

Wessex Fine Art Tours
NORTH WALES:

**CASTLES, COUNTRY HOUSES
and GARDENS**

PAGEANTRY & POETRY

16~22 June, 2024



Organiser:

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Snowdonia



Grwych Castle

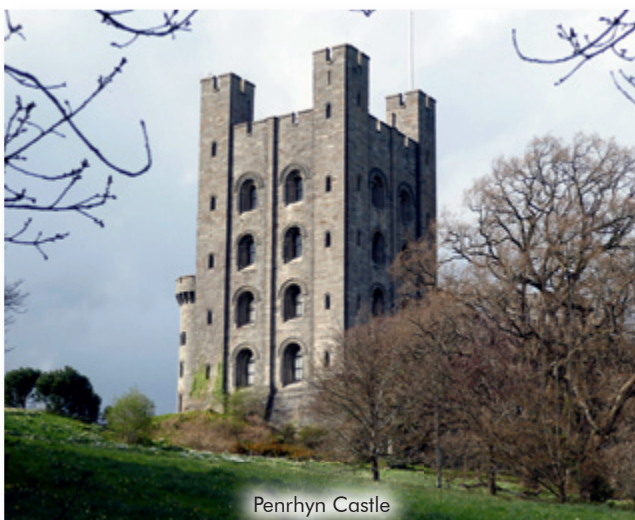
NORTH WALES: CASTLES, COUNTRY HOUSES AND GARDENS

Bounded by mountain and sea, North Wales is a land of outstanding scenic beauty, with a wealth of history, architecture and ancient cultural traditions. Castles dominate the landscape and contribute to its splendour. Built by Edward 1 to crush the rebellious Welsh princes, they are amongst the finest and best preserved in Europe (UNESCO World Heritage). We visit **Beaumaris**, a spectacularly beautiful symmetrical moated fortress, and magnificent **Conwy Castle**: built on a rocky outcrop, it dramatically dominates the old walled town of Conwy, which is still encircled by its mediaeval walls and towers. Within its heart splendid Elizabethan **Plas Mawr** is possibly the most complete town house of its period in Britain. The fortified manor house, **Gwydir Castle**, is one of the most romantic and evocative of Welsh Tudor houses. **Brynkinalt**, Denbighshire is the imposing Jacobean seat of the Trevors; the fine interiors, remodelled c.1808 contain important paintings and furniture. **Halston Hall**, built 1690, is a beautiful William and Mary house, whilst stately **Plas Draw**, Ruthin takes us into the Georgian period. Splendidly situated overlooking the Menai Straits is Georgian **Plas Newydd**, famous for Rex Whistler's magnificent fantasy mural.

The 19th century was the age of Romanticism. New country houses were built in Picturesque mediaevalizing styles, evoking Wales's historic past. **Grwych Castle** is a vast romantic castellated mansion, spectacularly located on a dramatic hillside, whilst **Penrhyn Castle** marks the climax of the Norman revival.

The Welsh countryside abounds in beautiful churches and chapels. At **St Dyfnog, Llanrhaedr** we see the magnificent C14 Jesse window, one of the very few to survive the Reformation; the C17 private chapels of **Rug** and **Gwydir Uchaf** are resplendent with carved and painted decoration, whilst the marble estate church at **Bodelwyddan** is the ultimate in Victorian splendour.

Our journeys will encompass much of Snowdonia's magnificent scenery and will include many outstanding historic gardens: highlights include **Gwydir**, a rare Elizabethan garden; **Plas Cadnant**, Anglesey, a romantic early C19 valley garden; the beautiful Arts and Crafts gardens of **Plas Brondanw**, and world-renowned **Bodnant**.



Penrhyn Castle



Plas Newydd: Rex Whistler mural



Jesse Window



Penrhyn Castle staircase



Gwydir



Beaumaris Castle



Halston Hall



Gwydir

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Sun June 16 The programme will begin in the afternoon (approx. 4.00 pm) at ***** Bodysgallen Hall Hotel, near Llandudno (see Practicalities).

Mon June 17 Conwy Castle (CADW), built 1283-87, and exceptionally well preserved, is one of the most magnificent mediaeval fortresses in Europe. Sumptuously decorated **Plas Mawr (CADW)** is possibly the finest Elizabethan town house in Britain. Afternoon visit to dramatic castellated neo-Norman **Penrhyn Castle (National Trust)**, built out of the profits of the slate industry, with an important art collection.

Tues June 18 We drive to spectacular **Brynkinalt Hall, Chirk (The Hon. Iain Hill-Trevor)**, the fine Jacobean home of the Trevors, one of the oldest and foremost families of Wales. **Halston Hall (Mr and Mrs Rupert Harvey)** is a beautiful William and Mary house with Georgian interiors. A special feature here is the rare timber-framed private chapel, with splendid C16 and C17 furnishings. We return via the scenic Horseshoe Pass.

Wed June 19 We drive along the lovely Conwy valley to the picturesque and atmospheric **Gwydir Castle (Peter and Judy Welford)**, the finest Tudor house in Wales and originally the power base of the Wynn family. Nearby is Sir Richard Wynn's remarkable painted **Gwydir Uchaf** chapel (1673) with its vividly carved angels and celestial ceiling. After lunch we continue on the scenic mountain road with views to Dolwyddelan Castle to **Plas Brondanw (Clough Williams Ellis Foundation)**, the important Arts and Crafts house and garden created by the Welsh architect Sir Clough Williams Ellis and considered his finest work. We return by the dramatic Nantgwynant Pass to enjoy one of the most magnificent drives in Snowdonia.

Thurs June 20 We cross the Menai Strait with its views of Telford's amazing suspension bridge (1826) to **Plas Newydd (National Trust)**, with its splendid late Georgian Gothick Gothick interiors and Rex Whistler mural. Thence to the remarkable recently rediscovered and restored early C19 **Plas Cadnant Hidden Gardens (Anthony Tavernor)** followed by an afternoon visit to **Beaumaris Castle (CADW)**, the last and possibly the greatest of Edward 1's castles.

Fri June 21 A visit to the sumptuous estate church of **St Margaret, Bodelwyddan**, built by Lady Willoughby de Broke in 1856 will contrast with the charming parish church of **St Dyfnog, LLanrhaedr-yng-Nghinmeirch**, with its holy well. The church's greatest feature is its magnificent and rare C14 Jesse window tracing the lineage of King David. Lunch in **Ruthin**, one of Wales most delightful towns with many historic buildings, including Elizabethan **Nantclwyd House (Denbighshire County Council)**. Afternoon visit to **Plas Draw (Mr Graham Holland)**, a distinguished Georgian house.

Sat June 22 Spectacular **Grwyth Castle (Grwyth Castle Preservation Trust)**, is one of Britain's most amazing 19th-century castellated creations, sublimely romantic. Finally, we finish the tour in the beautiful gardens of **Bodnant (National Trust)** in the heart of Snowdonia.

TOUR LEADER

The tour will be led by **Barbara Peacock MA FRSA**, founder of Wessex Fine Art Tours. She has led numerous successful tours in Britain and overseas and lectures internationally for organisations such as the **National Trust**, the **Art Fund** and the **Arts Society** and is a tour lecturer for **Art Pursuits**.



PRACTICALITIES

The beautiful and historic towered and gabled Bodysgallen Hall is a perfect base for our tour. Situated in 200 acres of parkland with spectacular views to Snowdonia and Conwy, the main building dates from c.1620 and has many period features. The rare and beautiful 17th and 18th-century terraced and walled gardens are a particular delight. The Hotel rooms are spacious and tastefully furnished. Carefully converted cottages provide further accommodation, whilst the former stable block now houses a spa and swimming pool. The restaurant has a 3-star AA rosette. Bodysgallen became a Historic House Hotel in the 1980s and is now owned by the National Trust. See www.bodysgallen.com

The nearest station is Llandudno Junction, a short taxi ride away, to which there are frequent trains from London Euston. Participants coming by train will be returned to the station at the end of the tour, which will finish in the early afternoon of June 22.

The 7-day tour will cost **£2995 per person** in a twin-bedded or double room, **£455 single supplement**. This will include accommodation B/B/D for 6 nights in *****Bodysgallen Hall Hotel, four lunches, teas and coffees as arranged, all coach transport, entrance fees and gratuities, illustrated course brochure and the services of the lecturer.

Please note: The course is limited to 25 participants

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Cancellation charges are as follows:

56 days or more before start of course - loss of deposit
55 - 43 days before start of course - 50% of the total
42 - 29 days before start of course - 60% of the total
28 - 22 days before start of course - 85% of the total
21 - 0 days before start of course - 100% of the total

It is a condition of booking that you arrange travel insurance to protect yourself against loss. In the unlikely event of cancellation by WFASC we undertake to refund you in full within 14 days all monies paid to us in course fees.



Bodysgallen Hall Hotel

BOOKING FORM

(PLEASE USE **BLOCK LETTERS**)

I/We wish to attend the 2024 Summer Tour and would like to reserve accommodation in a **single/shared** room.

I/we enclose a cheque for **£400 per person** (a non-returnable deposit) made payable to: **WESSEX FINE ART STUDY COURSES**,

OR, I am or we are paying £_____ into the following account:
Wessex Fine Art Study Courses, Account no.76898668

Sort Code: 30-99-71

Reservations should be sent to: WFASC Enrolments,
Church Cottage, Beauworth, Alresford, Hants SO24 0PA
or scanned and emailed to: wfasc-tours@wfasc.co.uk

[1] Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other (please include first name).....

Address:

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Postcode:..... Telephone:.....

Email:.....

[2] Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other (please include first name).....

Address:

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Postcode:..... Telephone:.....

Email:.....

Signature:

Date:.....

How did you hear about this course?

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Please indicate if you wish to receive details of future courses and to be on our mailing list: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please indicate if you are a member of: The National Trust ☐
English Heritage ☐ The Art Fund ☐ CADW ☐

More photographs at www.wfasc.co.uk



In addition to this all-inclusive tour, a 40+ page, fully-illustrated Tour Guide will be provided describing the historical background for each of the visits, supported by plans of the buildings and describing transitions through the ages.



If you would like to be added to the waiting list, or receive information about future tours please email Barbara Peacock on **wfasc-tours@wfasc.co.uk** or complete and return the form below.

Please make contact if you would like to hear more about talks and lectures for your local society or group.

Stay in touch also by viewing the website at **www.wfasc.co.uk**

Name (title & first name)

Address:

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Postcode:.....

Telephone:.....

Email:.....

Your area of interest:

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