

'Glynhir' (337 Gower Road, Killay)

NGR SS 60901 93015



The Grade II listed Gower mansion with stunning sea views across Mumbles and overlooking the Clyne Valley went on the market in 2021 for the first time in over 50 years.

The five-bed historic home called 'Glynhir' was built on Gower Road, Swansea around 1910 and was home to a Scot, John Cleland Napier (1858–1932), his wife Jane and four children. The house was specifically built for the view but also to be seen and admired – or envied. The elevated location allows an amazing view across the Clyne Valley to the coast and Mumbles Head. Even the garden was clearly designed to ensure that the view was the focal point: looking out, you see an avenue of trees each side of an immaculate lawn. The smooth green expanse sweeps down and guides your eyes to the impressive view.

The house was awarded a Grade II listing by Cadw in 1999, along with its stable and cart-shed, as a house of exceptional style and quality, retaining its original character. It was designed by Glendinning Moxham. He was a prominent Swansea architect, who designed many buildings in the town and elsewhere, including banks, hospitals and private homes. His most famous building is the Glynn Vivian Gallery. In a partnership with James Buckley Wilson from 1888, he also taught at Swansea School of Art.

The grandeur of the house reflects the fact that even comparatively late in its industrial development, Swansea was still attracting already successful industrialists into this part of Swansea, given the great profits to be made.

According to the website [British Listed Buildings](#), the house was actually first called 'Grianaig'. This is Gaelic for the port of Greenock in the west of Scotland.

The architect who designed this house – how much did Napier specify what he wanted? – was obviously influenced by French designs, with the window shutters and hipped swept roof both more likely to be seen on a château in France than a Gower mansion. Another unusual detail is the insertion of a glass bottle into the apex of each ridge, said to represent bottles of perhaps the most famous French wine, champagne.

Inside are period details like a sweeping staircase as the central feature. It has intricate spindles with carved detailing and panelling below. A window on a half-landing floods the central space with light. There are still feature fireplaces also and ceiling beams and literally French doors into the garden.

The second owner was Gerald Michael, managing director of Glynhir tinsplate works in Pontarddulais: hence the change of name. The mansion was later owned by Roger Bellingham, a Swansea solicitor.