

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



Newsletter 5 – October 2011

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

October Meeting Review

Subject: "Flooding Breconshire" – An exposé of 19th century plans to create huge reservoirs in Breconshire and mid-Wales to supply London with 315 million gallons of water per day.

Richard Rees gave a fascinating illustrated lecture about the detailed planning which had been carried out by the London local authorities in the 1890s to secure the future business and residential water supply for London for the first half of the twentieth century. This would have involved flooding large parts of the Upper Tywi (Cardiganshire), Usk and Irfon Valleys (Breconshire) and Radnorshire rivers and their tributaries. The detailed plans, schedules and maps of the land and properties involved were shown in an excellent slide show, and paper copies of the schedules were available for the audience to examine after the lecture. Mr Rees has generously allowed us to make a digital audio recording of his lecture available on our website. Copyright issues, however, prevent us displaying the slides on the website.

Breaking the 100th member barrier

I am sure you will be as pleased as we are to learn that we now have 104 members. We decided to welcome our 100th member, Mrs Painter, by sending her a book: *Law and Disorder in Breconshire* by Dewi Davies. We now have members in the USA, Australia and New Zealand as well as various parts of the British Isles.

The Management Committee is delighted by the success of the Society to date, considering our launch was only in June, just four months ago. With a membership of over one hundred, the Committee has been able to set next year's subscription at £8 (not £10 as previously stated.) We hope that you will all want to continue your membership with us in 2012 and help us improve and develop the activities of the Society. The renewal form will be available on our website very shortly; the membership renewal date is the beginning of January 2012.

Websites for Local and Family History

The National library of Wales has an excellent series of online searchable catalogues. The library holds an enormous amount of purchased manuscripts as well as donated collections of, for example, solicitor's records and family estate papers.

There are two main methods by which these collections can be searched.

1. **ISYS Catalogue** (also called "Archives and Manuscripts not yet included in the full catalogue") – this is an excellent keyword searchable facility which allows you access to all pre-1999 archived material. If the keyword is found in a collection, the concise description of each item in the collection is accessed and the keyword is highlighted in that collection. With this search facility it is possible to read the descriptions of all other items in the collection, which can put your keyword search into context.
2. For all archived material there is a new search facility called **Aquabrowser**. This retrieves the keyword from the collection but you are not able to see what else is in that collection.

To find these and other collections, go to <http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=117>

Monmouthshire Family and Local History Interests

This website, maintained by Mike John, offers anyone with Monmouthshire interests a vast amount of original document images as well as transcribed records
<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~monfamilies/>

Snippets from the Press

From the County Times

16th October 1913. A Garth wedding

A very pretty wedding was solemnized at Olewydd Congregational Church, on Wednesday week, the contracting parties being Mr. Lewis Evans, Newton, Brecon, and Miss Cora Joan Jones, of Llwynpiod, Garth. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. D.A. Griffith, Troedrihwaldar. The bride and bridegroom arrived in motor cars, and Miss Jones, who was accompanied by Mr. Llewelyn Jones (brother), was attired in a tailor made blue serge costume, with hat to match. The best man was Mr. David Evans, Great Porthamel, and the bride was given away by her brother. A

reception was held at Llwynpiod, after which Mr. and Mrs. Evans left for Bournemouth, where the honeymoon is being spent.

20th March, 1913

Breconshire Pensions – granted last year.

At a meeting of the Breconshire Old Age Pensions Committee on Friday, it was reported that 192 pensions had been granted last year. The figures for the several districts were:- Brecon 37, Builth 24, Brynmawr 37, Crickhowell 29, Defynock 14, Hay and Talgarth 28, Vaynor 13, Ystradgynlais 10 – 192

A good read

Michael R Lewis (1992) *From Darkness to Light – the Catholics of Breconshire 1536-1851*, Old Bakehouse Publications, ISBN 0-9512181-2-3

This is a useful book if you have Breconshire ancestors who were recusant Catholics in the period covered by the author. Catholic families in Breconshire as well as Monmouthshire kept the spark of “Yr Hen Ffydd” (The Old Faith) alive despite the threat of severe financial and personal punishment for those who refused to swear loyalty to the new Protestant Faith.

NEXT MEETING

Date and time: Wednesday, 2nd November 2011 at 2:00 pm.
Venue: Brecon Library, Ship Street, Brecon
Subject: Geoffrey Williams: “How to research the history of your house”
A practical guide with tips, contacts and resources.

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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