

THE DOVE AND THE BIBLE



Those who have lived in Aberystwyth for a number of years will remember Seilo Chapel that stood near the corner where Queen's Road meets North Parade. Although Seilo Chapel was officially opened in April 1863, what most will remember is the very distinctive modern facade that was added at the start of the 1960s in time for the Chapel's centenary celebrations in 1963.

On its roof was a small structure sheltering a dove and a Bible, sculpted by Robert Lambert Gapper, who was Head of the Art Department in Aberystwyth University from 1939 until his retirement in 1962.

As well as being an educationalist, he was also a designer and sculptor, working with the slate and granite of his native Snowdonia, and also

bronze and wood. Most of his art was produced to commission and tended to be public works, such as memorials and gravestones, portrait busts and ecclesiastical furniture and ornaments; he was also responsible for designing the badge for Urdd Gobaith Cymru (the Welsh youth movement).

Although Seilo Chapel was demolished in the early 1990s, both the dove and Bible were taken down carefully and put in safe keeping; the dove however went astray.



When Morlan Centre was opened in April 2005, the Bible was placed within a structure in Morlan's garden with a specially constructed 'temporary' dove hanging above it, in the hope that one day the original dove would be returned. That day finally came in October 2010 and the original dove is now hanging in its rightful place above the Seilo Bible.

Hanging the dove was not an easy task at all and Morlan is grateful to Arad Goch for the safe transportation of the dove back to the Centre, and to Alun Morris and Raymond Walters for their help in hanging it. However, special thanks must be given to Laurie Wright for his perseverance in ensuring the safe return of the dove, and for his hard work in building the framework which now houses both the Bible and the dove.