

## Secretary's Statement – June 2023

It has been over a year since I last wrote a statement as to the state of our society and I am pleased to say that things are beginning to look up ever since our restart after lockdown. Sadly during that dreadful time we lost some members and friends and our sympathies are with the families. Lately our membership has started to increase and we welcomed some new members to bolster those that returned after the COVID lockdown. In the same way we have welcomed some new speakers to the society and I think they have helped to improve our membership. But, a low membership means fewer fees so it has been decided to increase our price to £8 per annum which we think is still very reasonable. We've also re started our day visits and also a week's holiday to different places. We had a wonderful day out at the Nant Garw pottery and I would recommend the visit to anyone who has yet to experience the place.

Next year will be the 50<sup>th</sup> year since the Brynmawr Historical Society was started so celebrations are called for. It has already been suggested we have a dinner with a well know speaker to follow. The first talk was given in March 1974 but the first official meeting was in September 1974. In those days (those long ago days) the society was known as "The North East Blaenau Gwent Historical Society" because it incorporated the villages of Gilwern, Clydach and Llanelli Hill, (all three are now in Monmouthshire), but as other historical societies started nearby it was decided to change the name to "The Brynmawr Historical Society".

I am also pleased to report that the society is being contacted by many readers of our website looking for information about the area, families who came from Brynmawr and other topics and recently there has been a huge increase in people accessing the website of which we are rightly proud. We try our best to help but sometimes the information just isn't available.

Your friendly neighbourhood secretary.