Congratulations to Dr Geoffrey Brundrett of the Heritage Group on his award of the CIBSE Gold Medal at the Army & Navy Club in London on 13th October, 2017.

Dr Geoffrey Brundrett (left) with Alfred Leung, Chair CIBSE Merseyside & North Wales Region: An edited summary of his citation follows:

There can be few people who have ever done so much for the Institution over such a wide range of disciplines. Geoff’s involvement with building services goes back over 55 years. During this period he has combined a long and successful professional career, as Head of the Environmental & Building Division of the Electricity Council Research Centre, with outstanding service to CIBSE at Regional, National and International levels. He received a Bronze Medal in 1977 for a paper in Lighting Research & Technology and a second Bronze Medal in 1992 for a paper on Legionella. This was followed by the award of a Silver Medal in 2004.

Geoff’s contribution nationally to the Institution has been phenomenal, he has been involved with so many different Groups, Panels and Committees that there is barely space to list them all. He served on the Guide-A Panel; chaired TM13 (Legionella) & TM20 (Guide to Health & Safety); the Electrical Services Group and helped found the ASHRAE Group. He has been an active Committee Member of the Heritage Group since 1990 and was President of the Institution in 1997 during its Centenary.
On 17th October 1900, the City Surveyor estimated the cost of providing the Baths would be £57,000, but the Council considered this excessive and approved an expenditure of £39,998. On 6th May, 1902, the tender of Normanton and Sons at £39,316 10s 0d was accepted; though the Council may have been unaware this was for the building alone. The plans included three swimming baths (one Female and 1st & 2nd Class for Males), 64 wash baths, Turkish and Russian baths, boilers and calorifiers, etc. The costs rose: £4,788 for engineering work (including the plant for the pools), the lighting £1000, plus the considerable costs of stained glass windows, ornamental ironwork and tiling. Then a Laundry was added for £2,100, making the probable final cost £59,144. The foundation stone was laid in 1903. The Victoria Baths were opened by the Lord Mayor on 7th September, 1906. The Baths closed to the public on 13th March, 1993. After many difficult years of trying to find money, a £3.5 million Restoration Fund enabled a Gala Pool re-opening on the 14th May, 2017.
Early 19th century Wales saw a period of rapid industrialisation. As the valleys became peppered with iron works and then coal mines followed by progressive urbanisation the Baptist community began to build their chapels. The first Maesteg Bethania Chapel was built in 1832, enlarged in 1859, and rebuilt in 1898. The present chapel was constructed in 1908 to the designs of the architect Sir William Beddow Rees and said to seat up to 1001 people. The heating system, which dates from this time, was a Perkins medium pressure hot water system with a 4-circuit layout, with the heating pipe coils sited under the seating, and was in use until recently. The Perkins iron furnace appears to have replaced the original. After its closure, the Chapel was acquired in 2006 by the Welsh Religious Buildings Trust.
The Chapel was acquired by Addoldai Cymru (the Welsh Religious Buildings Trust) in 2005, an organisation which conserves some of the best examples of early Chapels in Wales. This particular Chapel was rebuilt in 1862 to the design of local architect Evan Griffiths, being a medium sized example, seating a congregation of about 300. The plain building facade reflects simple and strong Unitarian beliefs.

The Chapel today

The gallery and pews

Examples of the flueless direct-fired gas radiators

DC electrical switchgear

The radiators which operated on town’s gas from the local gas works, were manufactured by Fletcher Russell & Co Ltd of Warrington and probably date from the Edwardian period. In 1920, the gas lighting was replaced by a DC electrical system installed by J H Bosner of Aberdare. The original porcelain fuse carriers and jelly mould tumbler switches remain in their timber enclosure.

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