

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



## **Newsletter 47 – September 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.

**September Meeting Review:** 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 returned to deliver a very interesting Talk concerning the Maritime career of Capt John Lloyd [1748-1818], a member of a well-known Breconshire Family. His life started as a child in Llanwrtyd, but in his late teens he decided to go to sea with the Maritime division of the East India Company. He spent most of the next 30 years at sea, eventually rising to the rank of Captain. Ken told us of the importance of the East India Company as a virtually autonomous trading company, with its own army and powers of government in India. He also explained how the East India Company was often drawn into battles both on land and at sea. John Lloyd was involved in all of these dangers but by the time he had risen through the ranks, he was able to make a small fortune from his right to trade for himself whilst with the Maritime Service. He retired to Brecon, where he had a wife and one son.

Ken Jones’s slides and a sound recording of his talk will be uploaded onto our website in due course.

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

Since the publication of the last newsletter, John Ball has added or updated the following items on our website:

- **Help Pages:** added new item on the *Breconshire Triplets* <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/help.htm>
- **Management Committee Minutes:** added minutes of the August meeting: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/minutes.htm>
- **Members’ Interests:** updated with details supplied by new member Roger Burne <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/members-interests.htm>
- **Newsletter:** added Newsletter 47 (the one you are now reading): <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/newsletters.htm>
- **Noticeboard:** added General Notice about the resignation from the Management Committee of BLFHS founder-member Sue Snook of Defynnog <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/noticeboard.htm>
- **Parish Pages:**
  - added *Llanddewi’r Cwm* parish (including photo-gallery)
  - added transcripts of BTs for *Brecon St David (Llanfaes)* parish: <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/members/parishes/index.htm>
- **Public News Pages:** updated 16 September <http://www.blfhs.co.uk/news.htm>
- **Members’ News Pages:** updated 16 September <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: Llandefalle and Llandeilo’r fân.

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

History Week began on 4 September with an opening event at St Mary’s Church, Brecon, where local history societies from all over the County had set up stalls to display their work. Representatives of many of the groups gave short presentations on a “Treasure” their Society had acquired. On behalf of the BLFHS, Hilary gave a six-minute illustrated talk on the papers and photographs belonging to Dr Mary Eppynt Phillips, kindly shared with us by BLFHS member, Mrs Valerie Lewis. Hilary’s aim was to emphasise the importance of family papers in the telling of the history of an individual, family and society of the time. These artefacts are often lost when a family member moves house or when the effects of a deceased family member are disposed of. Valerie’s

efforts to preserve the papers of her late great half-aunt and to make her story known, do her great credit. Papers and photographs can be scanned by historical societies and the originals donated to archive offices for safe keeping. Hilary's talk received a very favourable response from the audience. The BLFHS *Pop-Up Museum* on the theme of Breconshire Schools, was held on 11 and 12 September at St Mary's Church, Brecon, and proved to be very popular with the public, both local and those from further afield. Several of our members had travelled to Brecon especially to see and contribute to the event. We are most grateful to everyone who came and took part. It was wonderful to see groups of former school friends reminiscing and adding names to old class photographs. Many school photographs were scanned then and there, enabling the Society to add the images to its collection while the owners were able to take their precious original items back home with them. You can donate scans of your old school photographs to the Society at any time. Or if you are unable to scan them yourself, we can arrange to visit you or meet you at a suitable venue to scan what you have for us. Get in touch with Hilary Williams for more details (see contact details at end of the Newsletter).

We hope to do a similar Pop-up Event next year to display some of the new photographs.

### **Some School Stories from the Pop Up Museum**

**Member Mary Zorkoczy**, sent us this photograph with an explanation of the event commemorated.



The photograph shows the participants in a dramatic representation of the history of Breconshire in the Guildhall, put on to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup>(?) anniversary of the County Council. It was a combined effort of the Brecon secondary schools and with some contribution from the junior schools as well.

**Can you remember this Breconshire event and give us more details please?  
Contact Hilary in the usual way.**

### **Susan Morris's Defynnog School Memories**

She wrote, "In about the 1890s, rules had been relaxed and children of non-conformist families were able to attend [the church school at Defynnog]. I came from a non-conformist family and both my parents and I attended Defynnog School. I was there from 1939 to 1945. I remember being taught the alphabet, which was hung along the wall of the bottom classroom. Each letter was illustrated and we had tins of letters to match those on the wall. I remember the 'Tortoise Stoves' and the crates of milk in bottles placed near the stoves to warm. Pupils who could not go home at midday for lunch brought sandwiches. When we were old enough we went into the middle and top classrooms, whose desks had tip up seats. During WW2, I remember sticky tape being

put on the inside of the glass window panes. The children moved to Sennybridge modern school, in 1947 and the old school at Defynnog was used for community purposes, such as sports, cub and scout meetings.”

**Nesta Phillips**, another BLFHS member, spoke to us about Llandefaelog Fach School, now a private house. The school had one large classroom, with the kitchen in the porch and the separate boys and girls toilets in the rear yard. The twenty or so children, aged five to eleven plus, were taught in different age groups in the one classroom. Nesta's uncle, Albert Drinkwater, was a farmer and he brought the children from Sarnau to school in his horse and cart. She remembers with affection the only teacher, Mrs Billy Davies. They lived in the school house, next to the school. Mr Davies, with his two brothers, owned buses. The school was sold and converted into a house in 1972.

**BLFHS Member Marie Groothoff (née Jones)** who lives in Australia, sent information about her school days for our *Pop-up Museum*. I am sure many will remember receiving a School Uniform list such as the one below.

Marie wrote:

“The document I have attached may not be of interest but I thought I would send it just in case.

In June 1969 Sian Davies, Kathy Holmes and I (Janet Maralyn [Marie] Jones) were all accepted to the Brecon Girls Grammar School after passing the 11+ exam [at Glasbury Primary School].

At the time of starting both Kathy and I were 10, not turning 11 until October and November respectively.

The attached document (right) shows the school uniform that was to be purchased. Our parents were all very proud and I must admit we were all a bit chuffed too.

My father, Ken Jones, was the farm hand and later the Bailiff at Gwernyfed school for a few years.

Both of Kathy's parents, Bill and Pam Holmes were teachers and Sian's father, Tom Davies was in charge of the farm.

I have lovely memories of my childhood in this area. Unfortunately, I sailed to Australia early November that same year so only had a few months at the Grammar school.”

Forms I & II

BRECON GIRLS' COUNTY GRAMMAR

SCHOOL UNIFORM

WINTER UNIFORM

1. Indoors

Navy Gynslip - flared with school badge left hand side ✓  
White long sleeved blouse and school tie.  
Plain dark navy long sleeved V necked pullover. ✓  
Navy blazer with official badge (Watts). ✓  
Navy knickers. ✓  
Socks or stockings - green or fawn thick rib. ✓  
Shoes - black or brown lightweight rubber soled. ✓  
Navy ribbon to tie back shoulder length hair.

2. Outdoors

Navy felt hat with badge. (Watts or Joyces).  
Navy raincoat (or navy dufflecoat - dark buttons).  
Shoes - brown or black laced. (To be changed on arrival).  
Gloves - navy woollen or dark leather.

3. Gym Uniform

Green gym knickers } Watts. (or green leotard)  
Yellow gym vest }  
White gym shoes

Also desirable:-  
Green games skirt (Watts)  
Green track suit  
Yellow Games shirt (Aertex)

4. General

Slipper bag - red cotton with large pockets on the outside to hold gym uniform. Name to be embroidered on pocket.

Purse for money, season ticket etc. preferably with strap.  
Overall for practical lessons, i.e. Domestic Science and Art.

No jewellery to be worn.

Dinner 7/6 per week, subject to L.E.A. alteration.

ALL CLOTHES TO BE MARKED CLEARLY

12.7.68

**Member Patricia Jenkins, Swansea**, drew our attention to a paragraph in one of the displayed items; the County Grammar School for Girls Newsletter of May 1946., Reference was made on page 19 to two girls who had left the School before 1942. The reference stated “*Gwyneth Evans and Eira Lloyd have given up their teaching posts. Gwyneth to become an Organiser for 'Urdd Gobaith Cymru' and Eira to train before sailing as a Missionary to Africa*”.

Gwyneth Evans went out as a teacher/missionary to Madagascar and became the *defacto* Education Minister there. She was very highly thought of and learned the language.

**Member Margaret Sommers** recalled that Gwyneth came to Brecon Girl's Grammar School, in the 1950s to talk about her missionary work.

By the 1990s she had retired to Alltwen near Pontardawe. On one occasion, a Madagascan Official came to London for talks. He was asked whether he wanted to do anything special whilst in the UK. He requested a visit to meet Gwyneth Evans because of the high regard in which she was still held for her work in helping to develop education in his country. He was duly driven down to South Wales and had a most enjoyable meeting with Gwyneth, who was able to practice her Malagasy language skills with her visitor.

She was able to practice her language skills once again, when a group of Madagascan singers came to the Pontardawe Folk Festival. Patricia Jenkins arranged for them to meet her for dinner. Apparently, a good time was had by all involved.

The only information I have been able to find on-line about Gwyneth Evans is her obituary on the [Media Wales Group](#) website. It is written in Welsh

“EVANS Gwyneth Jane 1916-2012 Merch y diweddar Evan a Mary Ann Evans, Aberhonddu, chwaer y diweddar Ieuan ac Olwen, modryb Mary, Ann a Jane. Cenhades a phrifathrawes mewn coleg hyfforddi athrawon ym Madagascar am 28 mlynedd. Bu farw'n dawel ar Fedi 15 yng ngofal tyner Staff Ysbryd y Coed, Abertawe. Gwasanaeth i ddiolch am, a dathlu ei bywyd yn Amlogfa Treforys am 12.30 prynhawn dydd Iau, Medi 27. Blodau'r teulu yn unig, rhoddion at Celyn Ward Fund drwy law'r Ymgymwrwr Angladdau, Hywel Griffiths a'i Feibion, Bwtrimawr, 39 Heol-y-Betws, Betws Rhydaman. SA18 2HE.”

**Does anyone have any more information about Gwyneth Evans? Contact Hilary as usual.**

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

As many of you will know, owing to recent cut-backs 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 has 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 are 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.

**NEXT MEETING**

Date and time: Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at 2.00 pm.  
Venue: Brecon Library  
Subject: Jan Bailey “*Llangynidr Mill Digs*”

**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, Maesycod, 39 Camden Road, Brecon LD3 7RT.

Tel: 01874 624432 E-mail: [chair@blfhs.co.uk](mailto:chair@blfhs.co.uk)