



Crickhowell and District History Society

Newsletter No. 16~ Winter 2017



Chairman's Introduction

Welcome once again to our winter newsletter and a big thank you to all who attended our talks over the course of the year.

As usual, we have tried to incorporate talks from old friends and introduce some new speakers. This season, our guests have introduced us to a wide range of interesting local, national and international topics.

Thanks must also go to our Society's President, Robin Williams, for his continued support and expertise. Next, of course, to my colleagues on the committee, who have worked so hard this year to ensure that the facilities are readied for the presentations to take place and to all those who assist in helping us to pack away at the close of proceedings. It is much appreciated. We are always on the lookout for new members on the committee so if you think you'd like to help out, please get in touch.

We look forward to welcoming you all to the Parish Hall for next year's programme of talks which is detailed elsewhere in this newsletter.

May Christmas be all that you wish it to be, and I hope the New Year brings health and happiness.

Compliments of the season to you all

Mal Powell

Our Autumn Talks

The ever-popular and informative Chris Barber began our Autumn season with a fascinating talk on the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal. He was followed in October by Geoff Williams with his meticulously-researched history of his home Penheolrhyn. The season was rounded off with Malcolm Meadows' multimedia presentation on World War One at sea and the poignant account of the sinking of the "*Lusitania*."



Interesting website

The Society received an email from Mr. David Denison which stated;

"During a recent visit to old friends at Llangattock, my partner & I prepared a small Memorial website which may be of some interest to you and your Society". The address of the page to which he referred is

<http://www.miles-hall.wales/>

and is a history of the Miles family and Miles Hall in Llangattock. It is a fascinating story and the site, both real and online, is well worth a visit.

Some Statistics

Our attendance book shows that we had 158 people present at our talks this year (125 members and 33 non members). This is just 2 short of an average of 20 for each meeting. Non-members accounted for just under 20% of our attendees.

Update on the Lych Gate Appeal

The fund raising for the restoration of the Lych Gate has been very successful. Currently 80% of the total project costs have been received and all the funds necessary to carry out basic renovation on the structure are now available. The contract to rebuild the structure will be let shortly with work beginning in the Spring next year. Fund raising will continue and if members wish to contribute a donation bucket is located in Webbs - any size of donation is most welcome.

Gwernvale Chambered Tomb

A further e-mail was sent recently regarding the poor state of the Neolithic cairn at the foot of the Manor Hotel drive, but no further news has been received at the time of this publication.

Talks for 2018

Our AGM features a talk by Dr Naylor Firth on John Upton, whose prowess as a civil engineer was somewhat overshadowed by his criminal activities. Our programme moves from the first century, with Jeremy Bosanquet on the Romans in the Usk Valley, to the twentieth with Mel Warrender explaining why the steelworks was built in Ebbw Vale. Closer to home, Will Davies, from Cadw, will present his talk on Crickhowell Castle which had to be postponed from this year and Society member, Eric Gower will tell us about the war memorial in St Edmund's church. Three of our regular contributors return, with Brian Davies explaining his role in establishing the Big Pit Mining Museum and our President, Robin Williams, takes us to sunnier climes with a talk about ancient armaments in Malta. Our final talk takes place shortly after the hundredth anniversary of the armistice which ended World War 1 and, appropriately, Malcolm Meadows will be telling us about the role of women in the war.

The dates of the talks are as follows

21 February (AGM) Dr Naylor Firth
"John Upton, Genius or Rogue?"

21 March Will Davies
"Crickhowell Castle, Its History & Buildings"

18 April Brian Davies
"Big Pit, The Making of a Mining Museum"

23 May Eric Gower
"The Copper, the Screen and the Chiming Bells - The Story of a War Memorial"

20 June Robin Williams
"The Biggest Gun You Ever Saw"

26 September Jeremy Bosanquet
"The Romans and the Usk Valley"

24 October Mel Warrender
"Why Ebbw Vale?"

21 November Malcolm Meadows
"The Role of Women in World War 1"

All held in the Parish Hall and commence at
7.30 pm

Forthcoming Visit

Earlier this year, we had an e-mail from "Tours of Excellence" who intend to bring a party of visitors to the town next June. Here is an extract from the message

"I am writing on behalf of the Howell family, who would like to meet a member of the Crickhowell Historical Society, as below;

Date – Thursday 7th June

Time – 2:45pm

Requirements – talk on the Coat of Arms and a tour of the town

Numbers – approx. 26 people

Below is a paragraph that the family has sent us;

We are interested in any information about the Welsh history or heraldry of our particular Howell Coat of Arms. As Coats of Arms had to be registered, is there an organization or a body of information in Wales which could shed more light on our ancestry through the origins of our particular Howell Coat of Arms? Our Howell Coat of Arms (with the three castles not the one with the lions or the dragon) comes from the North of Wales. Our motto is Tenax Propositi. Is there anything the Welsh entities know which could link us through William back to this Howell line?"

The tour of the town will present no problem for us, but we are a bit stuck on the heraldic question. Can anyone help us out, or advise us where we might seek answers to help the Howell family?

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Please visit us and sign our guestbook

