

## **This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990**

### **Listed Building: Report for Building**

|                    |  |                            |                   |
|--------------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Authority :</b> | Pembrokeshire                                  | <b>Record Number :</b>     | 87844             |
|                    |  | <b>Date of Listing :</b>   | 08 Apr 2021       |
| <b>Community :</b> | Cwm Gwaun                                      | <b>Date of Amendment :</b> |                   |
| <b>Locality :</b>  | Pontfaen                                       | <b>Date Delisted :</b>     |                   |
|                    |  | <b>Grid Ref :</b>          | 204734,2351<br>83 |
|                    |  | <b>Grade :</b>             | II                |
| <b>Name :</b>      | Day Centre at Ffald y Brenin Christian Retreat |                            |                   |

**Street No, Name :**

**Street Side :**

#### **Location :**

On the S side of the main centre.

#### **History**

Sychbant Farm was purchased in 1984 by Peter and Phyllida Mould, with the aim of establishing a non-denominational Christian retreat centre. The centre is based on the conversion of the C19 farm range, undertaken 1985-8 by Christopher Day. The Day Centre was added in 1990-1991, also by Day. Christopher Day was a pioneer of eco-architecture, aiming to move away from mass-produced styles and materials in order to build vernacular-style buildings sensitive to their surroundings and with hand-crafted details. Influenced by the ideas of Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy, he wanted to create environments that would nurture the soul and nourish the spirit. Trained in both architecture and sculpture, Day moved to Pembrokeshire in 1972, where he began his career as an architect. Most of his commissions in Wales were for private houses, but his larger projects were the Rudolf Steiner School in Maenclochog and the Ffald y Brenin Christian Retreat Centre. Here Day was able to fulfil his ambition 'to design projects which develop and enhance the spirit of place already there so that the new is not an imposition, but an organic development of the old'.

#### **Exterior**

A single-storey U-shaped building, with slightly battered walls built largely of re-used or found rubble stone, under a slate roof. Openings either rise to eaves level or are under segmental brick heads, although the windows and doors themselves have trapezoidal heads. Facing the main building to the N the splayed, short outer wings are store rooms with full-height doors, of which the L-hand is part framed by an old gate pier. The main range has a window to the R in place of an earlier door and the entrance offset in a recessed porch at the angle with the L-hand wing. This is carried on an irregular timber post and has doors to the 2 main rooms. On the S side the building extends into the adjacent field, on a projecting base with stone revetment. Each face is treated differently but has windows designed to make the most of the vantage point overlooking

the Gwaun Valley. The S face has a wide 3-light window below the eaves and round-headed 3-light window below a gable to the R. In the SE wall is a 3-light half-dormer with faceted roof profile, and in the SW wall another wide 3-light window below the eaves and full-height door.

### **Interior**

The interior is divided into 2 main rooms, plus the store rooms in the wings. Main rooms have whitened walls and squared roof beams.

### **Listed**

Listed as a work by a leading eco-architect working in Wales, exhibiting signature characteristics such as the use of found materials and allowing the building to blend with its environment by extending it into a field of rough pasture, and for group value with the main Retreat Centre.

### **References**

None recorded

### **Sources**

| <b>Author</b>                      | <b>Date of Publication</b> | <b>Title</b>   | <b>Volume</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---------------|
| T Lloyd, J Orbach and R Scourfield | 2004                       | The Buildings of Wales: Pembrokeshire  |               |
| Christopher Day                    | 2007                       | (my) Dying is fun: a comedy of disabled misadventures  |               |
| Christopher Day                    | 1990                       | Places of the Soul: Architecture and Environmental Design as a Healing Art   |               |
| Christopher Day                    | 2002                       | Spirit & Place: healing our environment  |               |
|                                    |                            | Christopher Day's cv, c2000, online at <a href="http://www.fantastic-machine.com/artandspirit/spirit-and-place/cd_cv.html">http://www.fantastic-machine.com/artandspirit/spirit-and-place/cd_cv.html</a> |               |