

Breconshire Local & Family History Society (BLFHS)
Cymdeithas Hanes Lleol a Theuluoedd Brycheiniog



Newsletter 10 – April 2012

Welcome to our tenth Newsletter. We invite you to contribute articles, tips, questions and answers for others to share. Feedback is always welcome.

April meeting: Market Towns in Herefordshire

Despite the inclement weather, a good number of people attended this fascinating talk by Penny Platts on the history of the main Herefordshire market towns. At the request of the speaker, no recording of the talk could be made on this occasion.

Answers to *Doors and Windows of Brecon Quiz*: Try using [Google Maps and StreetView](#) to find these buildings in Brecon Town.

1. Lloyd's Bank, High Street Inferior
2. The Wellington Hotel, St Mary's Street
3. Old Doctor's Surgery, Ruperra House, Wheat Street
4. Barclays Bank, St Mary's Street
5. St Mary's Bakery, St Mary's Street
6. The Griffin building, the Struet, housing Zeera Indian Restaurant and Morgans Butcher
7. NatWest Bank, High Street Superior
8. Northcote Conservative Club, St Mary's Street
9. Market Hall entrance, High Street Superior, between Tenovus Charity Shop and NatWest Bank
10. HSBC Bank junction of Tredegar Street and High Street Inferior (covered in scaffolding on Street View!)
11. Alleyway off High Street Superior, to George Hotel between Specsavers Opticians and Lexys Barber Shop
12. First floor window on the end of The Garden Centre in High Street Inferior
13. Side entrance to Market Hall, Castle Street
14. Plough Chapel, Lion Street
15. Buckingham Place, Glamorgan Street.

Clockmakers of Breconshire – follow-up

Member Desmond Williams has kindly sent in the following information about Defynnog/Trecastle clockmakers:

- *William Griffith*: of Defynnog. Born in 1707 and buried at Defynnog parish Church in 1786. He made clocks, even the chain, wholly of wood
- *Griffith Williams*: son of the above William Griffith. [note patronymic naming pattern for father and son] He made clocks in Newport, Monmouthshire, between 1760 and 1795. One of his clocks is at the Governor's House in Gibraltar. Another of his clocks made for Cefnrhosan, is now in the Fogg Art Museum in New York. He died at Ynisfaen, Cwmwysg, Trecastle aged 79 years.
- *Rees Williams*: son of the above. (1737-1827). He made clocks at his home at Ynisfaen. He married on 11th July 1772, to Elizabeth Powell, daughter of Howell Powell of Abernant, Traeanmawr, Llywel. They had three sons, *William*, (1773-1825 a clockmaker at Cwmwysg; *Griffith* (born 1781) and *Evan* (born 1790). Evan made clocks in Trecastle village, next door to the Three Horse Shoes public house. His workshop was demolished in 1968.

A Good Read

Whilst we are on the subject of Defynnog, Sennybridge and Trecastle, two very good books describing the social and family history, both social and family, of these villages are the two volumes of "The District of Sennybridge, Trecastle and Defynnog – This was a way of Life", by Gareth Jones, Old Bakehouse Publications, (1997 & 2000). The volumes are packed with photographs as well as text.

Snippets from the Press

Many thanks to member Viv Parry for this interesting piece about the founding of Tirabad (Llandulas), situated on the northern lower slopes of the Epynt Mountain.

The Express – 6th March 1913 (*Peeps into the Past*)

LLANDULAS ANCIENT CHURCH. - A friend of mine, a native of the district of Llangammarch, writes: "With regard to the ancient church at Llandulas or Tyr-yr-Abad (land of Abbot), I beg to inform you that the original name was Llandewwi y Crwys, and not Llandulas. The new church of 1726 was called and is now known as Llandulas. The old church, Llandewi-y-Crwys, stood on the site of the present ancient farm, Llwyn y fynwent (Cemetery

Grove, or Grave Yard Grove), not far distant. It is known that the tenants some eighty years ago, came across several human skulls whilst digging in the garden, and the present tenant, Mr. William Jones, very lately found a pitched coffin-shaped grave in the same spot. This goes a long way to prove that the church at one time stood upon the spot where the homestead Llwyn y fynwent now is

EDITOR

LORD RHYS AP GRUFFYDD - The country around Llandulas was given by the Lord Rhys to the Abbot of Strata Florida about 1164. Gwynfardd Brycheiniog, a poet of Breconshire, flourished about the same time, and he refers in one of his poems to Llwyn y fynwent, the old church of Llandulas, and calls it Llandewi y Crwys, in order to distinguish it from Llandewi Abergwessin. There is no doubt that the poet refers to the church, because there is a lively little stream flowing past Llwyn-y-fynwent farm called and known for years past as Nant y Crwys; this stream serves as a division between Penbualt and Tyr yr Abad. In the "Myfyriau Arcchaeology of Wales" (page 193) there is a splendid awdle (ode) composed by Gwynfardd to Lord Rhys. In the next few pages is a long and remarkable poem by the same author to Dewi Sant (Saint David) in which he mentions some twenty or more churches owned by him.

Here is an extract:-

"Garthbrenni bryn Dewi, digyilydd
A Thrallwng Cynfyn ger a y dolydd
A Llandewwi y Crwys, Llogawd newydd
A Glascwm, a'r eglwys ger glas fynydd."

It will be noticed that the poet particularly refers to "Llandewi y Crwys, Llogawd newydd" (Llandewwi y Crwys with its new chancel). It would appear, therefore, that the church was in existence for a long time before the new chancel was built. Probably the new chancel was added in Gwynfardd's time, otherwise it would not have called for his special attention. How are we to account for the disappearance of the old church? Had Owain Glyndwr a hand in it? Are there any documents left from Strata Florida which would throw light upon this subject?

JOSIAH J. Cardiff

NEXT MEETING

- Date and time: Wednesday, 2nd May 2012 at 2:00 pm
Venue: Llangammarch Wells
Subject: A gentle walk around this fascinating village, led by local historians. The walk will finish with tea at the village hall. Donation to Llangammarch Local History Society, £3.00 per person.
Guides: Llangammarch Local History Society personnel.

NB: Details of where to meet in Llangammarch will follow soon.

BLFHS WEBSITE

Our website address is: www.blfhs.co.uk

CONTACT DETAILS

If you wish to respond to or comment on an item in this newsletter, or contribute to the next newsletter or to our website, please contact our Chairperson:

Hilary Williams
Maesycoed
39 Camden Road
Brecon LD3 7RT
Tel: 01874 624432
E-mail: williams.o.h@ic24.net