

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



Newsletter 15 – September 2012

Welcome to our fifteenth 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

I am very sorry to announce that our Speaker, Mr Tudor Watkins, did not attend the September meeting. We have not yet found out what happened to him. Fortunately, we were able to rely on some members of the audience who related their own railway memories and we were particularly pleased to listen to the experiences of the grandfather and father of Mick Ford, husband of BLFHS Member, Mair Ford. You can hear his account on the website.

Helen Whyte continued her series of short presentations on using the new www.FamilySearch.org/ website. This series has been greeted with great enthusiasm by Members.

Thank you, Helen, for your excellent presentations.

Sound recordings and slides are now available on the Members' section of our website: select Meetings from the Resources drop-down list.

Monthly Meeting Sound Recordings and Illustrations

In order to provide space for new items on our website, we have had to remove some of the older material from the website. At its last meeting, the Committee, with the guidance of the webmasters, decided we should remove the archived monthly meetings on the Members' section up to and including October 2011. With effect from 17 September, only the meetings held in the most recent 12 months will appear on our website. Reports, sound files, and slides of the older meetings will be stored off the website.

If you wish to listen to, or save to your computer, any of the remaining talks and images, follow the instructions on the Downloading the Sound Files section which accompanies each monthly meeting report (under Resources on the Members' section of our website).

A Good Read- part 5

"The Diary of Benjamin Newton Rector of Wath 1816-1818". The Rector's observations of the human condition are quite amusing. On the 25th August he wrote "Dined yesterday at Penpont with Bolds and Prices. Young Hugh Bold is very amusing, he is exactly the size that is proper for a coxcomb. I never saw a very short person of the male sex that was not one. I rather think that tall women are more given to vanity than short ones, they think height gives them a sort of commanding superiority." Then, we have more gossip and humour "Heard D. Lewis having had a dispute with his wife about sowing a field he had prepared for turnips, she insisting on its being sown with wheat and he with turnips, she put the turnip seed in the oven and baked it and then enjoyed his disappointment when he had sowed the seed and none came up." More on his visit in the next Newsletter.

Victorian and Edwardian Memorial Cards:

This project is up and running with three contributors so far. If you have any Breconshire-based memorial cards from this era and want to add them to our database, just send a transcription of their contents to me, Hilary Williams, at chair@blfhs.co.uk.

Members Interests Database

Do remember to let me know if you wish to allow your family and local interests to be made available alongside your contact details, so that other Members may contact you. These details will only be accessible to Members.

A useful website:

<http://www.welshruins.co.uk/>

This website has wonderful photographs, in colour and in black and white, of buildings of all types that are falling into decay. You might find an ancestral long house there, as I did. Or you may like to see some more stately piles and follies which are now in a bad state of decay.

Family History Tip:

When writing down the names of the counties of Wales, you may like to use abbreviated versions. The most widely recognised set of abbreviations for Countries and Counties is known as the *Chapman Code*. The Chapman abbreviations for Wales and the counties of Wales are:

Wales	WLS	Carmarthenshire	CMN	Montgomeryshire	MGY
Anglesey	AGY	Denbighshire	DEN	Monmouthshire	MON
Breconshire	BRE	Flintshire	FLN	Pembrokeshire	PEM
Caernarfonshire	CAE	Glamorganshire	GLA	Radnorshire	RAD
Cardiganshire	CGN	Merionethshire	MER		

Hot off the Press:

FALSE TEETH LOST AND FOUND from *The County Times*, 13th February 1913

Incredibly, one of our Brecon Members came up to me this month and told me that the false teeth in this newspaper account had belonged to her grandfather, David Morgan, Cwmclydach.

What will happen with this month's Hot off the Press, I wonder?

Brecon County Times

25th. February 1915

LETTER TO A BUILTH CONSTABLE - Dangers of the Trench

Below is an extract from a letter by Pte. W. Williams, of the Expeditionary Force, to his brother, P.C. Williams (Builth Wells):-
"We have had very rough weather at the front, having been up to our knees in mud and water in the trenches, and have to endure this hardship for three days and nights, when we are relieved for the same period. Relieving in dangerous business, for the enemy seem to know when this is taking place and commence to fire. The Germans, sometimes, fire their maxim guns, and, when being relieved, we have lost numbers of men. Nearly 20 of our

men were knocked over one night, and bullets were flying around our heads. I was expecting to stop one every minute. I believe there will be a big move shortly, and shall not be sorry when this war is over, for, I'm getting as stiff as an old horse. My feet are bad – otherwise, I am in perfect health. We have some fine big guns now, and it is a treat to see them being fired. It is wonderful how our gunners obtain range, as the trenches are only 80 yards apart. Our gunners, however, have to be very careful not to drop the shells in our trenches and blow us up."

Does anyone know this family from Builth?

NEXT MEETING

- Date and time: Wednesday, 10th October 2012 at 2.00pm **Note change of date.**
Venue: Brecon Library
Subject: "Using Tithe Maps for Research" by John Ball.
Prior to the main talk, Helen Whyte will continue her presentation on using the new FamilySearch.org website.

BLFHS WEBSITE: Our website address: 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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