

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



## **Newsletter 46 – August 2015**

Welcome to our Newsletter. We invite you to contribute articles, tips, questions and answers for others to share. Feedback is always welcome. Have you missed an edition? Read the archived Newsletters on our website.

### **August Meeting Review: David Martin “Re-enactment of Medieval Times”**

Due to family commitments, David Martin was unable to present his talk. However, we were fortunate that he was able to loan his equipment to Alison Noble, our multi-talented secretary, and give her a “crash course” in medieval and civil war battles. Alison proved to be an excellent pupil. She explained the manner in which the King could raise an army when needed and she gave us a fascinating talk about the swords and daggers and their uses. John Ball was conscripted to model the various items of armour and we all thought that he would have made a very good knight. Members of the audience were then able to handle the replica items and everyone seemed to enjoy the experience. Rob Eckley has produced an excellent set of photographs, which together with the sound recording, will be uploaded onto our website in due course.

David Martin will be re-booked to give his original talk early in 2016.

Related sources:

- Juliet Barker: “*Agincourt: The King, the Campaign, the Battle*” published by Little, Brown [2005]  
This book describes the logistics involved in going to war during the medieval period.

### **This month on our Website**

John has been taking a break from developing the website, so not a lot has been added since the last Newsletter. Nevertheless, the following have been added or updated:

- **Management Committee Minutes:** added minutes of April, June and July meetings:  
<http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/minutes.htm>
- **Newsletter:** added Newsletter 46 (the one you are now reading):  
<http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/newsletters.htm>
- **Brecknock History Week booklet:** added the 2015 version of this annual publication:  
<http://www.blfhs.co.uk/docs/bhw-2015.pdf>
- **Public News Pages:** updated 20 August <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/news.htm>
- **Members’ News Pages:** updated 20 August <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/news.htm>

***Check the News Pages every few days and the Noticeboard at least weekly.***

**Help needed!** The next parishes being tackled are: Llandewi’r Cwm and Llandefalle.

If you can contribute any photographs or textual material relating to these parishes, or if you wish to report any problems with the website, email our webmaster John Ball at [john@jlb2011.co.uk](mailto:john@jlb2011.co.uk)

### **Update: Brecknock History Week 2015 - Friday 4th to Sunday 13th September**

A booklet giving details of all the county events is now available on our website as a PDF document: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/docs/bhw-2015.pdf>. A printed version of the booklet is also available, free, from the Tourist Information Centre and other outlets across the county.

This year, the BLFHS’s contribution to Brecknock History Week, will be a Pop-Up Museum in St Mary’s Church, Brecon, with the theme of schools in Brecon and the surrounding villages. The Pop-Up Museum will be held on Friday 11th and Saturday 12th September.

Did you go to school in Brecon? If you or a member of your family have attended school in the Brecon area we would like to hear from you as we will be collecting memories of going to school in Brecon and the surrounding villages. So many of the school buildings that were used even twenty years ago no longer serve the same function and as we all know, reading and writing are now taught in a different way.

Please come along and tell us about your schooldays, study the photographs and try to name everyone in the pictures, bring your photographs along for us to scan ... and don't forget your school reports if you dare!

We are interested in all kinds of schools. For example, did you know that in 1878 there was a '*Brecon School for Cookery*'. No one around now will have been to that school but what about the *Needlework School* that we believe was in town in the 1930s?

Our Pop-Up Museum is part of Brecknock History Week but If you cannot come to the Pop-up Museum, please send us your memories and memorabilia so we can display them during the event.

Contact Hilary (see below for contact details).

### **An extract from the Brecon Journal:**

26th July 1856 SENNY

About four years since, several gentlemen connected with the villages of Cray and Senny, feeling that the children of the surrounding district were growing up in a state of utter ignorance from the lack of any educational institution, the only school in the neighbourhood being that of Devynnock, a distance too great to send children, resolved to establish a school in the neighbourhood for the benefit of the villagers, but after several consultations the idea was abandoned.

Within the last fortnight, however, two of the gentlemen who had warmly supported the scheme, namely Mr. Rogerson, of Cnewr, and Mr. Rees Davies, of Leonhir [Llwynhir?], have come forward and renewed the effort and have formed a committee, consisting of themselves, Mr. Price, Nant-yr-hir; Mr. Powell, Pantscathlog; and Mr. Jeffries, Glwyd-hyr ; they proceeded to solicit subscriptions and select a site for the building; having selected a piece of ground near the tram road, admirably suited for the building, the property of Penry Williams, Esq., of Penpont, Mr. Rogerson waited upon that gentleman, and

having explained the object of his visit, Mr. Williams, with his usual liberality, presented the land for the purpose together with a subscription of £10 towards the building, Sir Joseph Bailey, Bart. M.P., and J. Gwynne Holford, Esq., have also subscribed £5. each.

The sum of £20 was also sent to the secretary, Mr. Rogerson, from A. Gabb, Esq., of Crickhowell, agent to J. Claypon, the owner of the Cnewr and Great Forest Estates.

Mr. Davies, of Leonhir, canvassed the hamlets of Senny and Cray, calling on the householders and land proprietors for subscriptions, when they cheerfully responded to the application and immediately entered their names on the subscriptions list, and we are happy to state that in the course of ten days upwards of £80 have been collected and every confidence is felt that sufficient funds for this great object will shortly be raised. It is in contemplation to have a Pic-nic party on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone. The scenery of the place and neighbourhood would well repay those who are fond of the picturesque.

Here (below) is a lovely photograph of Senni school with the pupils and staff [Cook: Maisie Charles].  
[Source: Senni website [http://senni.wales/Academic/History/Photos/1950/School\\_photo.jpg](http://senni.wales/Academic/History/Photos/1950/School_photo.jpg)]



In the same issue of the *Brecon Journal*, the following article appeared:

MYNYDD FYNNECH COMMON - On Thursday last, H. Rees, Esq., one of the Government Inspectors arrived in Brecon, and proceeded with some assistants to take a survey of the above common, for the purpose of a camp. Having made a careful examination of

the spot, we are happy to be able to state that this gentleman was so satisfied with the place, that he will accompany, with the report of his survey, a recommendation in favour of the above common being used for an encampment.

**Does anyone know the whereabouts of "Mynydd Ffynnech Common"?**

**How can I explain that death?**

Alison Noble was transcribing burials in the parish registers for Cwmdu and came across these causes of death. Some are sad, but the wording of others is quite amusing. Please note that spelling was transcribed "as seen":

- 11 April 1806 John Watkins base son of John Watkins Lab and Jennet Price Spinst. Age 5  
Cause: died in consequence of fire having caught hold of his clothes.
- 26 June 1807 Mrs Jennet Williams of Cwmdu Age 72  
Cause: died in consequence having knocked her eye against the latch of a door.
- 28 December 1808 Rachel wife of Ed Jones Cwmdu Aged 65  
Cause: died out of a fall she is supposed to have had over a stile.
- 16 Sept 1809 John Andrew Aged 2  
Cause: died of a motification in his privities, in consequence as is supposed of his having sat on a Toad.
- 2 January 1811 Evan Thomas Servant of Tretower Aged 20  
Cause: died in consequence of cold taken by kicking a football.

So the moral is: beware fire, latches, stiles, toads and footballs!

**The *Brecon Radnor Express Carmarthen and Swansea Valley Gazette and Brynmawr District Advertiser* - 24th January 1918:**

LET

**Harold Elston & Co.**  
**Repair Your Machinery.**

Nothing in the way of welding is beyond the scope of our Specialists.

Whenever a breakage occurs, send the part to us at once, and you will get a sound job at a reasonable price.

You may think the job IMPOSSIBLE, but—we won't.

We do the welding for the Government Food Production Department, to their Tractors, etc., by our Metallurgical system of Oxy-Acetyline Welding, and Oxy-Hydrogen Welding.

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NOTE THE ADDRESS—

**THE MODERN GARAGE,**  
**BRECON.**

Telephone—54 and 72.  
Telegrams—Elston.

**PLEASE NOTE: Venue for our monthly meetings for the remainder of 2015.**

As many of you will be aware, the Library services in Powys have been cut back. As a result, Brecon Library is now closed on Wednesdays. However, in view of our forward booking of the library for the whole of 2015, the Library Staff have agreed to open the premises for our meetings on the first Wednesday in the month as normal. The library will open at 1:15pm and will close at 4:15pm. Please do not expect normal library services during these hours: the library is only opening for our Society Meeting. The entry and exit points will be in the garage area in Bell Lane alongside the library, using the lift in the far left hand corner. You will enter the lift on the Lower Ground floor; press the 1<sup>st</sup> floor button to reach the upper floor. Exit the lift and pass through the staff office area to reach the regular meeting room.

**NOTE: THESE DIRECTIONS REPLACE THOSE GIVEN PREVIOUSLY.**

**NEXT MEETING**

Date and time: Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 at 2.00 pm.

Venue: Brecon Library

Subject Ken Jones "*Capt John Lloyd, 30 years in the Maritime Service of the East India Company – sea battles, shipwreck, and imprisonment in India*" (Part 1)  
Ken Jones will tell the story of Capt John Lloyd.  
N.B. This is a change from the topic originally advertised for Ken Jones's talk.

**BLFHS WEBSITE:** Our website address: <http://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: [chair@blfhs.co.uk](mailto:chair@blfhs.co.uk)