



# CRICKHOWELL & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER 2~ DECEMBER 2010



### President's Welcome

As we approach the end of December I am pleased to report that your Society has had a very successful year. Our monthly talks have been well attended and we have had a good mix of new and returning speakers covering a wide range of topics.

Our new ventures- the walk around the Clydach Gorge and the 'bus trip to St Fagans were blessed with good weather and we received positive responses from those who took part. We were grateful for members' support and we hope to repeat similar events next year.

We think it important to develop our links with the Archive Society and to this end your Committee intends to meet with the Archive Society early in the New Year to learn more about their activities. Later in this Newsletter, Geoff Williams, the Chairman of the Archive Society, tells us about their Society's work.

Looking forward to 2011, Janice has already finalised the details of our programme for monthly talks and these are set out on the enclosed sheet.

Last but not least, we would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Robin Williams

### Society's Talks ~ September to November

September saw a visit from David Woodliffe who reminded us of the sacrifice of warfare with his extensive selection of slides of war memorials, mainly, but not exclusively from South Wales. The slides included one of the Newbridge Memorial which was subsequently rebuilt at St Fagans and which we saw on our visit there.

In October we had a return visit from John Evans who told us about the role of the Quakers in alleviating the grinding poverty around Brynmawr and the Eastern Valleys in the 1920s and 1930s. Their activities included the encouragement of small businesses not only in the traditional industries of furniture making and shoemaking but also the establishment of agricultural holdings.

Well known local historian Chris Barber visited in November and we were treated to his presentation on Kilvert Country. It took the form of a slide show with occasional musical accompaniment and a narration taken directly from the reverend gentleman's diaries. It was fascinating to see that the countryside he described is today little changed.

### Committee News

Unfortunately, due to work commitments, Phil Harrison has been obliged to resign from the committee. A former chairman, Phil has worked extremely hard for the Society over the past few years. He has devoted much time to our presentations in the Clarence Hall, helped produce our booklet "*Walking Through History*", our recent calendars and has been very active in digitising our collection of photographs and postcards. Our thanks and best wishes go to him.

### Annual General Meeting Wednesday 16th February 2011

We hope you will be able to attend. This is your opportunity to influence what the Society is doing and we look forward to seeing you and hearing any ideas you may have for our future. We expect that the formal business at the AGM, including the election of officers, will not take very long and afterwards there will be an opportunity to chat with other members over a drink and light refreshments.

The evening will conclude with a short selection of slides of local historical interest. (Audience participation would be welcomed).

### Membership of the BALH - British Association for Local History

Your Society has joined the BALH essentially because it provides us with insurance cover for our activities such as guided walks or bus trips. But it also has a wealth of information for those interested in local history.

It publishes pamphlets and organises guided visits to libraries and museums. Those of you with access to computers may wish to have a look at its website [www.balh.co.uk](http://www.balh.co.uk).

It also publishes two magazines, *The Local Historian* and *Local History News*. If you would like to see our copies please ask Janice.

**Contact Numbers**

**Chairman**

Clive Ralph ~  
01873 810262

**Secretary**

Janice Marshall ~  
01873 810305

**Treasurer**

Sheila Harris ~  
01873 811135

**Membership Secretary**

Maldwyn Powell ~  
01873 811273

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We now have a website.  
We can be found at

[www.crickhowellhistorysociety.co.uk](http://www.crickhowellhistorysociety.co.uk)  
Please visit us and sign our questbook.

## Crickhowell District Archive Society

In August this year Crickhowell District Archive Society (CDAC) celebrated its first ten years with a very successful two-day exhibition, putting on show some of the more interesting documents, maps and photographs from its collections. CDAC was set up in 2000 by a group of senior citizens keen to preserve the documentary evidence of the area's rich history, accessing, through the charity Help the Aged, funds available to celebrate the Millennium. In 2006 it moved from its offices at 6 High Street (opposite Webb's) to its current location on the first floor of the CRiC building.

CDAC serves local historians and genealogists and has a rich collection of printed, digital, map and photographic items relevant to the eight parishes making up the local area: Crickhowell, Llangenny, Patrishow, Llanbedr, Cwmdu, Llangynidr, Llangattock and Llanelly. For all of these we have the tithe maps and parish records. In recent years a series of publications has been produced, including *Llangattock Scrapbook*, *The Mills of Grwyne*, and *Crickhowell through the Eyes of the Tourist*, the latest being *The Story of Latham House* by Tim and Serena Raikes. A small team of volunteers – we are currently looking to add to their number - ensures that the Centre is open weekdays and Saturdays, 10-12.30. You may not be able to join us as a volunteer but you can support CDAC for just £6 by becoming a Friend, each of whom receives our twice-yearly *Newsletter*.

There is a clear overlap of interests between CDAC and the Crickhowell District History Society there will shortly be a meeting between the committees of both to consider how we might develop an effective collaboration in the future – in the interest of both organisations and the community at large.

Geoff Williams  
Chairman, CDAC

### Visit to St Fagans Saturday 25 September

We were blessed with glorious weather and 28 members and their friends enjoyed their visit to the most popular heritage attraction in Wales. With extensive parklands and over 40 original buildings to explore and craftsmen practising traditional skills there was not enough time in the day to do everything justice.

Participants felt that this was a very successful occasion and we will consider organising a trip to another historical location next year. Your ideas are welcome.



The tin bath in front of the fire in one of the Rhyd-y-car ironworkers' houses brought back memories for many.

### And finally.....

It is your Society and the Committee welcomes any comments you may have on the way it is run or any ideas for doing things differently. In particular, if you have suggestions for topics or speakers for our monthly meetings, Janice would be pleased to have them.

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**Programme of talks for 2011**

We have a mix of new speakers and return visits from several, including Frank Olding and Brian Davies who have proved very popular in the past.

- Margaret Williams, the Minister at Llangattock Chapel, starts our programme and will tell us about the history of the chapel.
- Bill Cainan, who members will recall finished his talk in June by discharging several volleys from his musket, will talk about the Zulus.
- Nearer home, Malcolm Meadows will talk about the construction of the Grwyne Fawr reservoir.
- Our President, Robin Williams, will explain the mysteries of Pontypool's Japanware.
- Another of our members, Mrs Joan Evans, will recall the emigration of her family to the United States.

**SPEAKER DATES FOR 2011**

**SPEAKER BOOKED**

February 16<sup>th</sup> 2011 ( AGM)

Slide show

March 16<sup>th</sup> 2011

Rev. Margaret Williams - Llangattock Chapel

April 20<sup>th</sup> 2011

Robin Williams – Pontypool Japan Ware

May 18<sup>th</sup> 2011

Bill Cainan – Zulu Talk

June 15<sup>th</sup> 2011

Brian Davies – Dr Richard Griffiths & His Tram Roads

September 21<sup>st</sup> 2011

Joan Evans – Film & Talk on her Family

October 19<sup>th</sup> 2011

Malcolm Meadows – Building of the Grwyne Fawr Reservoir

November 16<sup>th</sup> 2011

Frank Olding – Archaeology of the Black Mountains – Part 3



**CRICKHOWELL & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY**

**WITH COMPLIMENTS**

**PLEASE FIND ENCLOSED OUR WINTER NEWSLETTER FOR 2010.**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A  
HAPPY NEW YEAR**