

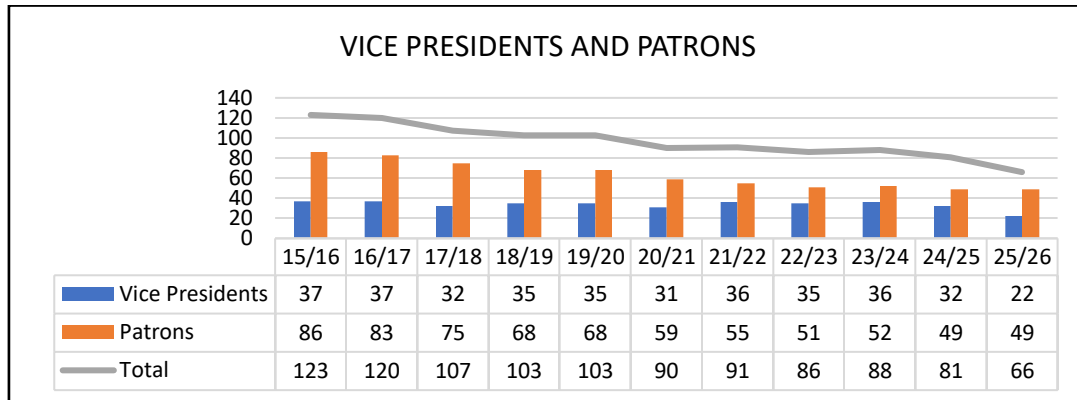
Brynmawr Museum and Historical Society

Annual Report

For the Year 1st April, 2024 To 31st March, 2025

Membership

A sincere thank you to all those who have renewed their membership and those ex-Historical members who have now become Vice Presidents and Patrons. The chart below shows a steady decline in membership and hopefully this year more members can be attracted and we can reverse the decline.



Note; Year 25/26 shows renewed membership received up to March 31st 2025 and is expected to increase.

Committee Members (8)

Currently the committee is made up of;

Nicholas Beswick (Chair), Geof Andrews (Vice Chair), John Hill (Treasurer) Ann Axford, Merryl Caleb (Lectures and Events Secretaries), June Evans (Minute Secretary, Hywel Axford, John Davies.

There are vacancies on the committee and if you would like to become a involved you will be more than welcome.

Volunteers (17)

There have been some changes in volunteers and their duties post-Christmas with some wanting to reduce the hours worked. We now have a Rota for coffee mornings which is working extremely well. The committee would like to welcome and thank three new volunteers, Gill Nicklin and Mel Teague who have joined the Coffee Rota and Elizabeth Miles who helps out during Museum opening hours.

Below is a list of the volunteers without whom the Museum couldn't function. We are still looking for more so if anyone is interested you would be made very welcome.

Coffee Morning Volunteers

Ann Axford, Merryl Caleb, Marge Holley, Maureen Hopkins, Gill Nicklin, Mel Teague, June Evans.

Reliefs

Thelma Hill, Judy Beswick, Nicholas Beswick

Museum Opening Hours Volunteers

Sandra Plaister, Judith Pearce, Vivienne Williams, Merryl Caleb, Thelma Hill, John Davies, Terry Phillips, Alan Michael, Marie Collie, Ann Hardwicke, Margaret Miles.

Reliefs

Ann Axford, Elizabeth Miles

Monthly Lectures Volunteers

David Morgan, Roy Fowler, Geof Andrews

Dissolving and Restoring the Company

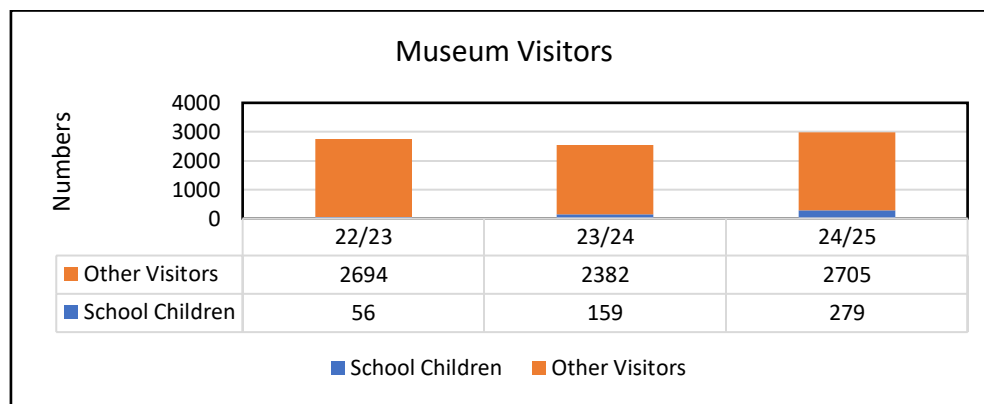
At last year's AGM it was agreed to dissolve the company due to the increasing administration costs of running the Society as a Company Limited by Guarantee. A firm called "Online Filings" were appointed to negotiate with Companies House on the dissolution of the Company. This proved to be a major mistake as was discovered in August 2024 when contrary to advice given by "OnLine Filings" our bank accounts were closed and our assets frozen. This came to light following notification that a direct debit had not been paid to British Gas and that the £2.3k that was in our current account and the £5.2k that was in our deposit account had been seized by HMRC Treasury. Lloyds Bank confirmed that this was standard practice when a company was "struck off". The £15k that we had in a Fixed Term ISA was still held by Lloyds Bank as it hadn't matured. It was due to mature in September but because we now didn't have a bank account Lloyds Bank agreed to extend the term of the ISA until we had opened a new bank account. Fortunately, during this period the Society had access to the Historical Society's Bank account and were able to pay the bills. The new account was finally opened at the end of September and the £15k Fixed ISA along with interest was paid into the new account (£15.5k).

So began the long and arduous journey of trying to recover the seized funds, Because the company was dissolved voluntarily a Court Order had to be acquired to begin the process of restoring the Company, and an application was lodged with Newport Civil Court for an order to begin the process. The Treasurer attended Court on the 4th October but the Hearing was adjourned because the Judge requested some additional information. The Treasurer attended Court again on the 4th December when the order to begin the process of restoring the Company was granted and a copy of the order was sent to Companies House and to HMRC Treasury Solicitors. Companies House required more information from the Court which the Treasurer obtained from the Clerk of the Court and forwarded it to Companies House and HMRC Treasury Solicitors. In January HMRC Treasury Solicitor insisted on an extension to the original Court Order which the Court granted and was passed on to them. In March a Draft Order was received from HMRC Treasury Solicitor along with a Waiver letter which in effect said they have no objections to restoring the Company. This has been passed to Companies House and at the time of writing we are still awaiting their response.

Because the Company was struck off it was also struck off the Charity Commission register.

Visitors to the Museum

The following chart shows that since the pandemic the number of visitors to the Museum is slowly increasing and more encouraging is the increase in the number of school children who have visited.



Exhibitions

A very successful WW2 exhibition was held to mark the 80th Anniversary of D Day. 332 people visited the exhibition including 133 schoolchildren from 3 local schools.

In February pupils from Brynmawr Foundation School visited the Museum and did an exercise on WW1 and WW2. Due to inclement weather when more pupils were unable to visit our Chair Nicholas visited the school and took along some artifacts. The School were very grateful.

The Museum hosted a mobile exhibition in June on the lives of those people who arrived in the UK on HMS Windrush.

Lectures

Merryl and Ann have done excellent work in securing speakers for the year, thanks also to our Chair, Nicholas and our Vice chair, Geof for stepping in when booked speakers couldn't make it.

A "Minnie Pallister" reception and refreshments was held in the Museum prior to the September lecture on her achievements, 80 people attended the Museum before moving on to the Market Hall where a purple plaque was unveiled by Mark Drakeford MS. The

party then moved on to the Social Club to hear a talk by Alan Burge who has written a book on the life and achievements of Minnie Pallister. Alun donated a copy of his book to the Museum.

Thanks to Alyson Tippins, BGCBC for funding the Buffet.

Visits

Ann, Merryl and Thelma have made a number of visits to Care Homes this year. These include Plasgeller and Brynmawr in Brynmawr and Penybont in Abertilly.

Annual Lunch and Buffet

Another very successful and enjoyable lunch was held at The Hall in Gwehelog on the 23rd October, thanks to Merryl and Ann for the arrangements.

The annual buffet was held in the Social Club prior to the December lecture, thanks to Carl's Catering for supplying the Buffet.

Bridgend Quakers

The friends of the Bridgend Quakers very kindly donated a table and two dining chairs of Brynmawr Furniture. They will in the near future visit the Museum.

Building Maintenance

Following more work on flushing out the radiators the new boiler is now heating the building satisfactorily. As can be seen in the Treasurer's report heating costs, although still high show a considerable improvement.

The damage to the corner of the building caused by a stolen car crashing into it is still being assessed by BGCBC.

Appreciation

The Society would like to sincerely thank once again the following, apologies if anyone has been omitted;

1. Firstly, our loyal members for continuing to support our efforts not only financially but also by attending our Coffee Mornings, Lectures and Exhibitions.
2. Members of the public for donating and loaning artifacts.
3. BGCBC for leasing us the Carnegie Library Building and for its upkeep.
4. The Brynmawr Social Club for the use of their facilities to hold our Historical lectures.
5. Brynmawr Town Council and Borough Councilors for their donations.
6. Alyson Tippings, Tourism Officer, BGCBC for support both financially and personally.
7. The Brynmawr Institute for allowing us the use of a store room.
8. Cllr Wayne Hodgins for logistical assistance
9. Mr Jeff Williams our Webmaster who with the amalgamation of the 2 Societies worked tirelessly on a new webpage.