



ISSUE 68

May 2020

Editorial



I hope that you are all keeping safe and enjoying your history while the Coronavirus is keeping us locked down. Even though all our diary events are cancelled I hope this newsletter will bring some light to your lives. Thanks to all our contributors for a mixed bag of excellent articles. Let's hope that by the time our next edition is due we can return to normal.

Hanes is published every 3 months. The next edition is to be published February 1st 2020. Please email any articles or information about events etc. with the heading "HANES" to alan.j.nicholls@btinternet.com by January 30th 2020

Introducing The Forum

BRECKNOCK MUSEUM

Contact: Nigel Blackmore, Senior Curator
Tel. 01874 624121

BRECKNOCK SOCIETY AND MUSEUM FRIENDS

Contact: Elaine Starling Tel. 01874 711484
email: evstarling@lineone.net

BRECON LIBRARY

Tel. 01874 62334

BRECONSHIRE LOCAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Contact: Alison Noble – Secretary
Email: enquiries@blfhs.co.uk

BUILT WELLS & DISTRICT HERITAGE SOCIETY

Contact: Anna Page Tel. 01982 553376
Mal Morrison mal911@yahoo.com

CHRIST COLLEGE ARCHIVE

Contact: Felicity Kilpatrick
Tel. 01874 615440

**CRICKHOWELL DISTRICT ARCHIVE
CENTRE**

Secretary: Wendy Parker.

Contact:

archive@visitcrickhowell.co.uk

**CRICKHOWELL & DISTRICT HISTORY
SOCIETY**

Contact: Clive Ralph

Tel. 01873 810262

CUSOP HISTORY GROUP

<http://cusophistory.wix.com/cusop>

HAY HISTORY GROUP

Contact: Peter Ford

Tel. 01497820676

email: pcford1@hotmail.com

www.Hayhistorygroup.co.uk

www.haytours.co.uk

**HEREFORDSHIRE FHS and POWYS
FHS**

email: philbufton@hotmail.com

3, Cagebrook Avenue, Hunderton,

Hereford. HR2 7AS Tel. 01432 355723

**LLANGAMMARCH WELLS LOCAL
HISTORY SOCIETY**

Contact: Sue Lilly

Tel. 01591 610792 Email:

llangammarchhs@gmail.com

**LLANGYNIDR LOCAL HISTORY
SOCIETY**

Contact: Ann Jessopp Tel. 01874

730431

email: dfjessopp@btinternet.com

LLANTHONY HISTORY GROUP

Contact: Oliver Fairclough

Tel. 01873 890 540

email: oliverfairclough@yahoo.co.uk

**LLANWRTYD & DISTRICT HERITAGE
& ARTS CENTRE**

Contact: Rob Thomas

Tel. 01591 610661

email: r.w.thomas@talk21.com

www.llanwrtydhistorygroup.com

LLYN SYFADDAN HISTORY GROUP

Contact: Roger Reese

email: roreese2013@gmail.com

POWYS COUNTY ARCHIVE OFFICE

email: archives@powys.gov.uk

www.powys.gov.uk/archives

Tel. 01597 826088

**REGIMENTAL MUSEUM OF THE
ROYAL WELSH**

Contact: Richard Davies / Celia Green

Tel. 01874 613310

**TALGARTH AND DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Contact: Sheila Lovell Tel. 01874

711096

Email: atalovell@btinternet.com

**YSTRADGYNLAIS DISTRICT HISTORY
AND LANGUAGE SOCIETY**

Contact: John Owens

johnowens38@talktalk.net

NEWS AND EVENTS

Brecknock Society and Museum Friends

A Report from John Gibbs

As people will know, and in common with Museums all over the UK, the Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery closed on March 23rd. For information on the position from Powys County Council, please go to

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/8795/Coronavirus-COVID-19---Libraries-and-Museums>.

An account of the situation from the perspective of the Society has been prepared by Dr Mervyn Bramley and can be found on the Society website at

<https://brecknocksociety.co.uk/news/y-gaer-open-for-3-months-and-now-closed-by-coronavirus> . This piece

describes the very warm public reaction to the facilities and resources offered by the whole y Gaer complex , outlines the work still in progress and provides information on the position with regard to future operational arrangements.

Senior Curator Nigel Blackamore has informed me that he and his small team have been redeployed to welfare calls . At the same time he is trying to keep everything else ticking over and continuing to catch up with the backlog of work from the last year. He adds 'We are of course

maintaining our collections management and security - and taking care of any buildings issues as and when they present themselves. Thankfully we haven't had too many issues, but it does mean we are somewhat limited on time for non-essential work'.

Despite this, it is very good to be able to report that Nigel and his team have been able to keep up the profile of the Museum and Art Gallery in various ways. This includes features in the local press and – a real coup – an entry in the Guardian's Great British Art Quiz on April 22nd. The quiz features eight paintings from the Collection, all but one with a strong local connection. Jacqui Morgan made the selection, having cleared copyright issues etc. The quiz can be found at

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/series/the-great-british-art-quiz> .

Try it yourself!

In the preamble, there is the following description: 'Y Gaer is a new cultural venue in Brecon, bringing together Brecknock Museum and Brecon Library as a community resource for the people of Brecon, Wales and the world. The collection contains works such as Augustus John's Welsh Mountains, Iwan Bala's Santes Mariona and numerous works by Josef Herman'.

A New BS&MF Initiative: Occasional e-papers

In this exceptionally difficult period when we have lost most of our normal means of interaction with our members and with the wider community, the Executive Council of the Society has decided that we should produce a series of occasional e-papers (electronic papers) otherwise to be known as 'Brecknock-logs'. The idea is that these papers should be illustrated, authoritative but fairly 'light touch' and of length in the range of 500 to 1500 words. They will be circulated to members by email and also posted on the website.



The first of these papers is now out tells the story of the remarkable hand-painted Worcester plate, showing Sarah Siddons as the Tragic Muse, that was acquired for Museum last year. It and can be found at <https://brecknocksociety.co.uk/brecknock-log-brecknock-society-and-museum-friends-occasional-papers> .

We are inviting suggestions for possible papers in this series (do please contact me). While some of the papers will draw on the research on items in the Museum Collection, others will relate to subjects such as the wonderful range of historic and cultural sites across Breconshire.

Brecknock Society and Brecknock History Forum: Possible Collections of Covid 14-related Material

John Gibbs

There have been suggestions in various radio programmes etc. that regional and national museums could be taking steps to make collections of items, materials etc. that would reflect the way in which people were affected by or responded to the virus pandemic. I have asked Nigel Blackamore how far his own thoughts have gone in this direction and wondered how far bodies like the Brecknock Society and the Brecknock History Forum could help. I suggested that among possibilities might be:

- Art or craft work related to the crisis and the response to it.
- Videos with a local perspective on the lock-down.
- Locally-produced magazines and other publications with stories of support for the local NHS or containing accounts featuring the

constraints faced by families in respect of weddings, funerals etc.

- Leaflets put out by local shops and other bodies to the vulnerable offering community support/ collection and delivery of essential groceries, medicines etc.

My discussions with Nigel are continuing but, in the meantime, I would be very interested to know how readers of Hanes respond to this idea. One of Nigel's comments is that 'we are certainly living through a "historic" moment and it is something we do need to record and collect. I see this in two seams: firstly, physical collecting - of some of the items you mention - and secondly post-Covid19 capturing local memories and activities digitally for future audiences'. He also points for the need to discuss matters with the Powys archives to avoid duplication.

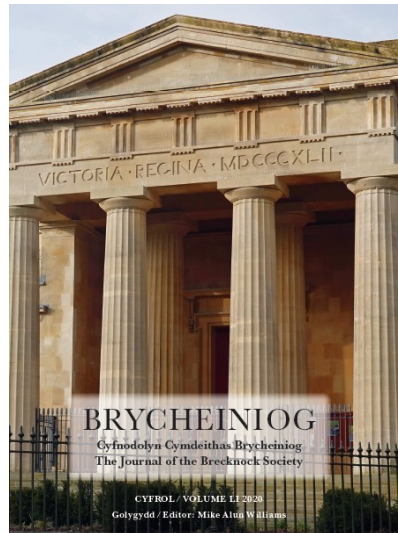
Brycheiniog

***Brycheiniog* for a lockdown read**

No matter how early I start working on *Brycheiniog*, it always seems to end in a rush. Last minute changes, touching up images, and agreeing the layout all take time. This year, it was no different. So it was a bit of a blow for my computer to explode internally

just days before the deadline.

Fortunately, I had already sent final versions to my typesetter so we were able to continue with only a few embarrassing emails to contributors asking for replacements where items had been lost. We all dug deep and got the journal printed and delivered on 17 March, ready for distribution at that week's Sir John Lloyd Memorial Lecture. I heaved a deep sigh of relief. What else could possibly go wrong?



So it is that I have several boxes of *Brycheiniog* Volume 51 awaiting sale. I am happy to post issues or just sit tight and bring them to events after lockdown. But, I hear you ask, what's in the issue? Wonderful things; wonderful things.

Those of us in Theatr Brycheiniog on the night of Friday 22 March 2019 were treated to a spellbinding lecture on Theophilus Jones by Professor Prys Morgan. It has been a delight to work with him to bring forward a published version of that lecture, focussing on Theophilus and his 'History', as our lead article in the volume. Next, is a return to the Mansion House with Nigel Clubb, telling the history of the Morgan occupation of the house through the inventories of its contents. There's also a tale about a crafty housekeeper.

Our third article, by Martin Robson Riley, looks at the dialects of Welsh that are contained in Thomas Huet's translation of 'Gweledigeth Ioan y Divinydd' (the Revelation of St John the Divine) in William Salesbury's 1567 New Testament in Welsh. Was Huet possibly a Breconshire man?

John Rath develops his sparkling talk from last summer on Adelina Patti to show her devotion to our county and the people of Wales.

In the last of our long articles, Robert Gant looks at house occupation and abandonment in the Black Mountains, showing how the landscape itself is inscribed with the essence of its history.

Notes and Queries contain a delightful tale of T.J. Morgan, told by his son, Prys Morgan, about his mission to record the old Welsh dialects of Grwyne Fechan. It is a marvellous paean to what once existed and how wider events in the world snuff out even the best intentions (don't we know!).

Our second 'Note and Query' by Ieuan Evans and David Jones Powell provides the story behind a celebratory cup and how a series of chance acquaintances and events around the fight for grazing rights on Fforest Fawr saw a sophisticated piece of china end up in a farmhouse in the uplands of Breconshire.

In Letters to the Editor, John Gibbs spots a clock in Caldicot Castle and immediately recognises the name of its maker; you might too. The volume ends with a smorgasbord of reviews, from medieval Wales to mezzotint artwork, and from old photographs to Welsh literature through the ages, to say nothing of a book designed to bring well-being to all who read it.

Get in touch with me at Editor@brecknocksociety.co.uk and I can get a copy to you for its cover price plus postage or wait until lockdown is over and pick one up at

our events. I just hope it won't be too long before that happens. But then, what else could possibly go wrong?

Mike Williams, Editor of *Brycheiniog*

Breconshire Local and Family History Society

Earlier this year the Society started a new project – researching the Public Houses and Inns of Brecon. We have a list of most of the licensed premises in 1834 which provides a starting point. The exact location of most, but not all, of these buildings is known so we can look at their current use.

In 1834 there were at least 47 Premises which could sell alcohol, and probably a few more which were not licensed. Of these at least 13 were in Llanfaes where on market days, farmers would leave their horses and carts while attending the market in Brecon (where Morrison's car park is now). The householders caring for the horses would then offer some liquid refreshment for the journey home!

If you know the history of any of the public houses or inns in Brecon and Llanfaes please get in touch as personal stories and anecdotes add so much to the bald facts of who lived in the buildings.

Builth Wells Heritage Society

Builth Wells and District Heritage Society news

The current pandemic has forced changes to our plans this year. We will not be running a trip and we have had to postpone our April and May meetings and the June meeting, although not yet postponed is very unlikely to go ahead, however all of our speakers have been brilliant and have agreed to rearrange dates so hopefully we can get back to some degree of normality before the year end.

We have been keeping the people of Builth on their toes by publishing some old photos of football teams and local characters. One particularly popular picture was of Builth Wednesdays F.C. - a football team whose members all worked in local shops and could only play matches on Wednesday which was early closing day. Every member of the team has been identified together with some lovely anecdotes.

We have also had quite a lot of interest and reminiscing about a series of photos of one of our most loved and talented musicians – the late Peter Smout who performed as Prairie Dog Pete. One of the most underrated country and western singers and entertainers of our era.



Peter had wonderful depth and range to his voice and was quite a comedian as well. He really was a very talented man and was fondly remembered on our Facebook page when photos of him came to light.

Crickhowell & District History Society

World War 1: The Merthyr solicitor and the Crickhowell connection

As the Second Battalion of the South Wales Borderers (2SWB) advanced on the Siegfried Line on 20 November 1917 on the first day of the Battle of Cambrai, Lt. Christy James, aged 35, was shot in the head by a machine gun bullet. The War Diaries of 2SWB note that he died of his wounds on 22 November. He lies near to where he fell in Rocquigny-Equancourt Road

British Cemetery, Manancourt. In civilian life he was a solicitor born and bred and working in Merthyr Tydfil. His death was to result in a permanent legacy for the communities of Llangattock and Crickhowell. How did this come to pass?

Family Background

Gwilym Christopher (Christy) Bowring James was born in Merthyr in 1882. His grandfather, Charles Herbert James, had been the Liberal Member of Parliament for the Merthyr Boroughs. His father, Gwilym James, was a partner in the firm Gwilym James, Llewellyn & Co based at 51-53 High Street Merthyr. A former Sheriff of Monmouthshire, he was the military representative for the Crickhowell and Brynmawr Districts and Chairman of the Crickhowell Board of Guardians.

Christy was one of four children. He had an elder brother, Rees, and two sisters Gertrude and Dora. Gertrude married Norman Hankey, a mine owner, who was the mayor of Merthyr in 1917.

The 1891 Census shows the family resident at Gwaelodygarth in Merthyr. The house had been built around 1809 by the ironmaster

Richard Crawshay for his son in law Benjamin Hall. In 1891 the household consisted of Mr James (aged 41), his wife Sarah (41), daughter Dora (14), son Rees (10), son Gwilym C B (8), Elizabeth, mother in law (63) and four female servants aged from 19 to 38.

Lt James' Early Life

Christy was educated at Eton and Magdalene College Oxford. He was a talented rower and was in the Magdalene College eight which won the Ladies Plate in 1903. He was a member of the Gellygaer Hunt and said to be 'a straight and fearless rider to hounds'. The 1911 Census shows Christy living at Queen's Road, Merthyr with a housekeeper, Kathleen Phillips.

Military Career

Christy had been a member of the Inns of Court training Regiment before joining 2SWB. His initial training was at Berkhamstead. The Brecon County Times of 3 May 1917 noted that his name had appeared in the London Gazette commissioned as a Second Lieutenant on 28 March 1917.

The War Diary for 11 June notes that the Battalion marched to Autheux, in the Somme region, and received reinforcements of three officers including Lt. James. The Diary for

14 and 15 August notes that Lt. James of D Company was one of the officers who took part in a successful attack around Steenbeek near Langemark in the Third Battle of Ypres.

The Battle of Cambrai 20 November 1917 to 7 December 1917

In late 1916 and early 1917 the Germans built a defensive line, the Siegfried Stellung, from Arras southwards, in places five miles deep, known to the British as the Hindenburg Line. They made a tactical withdrawal from their old Somme positions and by May were embedded behind the Line. In the first large scale use of tanks the British attacked on a front of about 11,000 yards enabling the infantry to advance about 10,000 yards. A ferocious German counter attack halted the British assault and by the end of the battle on 7 December the British, having suffered 48,000 casualties, held about 50% of the ground initially taken. German casualties were some 53,000.

The Role of 2SWB

2SWB was part of 87 Brigade commanded by Brigadier-General CHT Lucas, 87 Brigade was part of the 29 Division led by Sir Beavoir de Lisle. The night before the battle 29 Division

marched seven miles from a point north of Peronne to Gouzeacourt. On 20 November 2SWB joined battle to secure the canal crossings between Masnieres and Marcoing. At the canal the battalion was stopped by ferocious fire from the opposite bank. His fellow officers subsequently told the family that early in the attack the company's commanding officer, Lt. Weeks, was hit and Christy took command. He was shot shortly afterwards on the canal bank at the eastern end of Marcoing Copse and carried back unconscious to No 5 Casualty Clearing Station where he died.

The Aftermath

The 1911 Census shows Mr Gwilym James senior, now retired, living at Llanwysg a substantial property between Crickhowell and Llangynidr. Built by John Nash in the 1790s for Admiral John Gell. Lord Nelson is said to have visited Gell in 1802. Mr James lived there with his wife, aged 61, and five single ladies in domestic service, aged from 15 to 33, with a child of 7.

Probate records that at the time of his death Christy's home was Pentrebach Cottage, Merthyr Tydfil and his effects amounted to £4,415. 3s. 2d.

Christy's name is on War Memorials

at Crickhowell Health Centre, Llangattock Church, in the Book of Remembrance for Merthyr Tydfil and on Memorials at Eton School and Magdalene College.

The castle meadow between Castle Road and Beaufort Street in Crickhowell was part of the Duke of Beaufort's estate. It was sold on Wednesday 17 November 1915 to a Mr R. Jenkins for £260. The land was rented by the Parish Council for recreational purposes at an annual rent of £12. By May 1916 the land belonged to Thomas Lewis and the Council tenancy had ceased. The Abergavenny Chronicle of 5 July 1918 reports that Mr Thomas Vaughan a solicitor had told a meeting of the Crickhowell Hospital Supply Depot that Mr James of Llanwysg had purchased the castle field containing the historic ruins from Mr Thomas Lewis for £350. Mr James intended to give it to the communities of Crickhowell and Llangattock in memory of his son.

Copies of Parish Council minutes held in Crickhowell Archive Centre show that progress in formally transferring the grounds to the community proceeded slowly. A report to the Council on 17 October 1922 following a meeting with Mr James noted that

Hay History Group

he was to give £200 as part of his bequest and the interest was to be used for the upkeep of the grounds. It has not been possible to establish when the formal transfer of the castle grounds from Mr James to the Council took place.

Mr and Mrs James moved from Llanwysg to the Knoll in Abergavenny, a property opposite to the entrance to Neville Hall hospital and he died there on 13 March 1925.

The Abergavenny Chronicle of Friday 16 March 1934 reported that a memorial tablet of bronze had been erected the previous week in the recreation ground to commemorate the donation of the grounds by Mr Gwilym James of Llanwysg in memory of his son Lt. James. The tablet, fixed on a high stone built column, was designed by Mr Louis Hurley and built by Mr A J Addis, of Llangattock at the request of the Castle Grounds Committee as trustees of the Recreation Ground.

The castle grounds remain as a recreational facility for the community and as a fitting memorial to Lt James' service to his country.

How to Research the History of a Parish or lordship - Alan Nicholls

While we are in lockdown due to the Coronavirus it is an ideal time to do some original research. Although we cannot visit archives and libraries at present there is a wealth of historic material accessible online, waiting to be discovered, about the many fascinating places and people of our green and pleasant land.

Over the course of the last 10 years I have been researching the lordship of Hay on Wye. Recently I have also looked at Cusop lordship in Herefordshire and that of Clyro, which is in the lordship of Elfael, Radnorshire. These latter parishes are contiguous to the parish of Hay. It has been great fun to uncover their histories.

So why not research the history of your local lordship or parish? You will need access to a PC or laptop connected to the internet.

But where to begin? I will start in this issue with just a couple of amazing websites and where to find them online.

The parish you choose may already have a book about its history but most just give a general history of the parish and its great families. You need to get stuck into the nitty gritty of the archives to find more.

There is one website that I find an invaluable starting point:

www.medievalgenealogy.org.uk

There are masses of links on this website to online resources.

I would start by clicking on SOURCES and then PUBLIC RECORDS and then 8. Chancery Rolls.

This brings you onto a page which gives access to most of the published Rolls series of documents: Charter Rolls; Close Rolls; Fine Rolls; Patent Rolls; and others. If you click on one of these volumes you will be taken to a digital copy of that book. Each book can be up to 1000 pages long but luckily they are indexed and searchable. The front cover of the book is presented on screen but if you click on it the pages are turned. A slider at the bottom of the page shows how many pages there are. Go towards the back of the book and look in the index to see if you place or person of interest is given. If so note the page numbers and go to the entry to see what it gives. Repeating this

procedure through each volume should give a very good timeline from which to carry on your research.

Some of the early volumes are transcribed into latin but I note the entries anyway as they can be translated later. If you don't understand latin, place names and people should be reasonably easy to get to grips with.

You will see that each book is opened up in another website. To get back to the list of volumes click the back arrow (you may need to do this several times).

Note - each site accessed is slightly different so you may have to play around with it to find the information you need. But stick at it - it's worth it.

I always type each entry into a document in chronological order to give me a picture of the parish or lordship over time. Additional data can be slotted in at the appropriate position. It is amazing how quickly this builds up into a valuable working document. Don't forget to save it regularly and make a backup copy occasionally.

One of the websites which you may be taken to is <https://archive.org> .

This is another huge website which holds millions of books which may be searched by author or keywords from the book title. Also if you put any text into the search box (if a phrase then put it in quotes " ") and click "search text contents" you will be presented with any book in the archive that has your search term.

These two resources should keep you busy for quite a long time. But if you want to go further there are lots of exciting resources available online . Try the National Library of Wales website which has thousands of original Welsh wills to view online for free. Its manuscript section index gives good descriptions of the documents it holds. Its Journals online section is also another huge resource which gives searchable access to historic journals such as Cymmrodorian and also Brycheiniog.

The National Archives at Kew has just sent me an email about their free online resources. (see end). You will find all the wills registered at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury before 1858 and many other documents on this website free of charge. That is where the lords of your manor are likely to have proved their wills.

Happy researching - I will continue this article in our next edition of Hanes. If you need any more guidance I am happy for you to contact me by email.

National Archives, Kew - An update from our Chief Executive and Keeper

As you will be aware, several weeks ago we closed our Kew site to visitors. Since then we have been working hard to ensure that you can continue to experience and research our collections and services from the safety of your home.

With that in mind, I'm very pleased to tell you that we are now providing free access to our digital records available on our website for as long as we remain closed to visitors. Registered users* can now order and download up to 10 items at a time, up to a maximum of 50 items over a rolling 30-day period. The limits are there to help ensure the availability of our digital services for everyone – you can read more about the service, including details of what's available to download, on our website. Jeff James. Chief Executive and Keeper, The National Archives

*Please note that you will need to create an online account with [Discovery](#), our online catalogue, to download free digital records – your

subscription to this mailing list is separate.

Llyn Safadden History Group

In the absence of meetings readers may be interested to note that we have a Facebook Page; Llyn Syfaddan History Group, and a website that can be found under Llangorshistory.org

Earlier this year two members of our group, Roger Young and Roger Reese, hosted a visit by Paul and Rebecca Whitewick who research and film abandoned railway features around Great Britain. The film of their visit to Talyllyn can be found on Youtube under "Whitewicks Abandoned Railways". The particular short film focusing on Talyllyn is headed "The Worlds Smallest Railway Museum, Talyllyn Junction and Tunnel".

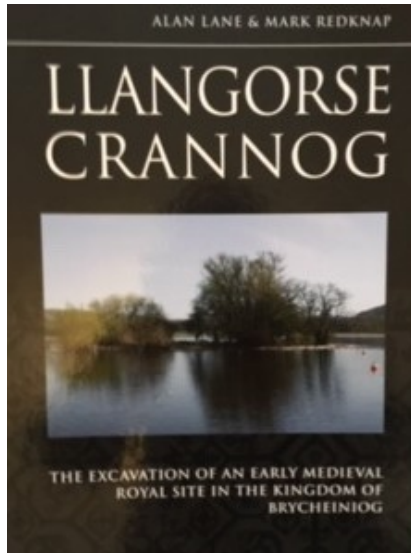
The film is around 15 minutes in length and shows the displays in our converted BT kiosk and the railway station and tunnel as they are now interspersed with photographs from the railway era.

In September 2018 our history group joined forces with Tabernacle United Reformed Church in Pennorth to stage an 'Open Doors' event at the chapel.

The theme of interesting local characters was researched and a number of displays were created to present the results. In preparation for the event local volunteers helped to clear the overgrown vegetation in the burial ground and it became possible to conduct a survey to bring the record taken in the 1980s by the Powys Family History Society up to date. This work has continued and the data has now been added to a section of the new website of the Brecon Beacons Pastorate of the United Reformed Church. A technically gifted volunteer from the URC created the website and has worked tirelessly to develop this interactive section on the graveyard. You can read each monumental inscription and find its location on a plan; view the headstone and carry out a surname search. Links are also provided to general information and fascinating facts. It is the only interactive graveyard database of its type for any church in the United Reformed Church in Wales – perhaps in the entire UK. Take a look via this link: <https://beacons.wales/1pennorth/index.php>

Llangorse

Llangorse Crannog: The Excavation of an Early Medieval Royal Site in the Kingdom of Brycheiniog



There are probably only a few readers of Hanes who are not aware of the crannog in Llangorse Lake. The logboat from the lake has been a major feature of Brecon Museum since the early 20th century and a notional reconstruction drawing in the museum is the basis for the Crannog Centre on the northern edge of the lake by the boat launching quay. So we hope readers will be pleased to hear that the final report on the crannog investigations has now been published as a fully illustrated book by

Oxbow Books.

The crannog (artificial island settlement) was discovered and investigated in the late nineteenth century by two local antiquaries, Edgar and Henry Dumbleton who published their findings over the next four years in local journals. The site was accepted by scholars of the time and figured in important British and European discussions of the site type. However the lack of datable finds, and its status as a unique example of a crannog outside Ireland and Scotland, meant it was largely dismissed in modern archaeological and historical accounts.

In 1988 dendrochronological dates from submerged oak palisade planks established its construction in the late ninth century, and a combined off- and on-shore investigation of the site was started as a joint project between Cardiff University and Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales. The subsequent underwater surveys and excavation (1989-1994, 2004) resulted in the recovery of a remarkable time capsule of life in the late ninth and early tenth century, on the only crannog identified in Wales.

This publication re-examines the early investigations, describes in detail the

anatomy of the crannog mound and its construction, and the material culture found. The process of underwater survey and excavation identified a complex sequence of crannog construction and expansion.



Llangorse crannog: Burnt oak palisade timbers in foreground with encircling post settings in lines to shore edge. Copyright Cardiff University.

Dendrochronological dates indicate that the site was short-lived with construction in the early 890s. The crannog's archaeological treasures include early medieval secular and religious metalwork (such as fragments of an enamel-decorated house shrine), evidence for manufacture, the largest depository of early medieval carpentry identified from Wales and the carbonised remains of remarkable richly embroidered silk and linen textile, which is fully analysed and placed in context. The crannog's place in Welsh history is explored, as a royal llys

(‘court’) within the small kingdom of Brycheiniog. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that the site was destroyed in AD 916 in the course of the Viking wars of the early tenth century by Aethelflaed, the Mercian queen, daughter of King Alfred of Wessex, and uniquely famous as a successful woman military leader of the time. A critical assessment of the Llandaff Charters indicate that the crannog was the centre of royal estate and adjacent to an important monastery. The crannog was not re-occupied but its remains gave rise to local stories of a sunken landscape recorded by Giraldus Cambrensis in the twelfth century and to later folk tales of a palace destroyed due to the wickedness of its inhabitants.

Traces of post-medieval occupation may belong to a riotous dispute in the late sixteenth century recorded in the English Courts Roles.

Two logboats from the vicinity of the crannog are analysed, and a replica described. The structural parallels between the site and examples in Ireland and Scotland are explored and the cultural affinities of the crannog and its material culture is assessed, as are their relationship to origin myths for the kingdom, and to probable links with early medieval Ireland.

The site provides a rich assemblage of closely dated artefacts for a poorly understood period of the pre-Norman Welsh archaeological record, and their parallels in Britain, Ireland and Europe are fully discussed. A substantial assemblage of flint tools of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Early Bronze Age flint artefacts and debitage are interpreted as evidence of significant prehistoric activity in the area. The rich early medieval animal bone assemblage provides striking evidence of royal hunting and food resource exploitation in a modern analytical report, while plant remains contribute to our understanding of farming practices.

This book brings together archaeology, history, myths and legends, underwater and terrestrial archaeology in a full, richly illustrated, publication of a unique Welsh early medieval site.

ORDER NOW:
WWW.OXBOWBOOKS.COM |
+44 (0)1226 734350
9781789253061 • OXBOW BOOKS •
HARDBACK 512 PAGES • • £40.00
By Alan Lane and Mark Redknap

Powys Family History Society

The Powys FHS has for some time been transcribing parish registers and any other associated documents. The Corona Virus outbreak has given some of our members the chance to do checking against the original images a new impetus and we hope to have new publications coming out soon for Breconshire parishes.

New publications since the last Hanes includes the Hemmings-Powell Marriage Index 1754-1837 for both Breconshire and Radnorshire.

Revised or updated Monumental Inscriptions for Radnorshire during 2019 include Bleddfa, Bryngwyn, Cregrina, Knighton, Glascwm, Knighton, Llanddewi Fach, Llandrindod Cemetery, Newchurch, Pilleth and Rhulen.

Once the lock-down is over we will be concentrating on Breconshire parishes.

We have also been exploring the use of both Skype and Zoom (Other applications are available) to keep in touch with the dispersed committee members, by using technology we have been able to keep in contact over the internet. There has been some indication that we may use this method of communication for actual committee meeting post-Corona.

We are hoping that the lock-down will be over before we get to the July mailing of our journal, Cronicl, if not we make it available free on our website.

National Archives have sent out a notification that free access to downloads are available from their site.

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/digital-downloads/>

This is for the period that the National Archive at Kew are closed to the public.

Phil Bufton
philbufton@hotmail.com
www.powysfhs.org.uk

Ystradgynlais District History and Language Society

The Society's regular monthly meetings have been cancelled for the foreseeable future to conform with the Government's Corona virus pandemic requirements. However we are pleased to report that just prior to the 'lockdown arrangements' the Society secured funding to proceed with its programme of projects for 2020.

The Society will erect an Interpretation Panel measuring 7' by

4' which outlines the industrial and social heritage of the village of Upper Cwmtwrch. This will be the seventh such panel erected by the Society since its formation in January, 2010 outlining the heritage of Ystradgynlais and its satellite villages of Abercraf, Cwmgiedd, Glanrhyd, Lower Cwmtwrch and Penrhos as well as Ystradgynlais itself. The panel, awaiting final planning approval, will outline the village's heritage using bilingual text, maps and photographs. A photograph of the Glanrhyd panel is shown below.



In addition two lectern style interpretation panels measuring 3' by 2' will outline the history of the area's 'Tick Tock factory' and the Glantawe Electricity Company. The 'Tick-Tock' was one of the largest watch and clock making factories in Europe and employed almost 2,000 local men and women in the manufacture of clocks and watches. The factory opened in 1947 and was operated by the Smiths

Company until 1980. The premises was then used by a number of other smaller companies with a much reduced workforce until its demolition in 2010. The site was then developed by the Tesco supermarket company along with a newly constructed public house & restaurant by Marstons called 'The Clock Works'. The interpretation panel will be located near the entrance to the 'The Clock Works'.

The second lectern style panel will outline the history of the Glantawe Electricity Company. The company provided domestic and street lighting throughout the community until nationalization in 1947 when it was operated by the South Wales Electricity Board. This premises, still standing near the town centre, was officially opened on 22nd December 1910 by Baron Cederstrom the third husband of the world renown opera singer Adelina Patti of Craig y Nos Castle in the upper Swansea Valley. The proposed panel will be erected near the site of the original premises in the village. Each panel will outline the site's heritage using bilingual text and photographs. These panels will complement the four similar panels already erected by the Society in the district.

An additional pamphlet outlining the life of another of the area's noteworthy people will also be published later this year. The pamphlet, using bilingual text, photographs etc, outlines the life of Dafydd Dafis who was born in Cwmgiedd and was a noted naturalist and founder of the Edward Llwyd Society (Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd) a natural history society which now has members throughout Wales and beyond. The pamphlet will be the thirteenth in the series published by the Society.

Members look forward to the completion of these projects in the not too distant future and take this opportunity to thank the Ystradgynlais Town Council and Powys County Council for their financial contributions and support for our projects.