



# GELLIGAER TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF GELLIGAER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

No. 41.

AUTUMN 2019

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This is a short newsletter, produced by GHS Committee in the absence of a newsletter editor. If anyone would like to volunteer to edit the next issue, please contact GHS website to discuss it.

## RECENT EVENTS

**Saturday 18 May** -- GHS was represented at the launch of *Morgan Jones - Man of Conscience* (by Wayne David MP) in Caerphilly (see photograph).

**GHS May meeting** – At the 2018 AGM, GHS Chair suggested an annual Gelligaer Parish talk as a way of helping to meet the stated aims of the Society. This, the first of such talks, was given by Annie Owen and outlined the history of Pantywaun, a small community in north of Gelligaer parish.

*Gelligaer*, the Society's journal, issue 26 carries her article on Pantywaun and district.

**Friday 21 June** -- GHS was represented at Merthyr Historical Society's event in Red House, Merthyr Tydfil, to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of Dr. Fred Holley.

**GHS June meeting** -- GHS members and friends gathered at Llancaiach Fawr at 6 pm to help GHS Life Member, Dr. Fred Holley, celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. The number of people present and the sentiments conveyed in the short speeches reflect the respect the Society has for this valuable longstanding member. He was accompanied by his wife, Vida, and son, John, both of whom have given good service to the Society.



**GELLIGAER HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
CELEBRATES THE 90<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY OF  
LIFE MEMBER  
DR. FRED HOLLEY

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



The AGM followed at 7 pm, after which GHS member Dr. Stuart Broomfield gave an illustrated talk *Dramatis personae in the story of Llewelyn Bren – their fortunes and fate*. A plaque to the memory of Llewelyn Bren will be erected in Gelligaer during winter 2019-2020.

**Wednesday 4 September** – GHS members were among those who gathered in St. Catwg's Church, Gelligaer, for a cheese and wine reception (when the church records were available for local and family history research) before crossing the road to the Church Hall in time for the 7.30 pm start of the performance of *St Catwg and the Drowned Boys*, a play based on the life of St. Catwg.

Written by Welsh playwright Vic Mills and performed by a small group of young actors, the play gave the audience an insight into the life and work of this early saint. The production was sponsored by the University of South Wales.

N.B. – Readers may be interested to know that the church is open most Saturday mornings (between 10 am and noon) if they wish to consult the church records for family and local history research.

**Thursday 5 September** – following an invitation from Ystrad Mynach Library, GHS gave a talk to a large and interested audience in Ystrad Mynach Library at 11.30 am. The talk, focusing on the history of Ystrad Mynach and illustrated by extracts from Yates' map of Glamorgan (1799), parish tithe maps, large scale OS maps (1879, 1900 and 1919), aimed to help residents and others set their



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Studying history and heritage since 1961

[www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk](http://www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk) Gelligaer Historical Society is on Facebook and Twitter

knowledge of the village in its historical context. This was a good opportunity to showcase GHS and its work to the Ystrad Mynach community. Thanks to Helen and Alex of the Library Service for making this possible.

**GHS September meeting** – As this was the opening meeting of GHS 2019-20 session, the evening started with tea/coffee and biscuits at 6.15 pm. Members, both existing and new, as well as visitors, enjoyed some social time and took advantage of the opportunity to buy the new *Gelligaer* Volume 26. At 7 pm, Les James gave his fascinating talk on Chartist, Zephaniah Williams. Les has researched many aspects of the history of Chartism and is an acknowledged master of information about the events and personalities. We look forward to his forthcoming publication which will shed new light on the life and work of Zephaniah Williams.

**Saturday 12 October** -- Thanks to those members of GHS who helped man the stand and represent GHS at Glamorgan Family History Society Annual Fair at Merthyr Leisure Centre. Although it was relatively quiet, GHS sold 10 of its publications and was able to offer constructive help on the local and family history queries of a number of visitors to GHS stand.

**GHS October meeting** – A sizeable audience gathered for the talk by Huw Williams, Dowlais. Delivered with his usual enthusiasm and clarity, the talk was full of information about Peterloo 1819, Merthyr 1831 and Merthyr Chartists 1839.

**Saturday 2 November** – Thanks to the members of GHS who helped man the stand and represent the Society at the 2019 Chartist Convention in St. Woolos Cathedral, Newport.

### **BARGOED EMPORIUM**

The painting *BARGOED EMPORIUM*, a 1980 work by Rhymney-born artist, Olwen Hughes, was gifted to Gelligaer Historical Society by Mrs Christine Findlay, whose grandmother had worked in Bargoed Emporium about a century ago. As reported in *Gelligaer Times* 40, GHS presented the painting to Bargoed Town Council for display in the Town Hall. The Clerk of Bargoed Town Council has sent this photograph which shows it in place. For information on the history of Griffith William Davies and his shop, Bargoed Emporium, see *Bargoed and Gilfach a local history* (Gelligaer Historical Society, 2011).



### **GHS PROJECTS**

**GHS WWI project** closed in winter 2018-19, but the database of names on local war memorials is still on the Society website and any additional information available can be added.

**GHS Diamond project** will run until the Society celebrates this milestone in 2021-22 season. Some members and friends are researching aspects of life and work in various parts of the parish during the nineteenth century in preparation for a publication in Diamond Jubilee year. More volunteer researchers will be welcome. Readers with access to the internet may like to look at some of the websites listed below for information about local people and places in the nineteenth century, a century that saw industrialisation and urbanisation roll southwards through the parish. (N.B. if you do not have internet access at home, it is available in your local library.)



<b>USEFUL WEBSITES</b>	
<b>Website link</b>	<b>What to look at</b>
<a href="https://newspapers.library.wales/home">https://newspapers.library.wales/home</a>	Newspapers 1804-1919
<a href="https://www.ancestry.com/">https://www.ancestry.com/</a>	Genealogy
<a href="https://places.library.wales/">https://places.library.wales/</a>	Parish tithe maps (dated about 1840)
<a href="https://www.library.wales/discover/digital-gallery/printed-material/thebluebooks/">https://www.library.wales/discover/digital-gallery/printed-material/thebluebooks/</a>	The Blue Books (education report 1847)
If you find other useful websites, please send link to <a href="mailto:chairman@gelligaerhistoricalsociety.cco.uk">chairman@gelligaerhistoricalsociety.cco.uk</a> so it can be added to this list in a future newsletter.	

### **Treharris Remembers – Treharris yn Cofio [merthyr.history@gmail.com](mailto:merthyr.history@gmail.com)**

Readers may be interested in this extract from a post on the blog *The Melting Pot*.

A small community group is creating a public record: -

- *to commemorate those people who lost their lives during the 1939-45 World War who were associated with the Treharris Ward area of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough, and who have been recorded in records and on War Memorials throughout the world, as a result of their deaths during that period as a result of enemy actions or whilst in the service of their country.*



- to record information for wider public and educational purposes so that this current generation and future generations will have information and stories to understand how people in their community died in one of the deadliest conflicts in recent history, and the impact on their families and community.
- to produce an exhibition of information, photographs and other media in time for the Commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of the 1939-45 World War, to complete the Project by 4 May 2020.

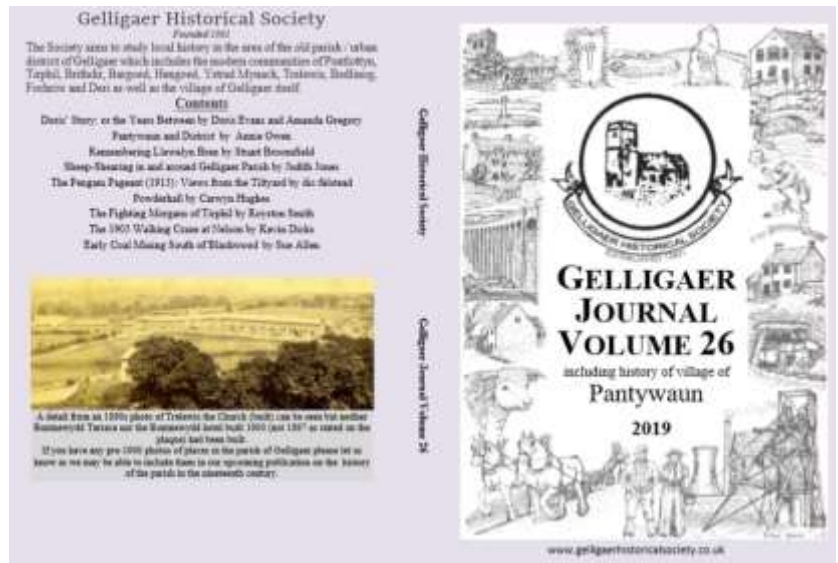
## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

Please see GHS programme 2019-20 at the end of this newsletter.

From time-to-time, GHS is informed of events and activities relating to history and heritage as well as the performing arts. These are frequently announced at GHS monthly meetings but readers who seek up-to-date information and contact details are advised to check the following websites for details:-

- <http://www.merthyr-history.com/> (blog, *The Melting Pot*, about heritage and culture of Merthyr)
- <http://merthyrtidfilheritage.blogspot.com/2013/10/forthcoming-events.html> (calendar of events in Merthyr Tydfil and surrounding area including Rhymney, Merthyr and Cynon Valleys)
- <http://www.mths.co.uk/?LMCL=uuMTAI> (Merthyr Tydfil Historical Society, scroll down for calendar of forthcoming events)
- <https://vanguardcaerphilly.org/> (Vanguard Centre, Van Road URC, Caerphilly – contact 02920 866578 or [Hello@VanguardCaerphilly.co.uk](mailto:Hello@VanguardCaerphilly.co.uk) -- lunchtime and evening concerts)
- <https://glamarchives.gov.uk/> (Glamorgan Archives host some interesting talks)
- <http://www.gwentarchives.gov.uk/> -- (Gwent Archives host some interesting talks and short courses).

## **RECENT PUBLICATIONS**



The most recent *Gelligaer* (Volume 26), now on sale at £5, is available from the usual local outlets and from

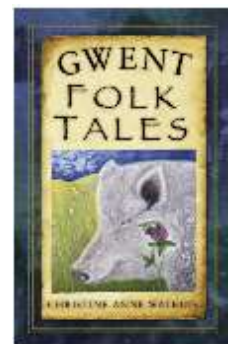
<http://www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk/index.php/ghs-publications>

*Gwent Folk Tales*, by Christine Anne Watkins, available from various shops and online, or

contact [info@christinewatkins.co.uk](mailto:info@christinewatkins.co.uk)

ISBN: 9780750986793

Published by The History Press 23-04-2019



Readers of *Gelligaer Times* may also be interested in the following:-

- <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/politics/boris-johnson-and-jeremy-corbyn-s-ancestors-lived-next-door-to-each-other-in-small-yorkshire-town-1-10008486> (an article entitled *Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn's ancestors lived next door to each other in small Yorkshire town*)
- [https://maps.gisforthought.com/gb\\_population/](https://maps.gisforthought.com/gb_population/) map showing where GB people live.

## **A REMINDER ABOUT DAN SNOW'S WARGEN PROJECT.**

If you have any memories of WW2 or you know someone, a family member, a friend or neighbour, please check out the website and consider participating in this project.



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AND THE ANSWERS TO WHERE IN GELLIGAER IN ISSUE 40



A

Aerial view of Penallta



B

By Gelligaer Fort



C

Hengoed Girls' School



D

Capel Brithdir



E

Ystrad Mynach signal box



Bedlinog Square

Photograph sent in by a reader



This is the stone from a small wooden cheese press, the like of which was used in many local farmhouse sculleries before the mid-twentieth century.





**GELLIGAER HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
Studying the history and heritage of the area covered by  
the former Gelligaer parish and Gelligaer Urban District since 1961  
**PROGRAMME : 2019-2020**

2019	Speaker	Topic
Sept 25	Les James	Zephaniah Williams
	<i>Gelligaer</i> volume 26 will be launched before this meeting (refreshments from 6.15 pm)	
Oct 30	Huw Williams	Merthyr Tydfil and the Heads of the Valleys: 1830s and a Decade of Crisis
Nov 27	Carwyn Hughes	Patagonia, where Welsh meet Spanish, 1865 -2019
Dec 11	A Winter Medley -- Short Portraits of Decembers Past, a quiz and raffle	
	An informal evening with Christmas refreshments	
2020	Speaker	Topic
Jan 29 <u>11.00 a.m. start</u>	Carolyn Jacob and Steve Brewer	A Merthyr Miscellany -- Two talks (one before and one after lunch)
	Lunch can be purchased at Llancaiach Fawr	
Feb 26	Daryl Leeworthy	The Life and Times of Elaine Morgan
Saturday March 21	<b>CONFERENCE</b>	
	Booking essential -- Programme and application form will be available nearer the date	
March 25	Roger Evans	A Victorian Valleys Village School
April 29	Dr. Stuart Broomfield	Pontllytyn and the Irish/Welsh riot of 22 August 1869
May 27	<b>GELLIGAER PARISH LECTURE</b>	
	Judith Jones	140 years of sheep-shearing matches in Gelligaer parish
June 24	A.G.M.	
	Dic Felstead	1913 Pengam Pageant

**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 2019-2020 is £10. Meetings are open to non-members (who are invited -to contribute £2)

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS** of GHS events, activities and publications visit [www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk](http://www.gelligaerhistoricalsociety.co.uk) or follow GHS on Facebook or Twitter

