

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



## **Newsletter 9 – March 2012**

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

### **March: visit to Powys Archives**

A party of members made the journey to Llandrindod Wells to have a tour of the Archives facilities and Holdings. To find out more about what is available at Powys Archives, visit their website at <http://www.powys.gov.uk/index.php?id=647&L=0>

### **March: Annual Lunch**

We had a very pleasant afternoon at Bishops Meadow, in the company of 24 members and friends.

The Chef and his staff provided an excellent meal, and with the restaurant patio doors open, we were able to take full advantage of the lovely warm sunny day.

Rob Eckley made sure that our “grey cells” as well as our appetites were stimulated by setting us a “Doors and Windows of Brecon” quiz. The photos were printed in black and white, which made identification even more difficult. Society member Glen Harris identified the most doorways, and was presented with one of the two gift vouchers given to the Society by member Jennifer Lewis.

You may like to try the Quiz yourself. I have attached the sheet prepared by Rob and I will provide the answers next month. No prizes this time, unfortunately.

Rob had also brought along his wonderful collection of old and new photographs, which certainly aroused memories and interest in the members that afternoon.

### **A Good Read**

The annual Journal produced by the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends is called *Brycheiniog* and Volume XLIII has just been published. This scholarly, mainly English language Journal was established in 1955 and is devoted to describing the history and archaeology of Breconshire.

The National Library of Wales has consulted various Societies in Wales and reached an agreement whereby their journals can be digitised and made freely available to all, on the web. The only caveat is that the latest five or so years of journals will not be available online, enabling the Societies to continue to sell their latest journals.

I am pleased to say that *Brycheiniog* is now available in digital form on the following website: <http://welshjournals.llgc.org.uk/browse/listissues/llgc-id:1380216>

Thirty-five editions (up to 2006) are currently available and Volume XXX is particularly valuable being a comprehensive Index to the previous volumes. Volumes can be downloaded article by article in PDF format and saved to your computer.

Interestingly, the current *Brycheiniog* (Volume XLIII), which is currently available as a hard copy only, includes an article entitled “Brecknockshire Clockmakers”. Your Chairperson was therefore in good company when she wrote about Iorwerth C. Peate’s *Clock and Watch Makers in Wales* as last month’s Good Read. The “Cloc” poem is also mentioned in *Brycheiniog*!

Other articles in the latest edition are ‘Houses and History in Breconshire’; ‘Brecon Isolation Hospital’; ‘Pryce of Newtown and Buckland’; ‘Glasbury Churches and Chapels’; Sam Garratt; Cartref y Teulu, ‘Trefeca’; and ‘Brecknock Overseas’. This edition is available in the local libraries, local bookshops and from the Brecknock Society: website <http://www.brecknocksociety.co.uk/>

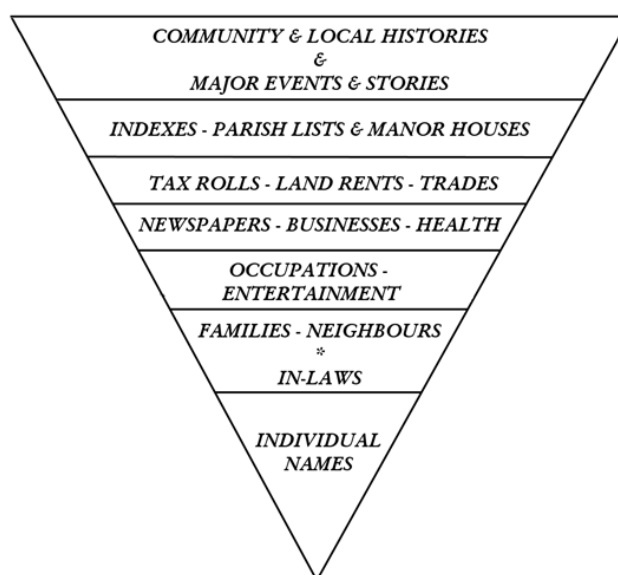
### **New feature**

Society member **Helen Whyte** from Brecon has agreed to keep an eye open for any genealogy news items and articles which would interest and help our members. Thank you Helen. Her first contribution, which follows, is about the ArchivesWales website.

## HOMEWORK in BRECON – by Helen Whyte

Recently a lady in Tasmania wrote to a Welsh mail-list requesting help in her preparations for a visit to Wales this summer — a visit wherein she expected to follow some threads in her family history. The moderator of the mail-list gave her some homework, a valuable lesson in how to prepare at home for family history research. That lesson applies also to us.

To look for ancestors in the misty years of the early nineteenth century and back into the eighteenth century, our family history searches begin in local history resources. Those who lived in those years, from about 1700 to about 1840, were born, married and buried often without much official notice at all, and certainly not in records generated very far from home or outside their own neighbourhood and parish. To find them, we turn family history research upside-down. Instead of beginning with the family members and then widening our perspective to develop the context of their lives, we must begin with the times and the place and narrow our searches carefully to find the right people.



Our research begins, not in the name searches of Ancestry, or Findmypast, FreeBMD, Census Returns or the GRO, but in libraries, museums, and archives, and discoveries in these places depend hugely on homework. There are files in the County Record Offices, the National Library and the local libraries that can help enormously with our nineteenth and twentieth century ancestors, of course, but for the earlier relatives in our family trees, we must turn to resources that probably are not yet on-line. Our homework thus begins at the keyboard, and that is the same whether we are travelling from Tasmania or Defynnog.

In Wales, we turn to [www.archiveswales.org.uk](http://www.archiveswales.org.uk). Why? Because the catalogues of all the county record offices, plus the catalogue of the National Library of Wales, plus the catalogues of universities, plus the catalogues of family history resources in local libraries are merged on that one website. It is a brilliant concept, and one that will get better and better as more resources are added.

The opening page of archiveswales, across the top, offers the chance to 'Search the Catalogue'; then from the index on the left, we choose PLACE, or SUBJECT, or NAME, CORPORATE NAME, or REPOSITORY. In fact, for most research it is best to take advantage of all or almost all of those possibilities. Try searching 'Brecon' as a place, then as a subject; search by Repository for the Powys County Archives to see what holdings there are for 'Brecon', Breconshire, or 'Brecknockshire'. Go ahead then: search some people! Finally, prepare for a terrific day, an interesting hunt in any and all of the records that will turn your list of names and relations into a compelling family history.

That was the advice to the lady in Tasmania. "Good idea", she responded. "Those of us intending to visit the records office need to plan our time closely and if we don't know what records and call numbers there are, valuable time is wasted."

Helen Whyte, Brecon

## **NEXT MEETING**

Date and time: Wednesday, 4th April 2012 at 2:00 pm  
Venue: Brecon Library, Ship Street, Brecon  
Subject: Market Towns in Herefordshire  
Speaker Penny Platts

## **BLFHS WEBSITE**

Our website address: [www.blfhs.co.uk](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:**

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## Doors and Windows of Brecon Quiz



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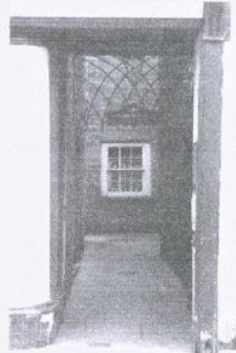
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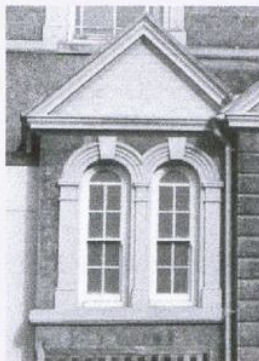
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