

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



## Newsletter 4 – September 2011

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

### September Meeting Review:

Subject: Brecon Shops & Businesses Project

Twenty-seven members came to our members-only presentations at Brecon Library, marking the launch of our exhibition. Alison Noble and Rob Eckley guided us through a selection of 'Then and Now' photographs of shops and business premises in the town centre. The presentations were enhanced by the lively audience, who not only asked questions but also supplied knowledgeable contributions of their own. The Public Exhibition, which ran for 2½ days, received an excellent response from the general public. Many appreciated our work in recording what is still largely unwritten oral history recalled by many of our members and the wider population of Brecon. As editor of the Newsletter, I want to record my personal thanks to Alison Noble and Rob Eckley, leaders of this important Project. Their talks and accompanying images are now available on our website at

[www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wlsblfhs/siddons/110907.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wlsblfhs/siddons/110907.htm)

### Websites for Local and Family History

1. **NewsBank UK:** <http://www.newsbank.com/colleges/index.cfm?content=111> offers online access to a large number of newspapers, which can be searched without charge at your local library. Newsbank can be accessed from your home computer if you have a Readers Ticket for the National Library of Wales, or for similar institutions elsewhere in the UK. I believe it is also available overseas.
2. **Interested in Penwyllt?** The South Wales Caving Club website gives very interesting information about Penwyllt, <http://www.swcc.org.uk/>. There are a number of articles on the history of the village at <http://www.swcc.org.uk/aboutswcc/history.php>
3. **Pre-WW1 78rpm records** can be enjoyed on the "Robert's Old Schmaltz" website at: <http://www.raeproductions.com/music/index2.html> Many of the recordings feature comic monologues that I find quite amusing, even now. My father had similar 78s, so hearing them again takes me back to my childhood.

### Snippets from the Press - Brecon Adverts

Alison Noble thought these adverts were amusing and so I include them for you to read. I love the trade name of the rain coats!

1930 - 31

You may be as dry and comfortable  
in the rain as a Duck if  
YOU wear one of  
**WATTS' DUCKDRI COATS**  
For LADIES AND GENTLEMEN  
21/- to 63/-  
Watts the Clothier Brecon

1930 - 31

We sell goods that don't come back to customers that do.  
Therefore  
*We confidently solicit your enquiries for*  
PROVISIONS  
GROCERIES,  
Brushes, Brooms, Mats  
Buckets, Baths  
Cattle, Dog and Poultry  
Feeds  
For Thirty-eight years we have been noted as the  
Store that does things well.

## **Brecon Clockmakers**

Following on from the article in our first Newsletter, about Breconshire-made clocks and clock-makers, BLFHS member Glyn Powell sent me this contribution.

"As a consequence of an enquiry from a person living in Chicago about a clock he had made by Rees Williams of Cwmwysg, it was revealed at the time that up until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a thriving community there that supported a considerable village industry. Rees Williams, who was buried at Llywel in 1827 aged 90, his son Evan and brother William all contributed."

There is a lovely picture of an Evan Williams clock, with more information on the family, at:

<http://www.welshantiques.com/trecastle-clock.html>

## **A good listen**

If you would like to learn some Welsh there are a number of good websites that enable you to read as well as listen to the Welsh lessons. One example is the BBC Catchphrase Series, which has been going for a number of years. The whole archive is available at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/catchphrase/>

Other on-line Welsh learners' links can be found at

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/learning/learnwelsh/>

## **A good read**

Gwen Awbery "*Tracing Family History in Wales - How to Read the Inscriptions on Welsh Gravestones*", Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, Llanrwst, 2011; ISBN: 978-1-84524-168-1

This is a comprehensive and practical manual which will enable a non Welsh speaker to understand the Welsh information on gravestones. The book is small enough to slip into a pocket when visiting a graveyard. Price: £7.50.

## **NEXT MEETING**

Date and time: Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at 2:00 pm.

Venue: Brecon Library, Ship Street, Brecon

Subject: Richard Rees: "Flooding Breconshire"

An exposé of 19<sup>th</sup> century plans to create huge reservoirs in Breconshire and mid-Wales to supply London with 315 million gallons of water per day.

In addition to his talk, Richard Rees will provide the audience with an opportunity to examine schedules of the farms and properties that would have been affected by the venture.

Try not to miss this fascinating talk and slide show.

## **BLFHS WEBSITE**

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wlsblfhs/>

Googling **WLSBLFHS** will also find the public page. You then need to add your password to the address to enter the Members' pages.

## **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:**

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