



Crickhowell and District History Society

Newsletter No. 12 ~ Winter 2015

Chairman's Introduction

Hello once more and welcome to this year's winter newsletter. Yet again, we seem to have had a busy and productive autumn season. We have been pleased to welcome some new faces to our meetings and are always glad to see our loyal members who turn up month after month, no matter what the weather may bring.

We were greatly saddened last month by the loss of Mr. Tony Wyatt, a long-time supporter of the Society and a true gentleman. Our condolences to his family.

Our activities for the last few months are chronicled elsewhere in this newsletter, along with a glimpse at what talks we have planned for 2016. May I take this opportunity to once again thank the committee, whose support is much appreciated, the committee of the Parish Hall, for providing us with such an excellent venue and all who have attended our meetings.

I hope you have an enjoyable and peaceful Christmas and best wishes for the coming New Year.

Nadolig Llawn a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda

two tunnels, both over 300 yards long, taking the railway through the mountain. We learned about the importance of the Clydach Ironworks and the various tramroads which crossed the surrounding area. We enjoyed superb views across the Clydach Gorge and could contrast the current day engineering to upgrade the Heads of the Valleys road with that required over 150 years ago to build the railway. At Clydach we had the opportunity to walk across the viaduct and see at close quarters the outstanding workmanship which remains as impressive today as it must have done when the line was first opened.



History Points



SOCIETY WALK 2015

For our Society's contribution to Brecon History Week our President, Robin Williams, led a walk, on Sunday 13 September, along part of the route of the former Abergavenny, Merthyr and Tredegar Railway. The line opened on 29 September 1862 and the last passenger train ran on 5 January 1958. We were blessed with favourable weather and the 5 members and 4 guests were treated to a superb insight from Robin into Clydach's industrial past and the magnificent engineering which had been required to build a railway through very difficult terrain.

We began our walk at the Gellifelen Halt, near to Brynmawr, and made our way down the gently sloping path to Clydach. Along the way we passed

We were contacted this year by an organisation called HistoryPoints which "delivers Welsh history to your mobile, on the spot!" They place QR codes on places of historical interest, you then simply scan the codes with your smartphone or tablet to read a concise history of the object in front of you. Their website is at <http://www.historypoints.org>. So far in Crickhowell they have been placed at St. Edmund's Church, The Bear, The Bridgend and we were asked to place one (with the kind permission of the home owner, our ex-secretary Janice Marshall) on the gatepost of 1, Clarence Villa, telling the story of Irvine Blennerhassett, with which many of you may be familiar. We were delighted to be aided by Mr. Bill Jehan, compiler of the Blenner-

hassett Family Tree, who travelled down for the occasion.

Bill Jehan with the plaque



Christmas Tree Competition

We were delighted in early December to be awarded 2nd prize in the Cric Centre's Christmas Tree Competition, where our tree was decorated with candy canes, an angel, copies of Victorian Christmas cards and old photographs of the town.



The angel on our tree

New Blood Needed

Following Marj Berresford's move to North Wales your Committee needs to find a replacement to help with the running of our Society. We usually meet once a month for about one hour and help organise our monthly talks and other events which we arrange occasionally. No previous experience of Committee work is required. If you are interested and would like to contribute to improving our Society or if you have any queries about the role please have a word with any committee member.

Talks for 2016

24 February (AGM)-Mal Powell
'The Senghenydd Connection'

16 March-Robin Williams
'Social Housing, Port Sunlight, Bournville and Pontywaun'

20 April-David Cartwright
'Hughesovka, A Welsh Adventure'

18 May-Brian Davies
'The Story of a Steamboat'

15 June-Roger Reese
'Tal-y-llyn, Forgotten Railway Village'

21 September-Adrian Cook
'The History of the Grwyne Fechan Valley'

19 October-Robert Gant
'Abandoned Dwellings of the Black Mountains'

16 November-Elizabeth Sibery
'A Crickhowell Crusader and the Legends of History'

All held at Parish Hall 7.30pm

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