



Newsletter 12 – June 2012

Welcome to our twelfth Newsletter. We invite you to contribute articles, tips, questions and answers for others to share. Feedback is always welcome. Have you missed an edition? You can read all the previous Newsletters on our website.

June AGM

We are very grateful to those members who contributed to the AGM process, in person and by letter, thus constituting a quorum of 20 members. The Chairman's Report and Financial Statement are both on the website for you to read. The Officers and Committee for 2012-2013 were elected. Following the business part of the meeting, we were entertained by three of the Committee members who had family stories to tell: Alison Noble: *The China Connection*, Rob Eckley: *Emigration to Pennsylvania* and Hilary Williams: *Last female in Brecon to be hanged, cut down & burnt at the stake*. The audio recordings of these talks are on the website, together with an article on the *Last female in Brecon to be hanged, cut down & burnt at the stake*.

A Good Read – Part 2

I refer, again, to *The Diary of Benjamin Newton Rector of Wath 1816-1818*, edited by C. P. Fendall and E. A. Crutchley, published by Cambridge, 1933. Benjamin Newton (1762-1830) was vicar of Defynnog Church, as his first preferment from 1784 to 1799. His diary includes a return visit to Breconshire to see the friends he had made whilst at Defynnog. They were of course from the gentry. He visited Penpont and Aberconlais (Abercamlais), Defynnog village, Pennoyre, Llangoed, Dwyncynten (?), Skethiog (Scethrog), Llangattock, Dan y gray (Dan y Graig?), Buckland and Wheatsheet (possibly Wheat Street, Brecon town).

On 16th August 1816, he travelled from Hereford to Hay, again commenting on the road conditions "at least half unstoned". He described the church at Hay as "so dark that I should think it impossible to have read the service this day." Travelling on to Abercamlais he arrived there and met his friends, including Rev Canon Williams of Abercamlais who had just sold his wheat at Brecon for £1 a bushel. Other commodity prices mentioned were meat at 6½d per lb, lime "12/- for 30b's at the pit", coal 12/- per ton, and oats 4/9 per 10 gallons. With this being the 200th anniversary of the Monmouth and Brecon Canal, we can speculate on which of these items would have come to Brecon by barge. More on his visit in the next Newsletter.

Victorian & Edwardian Memorial Cards Project:

This project is now up and running, with three contributors so far. If you want to participate in this project, transcribe any Breconshire-based memorial cards in your possession and send the transcriptions to me, Hilary Williams. They will then be added to our database.

Snippets from the Press:

Extract from the *Brecon and Radnor County Times* 20th January 1895

DISESTABLISHMENT AND DISENDOWMENT 240 YEARS AGO

The Reverend William Williams, of Llanafanfawr, in Cromwell's time, was ousted from his living and home, and obliged to live in a small wretched village, where he got his living as a day labourer. The vicarage and glebe was taken possession of by an ignorant mason, of the name of Evan Bowen, who could not read his primer, even in English. When in 1660 a messenger came to announce to the old clergyman that he was restored to his living and home, he was found cutting peat on Penlandwppa in Llanafan parish! There is a tradition that the hardships he underwent told so on his health that he did not long survive his restoration. It was during this confusion that the font was taken from

Llanfihangel Brynpabuan Church and used as a pigs trough at a house in the upper part of the parish. It was while put to such base uses that the deep notch – that distinguished the old font – was made. Some of the older inhabitants may remember the old font before the restoration of the Church. If the Disestablishment and Disendowment Bill, now about to be re-introduced, is passed, the glebe land of Llanafanfawr, which has belonged to the Church for over a thousand years – the vicarage still retaining the name of Perth-y-sant, - the saint's enclosure – will be given to the Parish Council to build wash houses with.

Express, 27th February 1913

TRANSPORTATION - "Inquirer" may be interested in the following:-

Margaret Jenkins was sentenced at Brecon in 1795 to seven years transportation to Botany Bay". There are many other cases on record, but the cost of transporting prisoners eventually became so expensive, that magistrates found some other mode of punishment. The "cat of nine tails" became a favourite weapon, and 60 strokes seems to have been the usual limit. Prisoners were treated with great barbarity, and were chained together as if they were wild beasts. Women were frequently flogged in public, and one poor creature was in 1787 sentenced at Brecon, for petty larceny, to solitary confinement, with hard labour for three years. The pillory was an institution, and was erected before the Shire Hall, then in High Street. A man was sentenced to be whipped at the carts' tail in Brecon, and to receive 60 lashes, one minute to expire between every lash. This was to take place at noon in the month of January out in the open street; after the punishment, if he survived he was to go into

hard labour for twelve months. A woman was publicly whipped, then kept in prison for twelve months, and then whipped again on her release. All the public whippings took place in the High street on market days. For stealing a cock and three hens, a man was sent into transportation for seven years. In 1751 a woman was sentenced by the magistrates at Brecon to be stripped from the waist upwards and then tied to a cart's tail, and so whipped from the gaol (probably in the Struet) to the Usk Bridge, and from thence back again; it was to take place between the hours of twelve and one in the day-time. This punishment was inflicted because the woman stole two shillings of English money. There are other cases of this kind in the Records of Magisterial proceedings in Breconshire. The old "ducking stool" has disappeared, but the "stocks" may still be seen in the entrance to the Guildhall at Brecon.

MARCO II

A straying ancestor:

A stray from the Llangibby burials (Llangibby is halfway between Caerleon & Usk).

Rachel Sadler, 11 Ship St, Brecon. Buried 4 Nov 1893 aged 68.

Useful website:

http://kimkat.org/amryw/1_testunau/sion_prys_003_beibl_mynegai_1284e.htm

Here, you can check the Welsh version of a Bible verse online with the bilingual online Bible (Old and New Testaments). It seems to be an on-going project and not all books have the English version included.

This feature is a part of the Wales-Catalonia Website. <http://kimkat.org/> and includes other useful tools such as a Welsh English dictionary.

NEXT MEETING

Date and time: Wednesday, 4th July 2012

Venue: Brecon Library

Subject: Len Ley will give a talk on farming in the 1780s, based on contemporary diaries from a farmer near Abercrave.

Prior to the main talk, Helen Whyte will give a short presentation on using the new *FamilySearch.org* website.

BLFHS WEBSITE: Our website address: 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
Maesycloed
39 Camden Road
Brecon LD3 7RT
Tel: 01874 624432
E-mail: williams.o.h@ic24.net