

BRYNMAWR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS UPDATE

March 2019

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The officers and committee of the society for 2019 are as follows:

OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN 2018: Nicholas Beswick
Vice Chairperson:
Secretary: Eifion Lloyd Davies
Treasurer: John Child

Committee Members are as follows:

Ann Axford Hywel Axford
Merryl Caleb Roy Fowler
John Hill David Morgan

Three new members co-opted are June Evans, Carol Morgan and Diane Downey.

The committee would like to thank Carol and June for their work over the last few years as auditors but sadly they have decided to retire from auditing so we are currently looking at two new auditors.

It's been six months since the last Newsletter but as was stated at the end of the previous copy ...**and finally, if you have any news for the Update then please e-mail them or hand them to the secretary at the next meeting.**

Nothing came through so please let me have some of your historical news and snippets. The News Update is also available on our web site: (See above).

Don't forget our annual Christmas Buffet following the December meeting. The talk is "Being Santa Claus" and is given by Roger Morgan. The buffet will be provided by Amie

Occasions who delivered such a wonderful buffet last December.
amioccasions@gmail.com

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY. 2019 DAY VISIT

Luncheon Club. Wednesday, April 24th 2019.

During 2019 our visits will continue as normal including the Luncheon club. This has always proved very successful in the past, it was just unfortunate that 2018 didn't take off partly due to the fact we couldn't think of somewhere to go. For this year's Luncheon Club we are visiting The Royal Mint at Llantrisant with lunch at the Llantrisant and Pontclun golf club.

We have been organising a week away holiday in Britain and on the Continent for over 30 years, the first in 1985 joined with the Gilwern Wine & Beer Circle. Ann and Merryl have taken over the organising of these breaks but you can also help by giving them suggestion of places to visit for a week. Everyone is looking forward to our society's visit to Paignton in April. This year some of our members will be departing for, what we anticipate will be an enjoyable time for all. As in the past five years we will be joining a trip organised by a local travel company. We are always sat together in one section of the coach, so there is much conversation and laughter on the journey! This will be the fifth time that we have joined an organised break as it has proved very successful. We have in the past visited Scotland (Oban in 2015), Llandudno (2016), Newquay (2017) and Caernarvon (2018). The hotels we have stayed at have always been comfortable (some very comfortable). This year, the hotel in Paignton comes highly recommended. We believe that these short holidays are a success

not only because we know each other and enjoy each other's company but also we have the support of friends who all share our enjoyment in seeing new places. There is also the pleasure of sitting down together at mealtimes and talking about what we have seen during the day. Our day usually ends with a walk and finally we end the evening in the "bar" with a nightcap so why not join us on our next short break?

June 1874, a Black Week at Brynmawr!

You may think that we are on our way to hell in a handcart these days but spare a thought for the second week in June 1874 when all news from Brynmawr was truly shocking.

The body of a young lady, 23 years old was pulled out of the Brynmawr reservoir. Her name was Mary Charles from the Clydach Dingle. It appears she had been missing since the previous October since the discovery of the body of a newly born baby in a small bush on the mountain side not far from the home of Mary's mother. Mary had recently arrived home from service in Wellington, in Gloucestershire and had agreed with a Mrs. Evans to be taught the craft of sewing. Mary was accused of abandoning the baby and the police had questioned Mrs. Evans who insisted that she had no reason to believe Mary was guilty. Sergeant Wilson visited Mary's mother leaving the accused with Mrs. Evans. While the police were gone Mary asked if she could go to the shop and she was not seen alive again except by Mr. Jacob Morgan from Katw Farm in Clydach Dingle, he'd seen her going towards the reservoir in the direction of Llangattock. They searched and eventually it was thought she had gone to America but nobody thought she had drowned herself. Following the inquest her body was laid to rest in Llanelli Church

Quite a few were sent to jail at Brecon, tried before the town's magistrates that included a certain Mr. C. Bailey. They were tried for a number of misdemeanours and jailed in the hope they would learn to behave within the society they lived. Mary Pritchard was jailed for a month for stealing clothes; another a Collins for fighting and breaking Will Doctor from Sirhowy's leg; Mary Anne Williams, better known as Mary Anne the Navy was deferred for a week whilst further information was gathered against her for stealing from a visiting traveller in the Eagle pub in Brynmawr.

Mary Anne is of the family of the devilish woman known as Hairy Mary from Dowlais but who's lived in this town for years.

To top it all, during a prayer meeting at the Baptist Chapel in Garnfach, Nant y Glo the balcony collapsed on to the old ladies below with numerous injuries with possibly one death as a result.

News report from 1874 June 12th Y Tyst a'r Dydd.

If you come across any interesting snippets like the above then please let's share it with our members.

Nicholas Beswick, our chairman, is raising funds for Combat Stress, the Armed Forces mental health charity, by undertaking their March in March challenge. Although service veterans overall have better mental health than the general population, many suffer from devastating conditions as a result of their service, especially post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Combat Stress provides veterans with access to specialist support and therapy, and now has a 24 hour confidential helpline. This year is the charity's centenary and therefore a time to recognise everything it has done over the years. Although the March in March is a ten mile challenge, Nicholas is undertaking the Crickhowell Walking Festival's event on 16 March – eighteen miles over the Black Mountains! Our speaker in February, David Llewellyn, contributed his fee to the charity, the committee have agreed to contribute and you can do the same on this link:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/nicholas-beswick1>

The committee is applying for some funding as we need to update all of our equipment, e-mails have sent out asking for help to decide topics you would like talks on, places you would like to visit and this plea will be repeated at our meetings. Please give us some of your suggestions by letting the secretary know by e-mail or at the monthly meetings.

Next News Update in September (hopefully).
