

A Blast From Our Past by Colin Robins (written in 2021)



The Glenys Stone Journals are a remarkable record of the work of Llanelli Art Society between 1953 and 1992. They were presented to LAS by the nephew and niece of Glenys Stone (1920 -2014), who had been a member of the LAS Committee for over forty years.

The earliest item, we have, is an invitation to a private viewing of the LAS exhibition, which was formally opened on March 21st, 1953, at Llanelli School of Art (now Pen Tip School, Pembrey Road).

The invitation is interesting because it links two people who made an important contribution to Art in Llanelli and throughout Wales.

Derrick Pratt, Principal of the School of Art, 1924-1951, was a founding member of Llanelli Art Society, in October 1929. Once the art college had acquired new premises at the Pen Tip site, LAS was invited to mount exhibitions at the art college.

John Petts (1914-1991), who opened the show, was a Londoner by birth, but is regarded as a Welsh artist. His talents were far-ranging portraitist, sculptor, wood engraver, glass engraver, printer, teacher, and publisher. He was well-connected to writers and other artists in Wales and worked for the Welsh Committee of the Arts' Council. He lived in North Wales, Llansteffan, and Abergavenny.

In 1963, he organised the funding and design of what became known as The Wales Window, which was installed in the 16 Street Baptist Street Church, Birmingham, Alabama, USA, following the bombing of the church by white supremacists. Four black teenage girls were killed in the bombing. All over Wales, people donated half-a-crown each to finance a memorial window for the church. The window depicted a black Christ.



