



Breconshire Local & Family History Society (BLFHS)

Cymdeithas Hanes Lleol a Theuluoedd Brycheiniog

Newsletter 73 - February 2018

SCHOOL DAYS

A lovely account of one person's memories of her schooldays during the early part of the Twentieth Century.

This has been contributed by Gwyneth Morris (nee Jenkins) who received it as part of her research project into Elementary Education in Breconshire.

LETTER FROM THE LATE SIBYL POWELL
(NÉE JONES)

TO GWYNETH MORRIS (NÉE JENKINS)

NOVEMBER 1994

Talybont School

I was a pupil at Talybont School until I was 11+. My mother was also a pupil there when the Headmaster was a Mr Hodson, and my Grandmother was a pupil there when it was housed in another part of the village.

My earliest recollection of School when I was about 5 years old – the Headmaster was a Mr Cuthbert. I remember him coming to the Babies Class to look at my knitting which was not very good and he said it was very nice – so I presumed he was a very kind sort of man. Mrs Cuthbert taught occasionally and if any child had a cold she would always produce something to rub on the chest - I think it was goose grease.

Mrs Cuthbert seemed a bit glamorous to us country children – she had been “on the stage” but was now rather lame. They had one son and he and his mother could play the piano – more glamour for us. Every Monday morning my oldest brother was entrusted with the Master's watch and chain – gold – and had to take it to the railway station to have the correct time for the next week. The times of the trains were the only way of knowing the correct time. Remember that this was 80 years ago – at least 80 years ago. I remember Mr Cuthbert leaving school because I can still see the Christmas card I gave him – a Black Cat sitting in front of a lovely red coal fire (still popular today).

I do not have any outstanding recollection of Mr Roland Price – the next Headmaster – only of doing sums in Standard 1 and 2, and sewing in Standard 3 and 4 with Miss Gladys Morgan and Miss Poste in the Glyn Valley and Miss Janet Evans of Craig. When I was 9 or 10 years old I remember the coming of Mr Evan Price – it must have been 1918 or 1919 – the Great War was over. Mr Evan Price was a smart slim man and always wore a bow tie – probably I had not seen one like that before. By this time I was in the top class – Standards 5, 6 and 7. These were in a big room with a half glass partition between them separating us from Standards 3 and 4. Standards 1 and 2 were housed in another small room which became a kitchen. When

This month on our website

Just a reminder

Update: The new website is coming along but is not yet ready for launch.

Members continue to be able to access the current website as normal but as reported previously, no new items will be placed on it, no old items will be removed, and no amendments will be made. When the new website is up and running, visitors will be able to access old and new data as before. Access to the member's section of the new website will require a different username and password from the ones currently in use; members will be informed about this in time for the launch. I hope that everyone understands the need for this change and will bear with us until every section of our website has been converted to the new CMS website platform.

the bell rang at 9 a.m., we were marched into our places and every morning we sang a hymn – “Do no sinful action, Speak no angry word” etc. Then he said the Lords’ Prayer. The register was then called and the number of children present was put on the wall – 83-84 usually. Lots of children came from the “Aber village” 2 miles away and some came from Cwm Banw 4 miles away.

In the wet weather coats would be hung to dry on the fine iron guard and we loved to watch the steam rise out of the wet clothes.

Every morning started with Scripture lesson and once a year the Rev’d Aneurin Davies of Llanfigan Church came to examine us. If we answered correctly we were given a certificate and if one continued correctly this certificate was signed each year. We were very proud of these signatures. We had to learn the Apostles Creed.

Our Cookery teacher was Miss Jenkins – an aunt of Mr Mervyn Jenkins, Brecon.

These were the days of the British Empire. We had to dance around the Maypole with coloured bands – very complicated to get correct. Empire Day, May the 24th was celebrated with songs and Colonel James Williams would come and take a part in our celebrations and we had on clean white pinafores. Colonel J Williams donated the school field to us. We sang patriotic songs and there I learned “Land of Hope and glory” – I think.

The boys played football and cricket and we girls had hockey and netball – something quite new for us and we played against Gilwern School. 70 year ago. All this sport as the result of having a wonderful playing field.

We had several concerts and a choir under the leadership of Mr Bill Davies (?) a local man and competed in Eisteddfod or Church Hall. We were taught to sing duets.

We had drill every morning for about 10 minutes and then started on Arithmetic.

Lunch Time

Every day we sang “Be present at our table, Lord”. Then I ran home for dinner. Most children had sandwiches. When we returned to school we sang “We thank you Lord for this, our food”.

The boys had a plot of ground in the side of the playing field which they grew vegetables and were taught to clean paths.

Our playing field was wonderful. It was given to the school by Col James Williams of Cui Park.

The boys learned gardening and the girls had cooking. I was not allowed to take cookery although I was in the top class, because I was too young but eventually allowed as long as I did not go near the Black-leaded Stove.

We were taught how to sing properly and we gave several concerts under the conductorship of a local man. It was the first time I had sung a duet. I was 11 years old.

1923 was the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley and Mr Evan Price took 18 of us children to London for a week with one teacher. Every country of the Empire had a wonderful stand there. We visited all the usual things like St Paul’s Cathedral, House of Commons and Westminster. Every evening was spent at the wonderful entertainments – like the Big Dipper etc. etc. and Scenic Railway.

We had an afternoon at East Surrey – a gentleman of means had had a holiday at Talybont and invited us all there for the day. I think we were housed at Sudbury. This was a wonderful holiday for us as we only had a

grey van in Talybont. Some of us spent the last night with relatives and were to meet at a certain time outside Selfridges. When the time came one boy was missing. However we missed the train at Paddington and were taken to the Alhambra Theatre and went on the train at Paddington at 1 a.m. and arrived at Talybont at 10.30 a.m. All safe and well.

At this time doctors started to visit schools.

A few of us went to Brecon to the Town Hall to sit an examination. Later that summer I was walking through the village and a man called to me "Sib, do you know that you have passed an exam to go the County Girls' School". But this was the first Scholarship at Talybont School. 1923 I think.

During my time at School we had a school teacher Rose Parry who died. At Llansanffraed we also had a small girl die of meningitis (?). Buried at Aber. We were marched to these two funerals and sang at the graveside. This was the order of the day!

(Sibyl Powell was the mother of Gillian (later Prof Powell, Head of Biochemistry and the first female deputy principal at UCW Cardiff until her untimely death at the age of 55 in 1989.) Gwyneth and Gillian were at Brecon Girls' Grammar school together. When Gwyneth later sent out some questionnaires on elementary education this was Sibyl's reply)



Brecknock Society and Museum Friends

The Muse, Glamorgan Street, Brecon

Wed Feb 28th 6.00pm

The Stained Glass of Breconshire

Dr Martin Crampin Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies

This talk will look at the stylistic developments in ecclesiastical stained glass during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, using examples found in Breconshire. From the early Gothic Revival windows of the 1850s, to the modernism of the 1960s and 70s, we find a variety of styles and approaches to stained glass, which has produced fine examples of public art that remain largely unknown today.

Free entry: If you would like more information contact

John Gibbs (018747 30747) gibbs@keme.co.uk or Elaine Starling (018747 11484)

evstarling@lineone.net

Sat May 12 11.30 am to 4.30 pm

The Beaufort Estate in Breconshire: a Glimpse. In association with Llangynidr Local History Society and the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates (Bangor University).

The study-day starts in Llangynidr Village Hall with coffee at 11.30 am. Fee for the day: £5.00 for members of the BS&MF, Llangynidr Local History Society and the ISWE, £8.00 for others (this fee includes coffee and tea).

To book a place, contact John Gibbs (gibbs@keme.co.uk or 01874 730747)

There is free parking in the Llangynidr Village Car Park (GR SO 155194) which is just across the road from the Village Hall. Buses from Brecon and Abergavenny stop at the village hall



Unwanted Certificates

So often we end up with certificates which prove not to be our ancestor. Rather than let them go to waste we are instituting a section each month listing them for the benefit of any member who might be able to use them. If anyone has any they would like to donate please let me know.



Free Online Resources

There are lots of free resources out there on the Internet. Copy and paste the web addresses into your browser.

A virtual tour of Brecon Cathedral

https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=ebePdzZrSDo&help=1&qt=0&vr=0&utm_source=4

Or link from the Cathedral website <https://www.breconcathedral.org.uk/>



The Query Slot

Sometimes we all need a little help in knocking down a few walls. If anyone has a genealogical query they are stuck with please let me know. I can't answer everything but I am sure there is a member out there with far more knowledge and experience than me who might be able to assist.

Here is a query from a member. If anyone can help to point them to the relevant resources please email me at the usual address and I will pass on the message.

“How can I find out about land ownership in my family including land ownership and status, wills and successive inheritance re family farms , records of land ownership (apart from the Tithe Maps), and how to trace the owners of uninhabited or derelict land?”



Don't forget – I am always looking for interesting article subjects so let me know if you have anything you would like to share!!!!

I am looking for interesting subjects on which to base the monthly article. If you are passionate about a subject which you think would be interesting to our members please let me know by sending me an email at the usual address editorblfhs@outlook.com



BRECONSHIRE STRAYS

MONMOUTHSHIRE

Llanvetherine

Baptisms/Confirmation

Sara Jane d/o Iris Myfanwy & Reginald Francis Powell,
Llanbedr Rd., Crickhowell. Engineer
21 Dec 1969

Banns

Jas Hughes otp., & Elizth Watkins, Llangenny, Brec.
20/27 Jun & 4 Jul 1784

Marriages

David Williams., St David's Brec. & Susanna Davies otp,
minor. Wits: Thos Davies & John Davies. By Licence
23 Sep 1779

Edward Windham otp & Esther Shearman? Llandevelle?
Brec., Wits: Wm ? & Jane Powell. By Licence. 7 Oct 1787

Wm Edwards, Llangattock, Brec. & Ann Williams otp.
Wits: Ann Lewis & Elizth Tanker? By Banns. 12 Aug 1799

Philip Williams, Llangattock, Brec. & Sarah? Roberts otp.
Wits: Joseph Roberts & Mary Jones? By Licence. 10 Apr
1820

Thomas Parry, full age, widower & labr otp. Father: John
Parry labr. & Mary Price, full age, widow, labr Crickhowell.
Father: Wm Powell Carpenter. Wits: Wm Pritchard & Elizth
Jeffries. 18 Dec 1866

Thomas Williams, 41, bach. Malster, Talgarth. Father:
Thos Williams, malster. & Elizth Prosser, 34 spin. otp.
Father: Watkin Prosser, shoemaker. Wits: Thos Prosser &
Anne C Prosser. By Banns. 12 Aug 1884

Wm Jenkins, 29 batch. Road man, Talybont, Llanigan?
Brec. Father: Wm Jenkins (deceased), road man. & Agnes
Watkins...spin, Hentland Cottage, Llanferine. Father:
Andrew Watkins, labr. Wits: Mary Jenkins & Christopher
Watkins. By Banns. 25 May 1909

BRECONSHIRE STRAYS

MONMOUTHSHIRE

LLANVETHERINE

Burials

Thos Vaughan, Llanelly. 15 Jan 1844 aged 73
Ann Jeffreys, Bryn Mawr. 19 Apr 1853 aged 1 yr
5mnths

Wm Morgan, Llanbedr, Brec. 29? Nov 1858 aged
76

Hannah Watkins, Rose Cottage, Tal y bont. 24 Nov
1927 aged 76

James Keylock, Newport Terrace, Hay. 14 Mar
1941 aged 82

Chas Henry Perrett, St David's Hospital, Llan...?
Brec. 8 Oct 1960 age 87

LLANGWM UCHAF

Marriages

Clifford Edward Davies, 37. Bach., timber feller.
Sycamore House, Llangwm. Father: James Davies,
lbr., (deceased)

Married

Priscilla Maude Price, 30., Spin., Cilane Farm,
Crickadarn, Builth. Father: John Price, farmer
(deceased)

Witnesses: WG Edwards, AR Price. By Banns. 26
Jun 1948 [Apologies date missed off last month]

The Beacon

This free A5 monthly glossy magazine
distributed in Brecon and its surrounding
villages contains a "Your History" column,
contributed by the BLFHS, which often offers
an interesting article about the area.

January Meeting Review: Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift, a personal visit. 6 February 2018

Roger Reese Chairman, of the Llyn Safaddan History Group, gave a personal account of his visit to these historic sites as part of the cultural connections between Brecon and the Zulu nation. Accompanied by his slideshow he vividly illustrated how he and others in his party retraced the steps of the battles to understand the conditions under which these battles were fought. We were all moved by the care with which the scattered burial sites are maintained

There are many good books written about these events and a factsheet can be downloaded from <http://royalwelsh.org.uk/downloads/B05-01-24th-Anglo-Zuluwar1879.pdf>



Website

Our website address is www.blfhs.co.uk

Facebook

The society now has a Facebook page. Check it out at www.facebook.com/breconblfhs

Next Meeting

Date/Time: Tuesday 6th March 2018 2pm

Place: Brecon Public Library

Subject: Janet Robinson. Research and presentation: a family story