
close without prior notice for health and safety reasons.

Notices will be displayed on the Barry Town Council website

## Contact Us

Barry Town Council  
Town Hall, King Square

Barry

CF63 4RW

(01446) 738663

[info@barrytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@barrytowncouncil.gov.uk)

[www.barrytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.barrytowncouncil.gov.uk)