

BRYNMAWR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS UPDATE

January/February 2021.

www.brynmawrhistoricalsociety.org.uk

e-mail brynmawrhistsoc@gmail.com

Well, we made it to 2021 and we now have the COVID jab to look forward to. Let's hope it does change things for the better and I can wish you all a very Happy New Year. Hopefully we will be able to reopen the society by April, just in time before our summer recess! We have no idea as yet if any restrictions will be in place, whether we will still need to wear a face covering or if we will still need to sit 2 meters apart. Time will tell us. Meanwhile I will be contacting our missed speakers from 2020 to see if any are still available to visit us at Brynmawr.

Now some help from you. I'm currently looking to put together a history of Saxon Pop. I know so many of you will have your memories of the beverages sold, some of you may well have photographs of bottles (glass or stone), the weekly deliveries, the factory itself in fact anything associated with Saxon pop. There are some artefacts and photos in the Brynmawr Museum and you can also view these online at;

<https://www.brynmawrmuseum.org.uk/copy-of-permanent-exhibits-one?lang=en>

The Brynmawr and Nant y Glo facebook page also has some comments about Saxon Pop so do check that out if you can/ Saxon Pop was not the only "Botanical Brewery" in Brynmawr, there was also Lester & Co based in Bailey Street. (I have a photo of a bottle but can't find any details about the business).

This is a follow up to the last News Update and the article about June Warren Green who taught music at the Board School. I have been

told that she was very glamorous and all the boys thought she looked like

Marilyn Monroe. Which brings me to my all time favourite film; "Some like it hot" with Jack Lemon, Tony Curtis and of course Marilyn Monroe. In the film they ask her which school she went to and her reply was: "Bryn Mawr". That school was founded in 1885 and it has nothing to do with our town.

It was named after a farm near Dolgellau which was owned by Evan Ellis who was a strong Quaker leader in North Wales. In 1681 Welsh Quakers bought 40 acres of land in Pennsylvania which is where the famous School, Bryn Mawr can be found.

I'm sure you have all heard of Job's (Joby's) Pitch which sadly is no more. It was the road leading down from the old Blackrock Road to the Bridge End Inn. The road was supported by arches and Job ran a Horse slaughtering business under one of the arches hence Joby's Pitch. But who was Job? --His name was Job Davies, he was married to Emma Davies and they possibly had two boys, Henry and Robert. Most of what I can find about Job is through court reports; anything you can add will be gratefully received.

In 1865 he was charged by a Martha Vaughan with having committed an assault upon her at Brynmawr, Job pleaded not guilty but Martha's evidence satisfied the bench that Job had not only used language said to create unpleasantness between Martha and her husband (who is not named) but Job also pushed her down in the road. The bench fined him 5/- (5 shillings is 25p today though in those days it was quite a sum) with 7/- costs. In March 1866 we find Job again in court but this time he was the plaintiff as James Hodge

and Joseph Parfitt were charged with committing an assault on Job Davies at the Pelican Beerhouse, (the Pelican stood on the corner of Bailey Street and Worcester Street). The bench dismissed the case and ordered Job Davies to pay the costs.

In March 1875 it's not Job that's up in court but his son Robert who was charging William and Jane Smith (brother and sister) with assaulting him on the 18th of March. It appears that Robert had bought a dog off William but when he went to fetch the dog William Smith refused to let him have it. Robert went to untie the dog when, as he alleged, William Smith struck him with his wooden arm and the sister used a stick on him as well. Robert's mother (Emma Davies) confirmed what had happened. Thomas Jones (?) was called for the defence and said that Robert Davies struck William first. The court bound all the parties over in their own recognisances of £5 each and to keep the peace for three months.

In June 1875 it was the turn of Emma Davies, Job's wife to be charged with being drunk. This time Job appeared for his better half and in reply to the bench said his wife had had a little drop that morning and was not in a fit state to appear before their Worships. The Bench said it was sad for the defendant to be continually summoned in this way; the last time she appeared was only about a month ago. In her absence they fined her 20/- and costs. This Job paid at once remarking "Oh, that's not much". Interestingly, this time the newspaper start their report with the words "Job again" which gives the impression that Job was continually being charged with something. Job (horse dealer of Brynmawr) was this time charged with assaulting Thomas Watkins of Gilwern. On the 31st of July Thomas was on his way to Tredegar and called in the Bush Inn on King Street for a pint of beer. He was immediately collared by Job and his legs knocked from under him. Police Constable Williams was called to prove that Watkins was sober on the occasion. Job, when the assault was committed was under bonds to keep the peace, himself in £5 and one surety in £5 which was now estreated. Job was again detained. (*Estreat is to make a copy from a legal record in order to prosecute somebody*)

By 1876 it was the turn of Henry Davies, son of Job. Henry was out on bail and was charged

with stealing a wheelbarrow, the property of the Nantyglo and Blaina Iron Co. Mr Plews (of Merthyr) was the prosecutor and Mr George Jones defended. After the two learned gentlemen consulted it was decided to treat the case as a trespass and on Henry pleading guilty he was fined 6/- damage, a fine of 5/- and cost. This time Job was not in court, but at a meeting held on 5th of May 1877 the local Board who met to discuss further the horse slaughtering problem. They decided it was a dangerous nuisance and must be removed but Job was still carrying on his business because in 1882 (five years later) Job was fined £3:13:6d. He had been according to Joseph Wilson, the inspector for the local Board slaughtering horses without a licence.

Move forward to 1885 and at the police court Job Davies was again charged with permitting a nuisance on his premises. This was a case adjourned from the previous meeting of the court and the evidence given at the last court was read out which was to the effect that a quantity of putrid horse flesh was found under an archway of a bridge rented by Job. Mr Wilson the inspector to the local Board said that Job had been carrying on his business for about 16 years but had been repeatedly served with notices from the Board to abate the nuisance. This time due to the business having commenced prior to the passing of the act it was agreed to adjourn the case for three weeks to enable the local Board to employ a solicitor to conduct their case.

I have not yet found what happened but when I do you'll be the first to know. I always had the impression there was some sadness to the loss of the name Joby's Pitch but from what I've been reading it could not have been nice for anyone living nearby. As for Job, well you can make your own mind up as to what sort of character he was.

For the above article I used the following:

Monmouthshire Merlin 10th March

South Wales Daily News 25th May 1875

The Cardiff Times 12th June 1875

South Wales Daily News 17th August 1875

The Cardiff Times 10th June 1876

Pontypool Free Press and Herald of the Hills
5th May 1877

The Cardiff Times 27th May 1882

The Cardiff Times 12th September 1885

The Secretary