



Gelligaer Times

Newsletter of the Gelligaer Historical Society

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www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk

September 2013

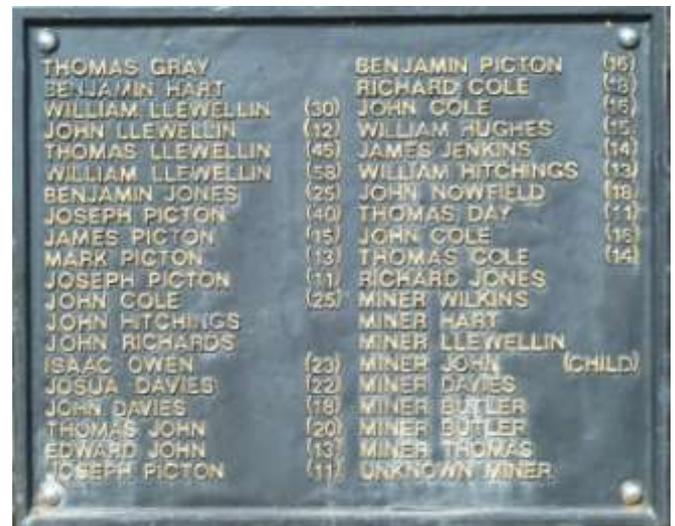
Message from the Chair

I wrote the last message during an exceptionally cold spell of March weather and today, as I write this message, there is a clear blue sky and a distinctly Mediterranean heat, all part of what has been the best summer weather for some years.

At the recent AGM I reported on another successful season for GHS in 2012-2013 and recorded my thanks to all whose efforts contributed to that success. The officers and committee to serve 2013-2014 are listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

If you haven't already got it, the 2013-2014 programme is included in this newsletter and also appears on the Society's website www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk I am sure that you all join me in thanking David Mills for his hard work in preparing such a varied series of talks. You will notice that our December meeting continues the practice of recent years and, if you are able to make a contribution to that evening, please contact a committee member by the October meeting (30 October). You will also notice a departure from the Society's evening talks in January when we are experimenting with a morning meeting. Perhaps some of those present may wish to purchase lunch at Llancaiach Fawr after the talk is over. Another change in the coming year is to move the one day conference from October to March.

Elsewhere in this issue you will read about some of the other activities in which the Society is involved, including an exciting Roman Archaeology project in Gelligaer and research into the World War I era. There are also some photographs of the memorial at Landshipping (Pembrokeshire) that was mentioned by Dr. Robert Ll. Davies, M.B.E. in his talk *The National Parks of Wales* (March 27 2013)._



Hope readers of Gelligaer Times have been able to get out and about during the good summer weather and that you will be able to come along to some of our 2013-2014 activities.

Annie

GELLIGAER HISTORICAL SOCIETY BAG

Gelligaer Historical Society thanks members Ruth and Neil for this photograph of a GHS Bag on a recent city break in Market Square of Bruges.

Has your GHS Bag been to any interesting places? If so, the editor of *Gelligaer Times* will be pleased to hear from you.



HERITAGE DAY AT HENGOED BAPTIST CHURCH

Gelligaer Historical Society organised a very successful Heritage Day at Hengoed Baptist Church on Saturday May 25. The weather was favourable and visitors, from near and far, included the local Ramblers Group, Jeff Cuthbert AM, Glamorgan County Archivist and Secretary of Glamorgan County History Society. Some visitors were attracted by the varied organised activities while others seized this opportunity to view the interior of this chapel that holds an important place in the history of non-conformity. The displays were impressive: not only were the extensive records of Hengoed Baptists available but also Hengoed Primary School history project was on show. The Society's draft programme for 2013-2014 was available but, if you missed it, it appears in this newsletter or you can check on www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk to find the dates for your diary. A PhD student from Cardiff University mingled with visitors to discuss her research on the history of cinema in the area and Society vice chair Judith Jones ensured that refreshments were available.

The first presentation of the day was Welsh for Family Historians (led by C. Jones). After a short introduction to Welsh words and phrases commonly used on gravestones, he took the group of some twenty or so people outside to look at the Welsh language on the grave stones. After this N. Davies led a similar number of people on a guided nature walk around the church yard, finding some interesting flora and fauna including Common Vetch, Birds Foot Trefoil, Wild Strawberry, Knapweed and Lady's Mantle. A Small Tortoiseshell Butterfly was seen and under a corrugated sheet, two Slow Worms were found at one end with a Toad and two little ones at the other. Numerous soil mounds contained Red Ants. The youngsters in the group particularly liked the Slow Worms. By 2 pm, the chapel filled for the main event, a talk by Dr. E. Wyn James, Reader in School of Welsh Cardiff University and co-Director of Cardiff Centre for Welsh American Studies, who spoke on Morgan John Rhys and his American Diary. Morgan John Rhys was born in Graddfa and, before he went to America in the late 18th century, he had worshipped in Hengoed Baptist. The eagerness with which members of the audience asked questions after the talk bears testimony to the interest generated.

Gelligaer Historical Society thanks everyone, members and visitors, who helped make the day such a success, and in particular extends thanks to everyone associated with Hengoed Baptist Church for hosting the event and the Headteacher (and her colleagues) of Hengoed Primary School for their display and the use of their car park.

GELLIGAER HISTORICAL SOCIETY WORLD WAR I COMMEMORATION PROJECT

The Society's researches relating to the World War I era continue to shed light on contemporary life and work in the local area as well as uncovering some of the remarkable stories associated with local people serving in the war. If you have a family story relating to the war or know of a war memorial in a local building, please contact the website www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk

ROMAN ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT

Representatives of Gelligaer Historical Society have attended a meeting organised by the Caerphilly County Borough Council to discuss community involvement as part of the Council's planning application to extend the cemetery at Gelligaer. Initial surveys have indicated that the area need a more detailed study before any further work can be done. Dr Peter Guest of Cardiff University was instrumental in getting GHS involved in the scheme. The outcome of the meeting was to proceed with a project that will involve the local schools and the local community. Starting on Tuesday 17th September 2013 four schools will visit Gelligaer, one school per day. School children will have a talk about the Romans in Gelligaer and then more practical demonstrations will take place. It is planned that they see the geophysical equipment being used and also they will have a chance to dress up as Romans. Graham Oxlade will dress up in his Roman uniform and the children will take part in a Roman drill on the lawn of the Rectory (this was the site of the parade ground at the fort)

ON FRIDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2013 there will be a community event. At present the plans are:-

Roman Homes workshop by GGAT, Replica Roman clothes, Gladiator display, Roman metal armour sets, display of objects found by Mal Jones. Graham Oxlade will try and identify any finds (not just Roman) that locals may care to bring along.

GHS will also have display stands in the hall illustrating the history of fort and Gelligaer Village and surrounding area. This is a great opportunity for the Society to raise its profile and if anyone has any photographs or stories about Gelligaer can they please forward them to Greg at the web site. Any member wishing to get involved can contact David Mills or Clive Andrewartha. There will be a guided tour around the fort site at about 5.00 pm and at 6.00 Peter Guest (who currently digs at Caerleon, but will be overseeing some digging at Gelligaer next summer, will give a talk including explaining the results of the geophysics survey.



**GELLIGAER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROGRAMME : 2013-2014**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Topic</u>
September 25 2013	David Cartwright	<i>From Dowlais to Bargoed via Hughesovska</i>
October 30 2013	Mark Baker	<i>History of Ruperra Castle</i>
November 27 2013	Brian Davies	<i>Welsh Paintings of Julius Caesar Ibetson</i>
December 11 2013	Open Evening	(details to be announced)
January 29 2014	Rosemarie Williams	<i>Llancaiach Fawr</i> [11.00 a.m. start]
February 26 2014	Tony Jukes	<i>Rhymney Tramroad North to South</i>
March 26 2014	Robin Williams	<i>Pontypool Japan ware</i>
March 29 2014	Conference	(details to be announced – pre-booking necessary)
April 30 2014	Willie Cross	<i>Tredegar Women – A Beautiful Nuisance</i>
May 28 2014	Lyn Pask	<i>Wales' 9-11*: what happened to the bodies?</i>
June 25 2014	Annual General Meeting	(Short talk to follow)

Gelligaer Historical Society, founded in 1961, concerns itself with the history and heritage of the area covered by the former Gelligaer parish and Gelligaer Urban District Council.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

WHEN? Last Wednesday most months (EXCEPT December [second Wednesday] and July and August [no monthly meeting])

START TIME? 7.00 p.m. (EXCEPT January when it is 11.00 a.m. start)

WHERE? Llancaiach Fawr [CF46 6ER]

Membership for 2013-2014 is £10.

Meetings are open to non-members (who are invited to contribute £2 on the evening)

For further details of GHS events, activities and publications visit www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk

* Abercarn Colliery Disaster September 11 1878

GELLIGAER HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE FOR 2013-2014

Chair	Mrs Annie Owen
Vice-Chair	Mrs Judith Jones
Treasurer	Mr Greg Buick
Webmaster	Mr Neil Todd
Publicity Officer	David Mills
Programmes	Miss Nesta Jones, Mrs Ann Pinch and Dr David Williams
Committee	

New Publications

Readers of *Gelligaer Times* may be interested in *War Underground*, Memoirs of Michael Edmonds, a Bevin Boy in the South Wales Coalfield, published by South Wales Record Society in April 2013.

The first publication of Three Imposters (a publishing house established in 2012) is *Far Off Things*, the first part of the autobiography of Welsh author, Arthur Machen (1863-1947) in which he describes his childhood and youth in the Monmouthshire countryside, and his early years as a struggling writer in London. For further details visit <http://www.threeimpostors.co.uk>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

This Saturday (September 7th) Open Doors Book Fair at Canolfan Soar in Merthyr Tydfil. Gelligaer Historical Society will have a stand from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm.

THURSDAY 12th September 2013 to SATURDAY 14th September 2013. Saint Catwgs Flower Festival at St Catwgs Church Gelligaer. open 10 am to 6 pm and on SUNDAY 15th September 12.30 to 6 pm with songs of praise at 6 pm. Refreshments available at Neuadd Sant Catwg Hall. Entry £2 per adult, child free if with an adult.

Merthyr Tydfil CBC

Ynysfach Engine House...once the scene of Industry in Merthyr Tydfil...is now open to the general public from Monday to Friday, between the hours of 10am and 12pm and 2pm and 4pm. Please contact the Tourist Information Centre on 01685 727474 for more details.