

Press Release – Gordon Richards
14th January 2018

On Sunday the 14th January, the congregation at St. Peter's, Marloes welcomed relatives to a special Memorial Service held on the actual day of the 80th Anniversary of the tragedy of the going down of the Gordon Richards. After recent press publicity, relatives of a further four families attended, in addition to those of James Lewis who had previously been remembered in a service in 1990. At the 1990 service, a stained glass window designed by John Petts had been dedicated in his memory, and that of his wife and a son who died in the 2nd World War.



The window of "Christ calming the Storm" was the focus for a special remembrance for all the relatives on this occasion. The service was led by the Vicar of St. Peter's, Andrew Johnson, and the organist was Mrs. Ira Hemingway. The Mayor of Milford Haven, Cllr. Colin Sharp was present to represent the community of Milford Haven where most of the crew had lived at the time. Yvonne Evans outlined to those present the story of the loss of the trawler, the reason why a memorial was present at St. Peter's and the hope by herself and Margaret Brace (granddaughter of James Lewis) that the service today would be a special remembrance for as many relatives as they could trace. Standing around the window, the Mayor of Milford Haven read out the names of the ten crewmen, and a candle was lit by a relative. For the four other crewmen, a candle each was lit by Mrs. Ann Axford whose greatuncle managed Westfleet Trawlers at the time of the tragedy. After prayers were said to remember those who had been lost, the service resumed with the singing of "Eternal Father, strong to save" with the collection taken to be divided between the Fishermen's Mission and the RNLI. Following the Eucharist, the Vicar invited all present to remain for light refreshments which were served by members of the St. Peter's congregation. This provided an opportunity for most of the relatives to meet for the first time, and share experiences of the tragedy, and also of their efforts to find out more about the Gordon Richards. The article written by Margaret Brace in the January issue of Pembrokeshire Life has brought this story to life, and the Service at St. Peter's has gone some-way to establish a memorial for all those lost, in addition to James Lewis.

The families are still hopeful of one day tracing a photograph of the Gordon Richards, previously known in Germany as the Gudrun. It is also hoped that in time relatives of the four crewmen named below might come forward :-

Bosun - Francis Allen, aged 56, Thomas Street, Grangetown, Cardiff, married, no children.

Deck Hand – L. A. Terporter, aged 19, single, St. Peter's Road, Milford Haven

Second Engineer – Charles R. Orchard, aged 28, married, two children, Prospect Place, Haverfordwest

Fireman – E. R. Stephens, 23, single, Crundale Road, Rudbaxton, Haverfordwest.

Any information can be forwarded care of this newspaper to Margaret Brace or Yvonne Evans Both are very grateful for all the assistance in this research received to date., and to all those who helped make the Service so special for all present.

Yvonne Evans

Warden – St. Peter's, Marloes

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