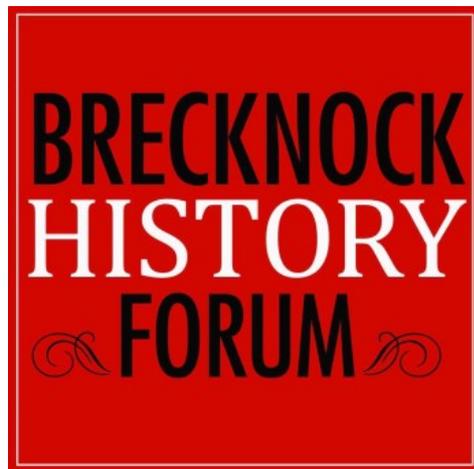




ISSUE 69

August 2020

Editorial



I hope that you have all been keeping safe during the past few months. At last the Coronavirus lockdown is easing and we may be able to get out and about in the sunshine to visit our wonderful landscape, museums and archives, and of course, our loved ones. The articles in this issue will give lots to think about and may inspire your journeys and researches.

Hanes is published every 3 months. The next edition is to be published November 1st 2020. Please email any articles or information about events etc. with the heading "HANES" to alan.j.nicholls@btinternet.com by October 31st 2020

Introducing The Forum

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BRECON LIBRARY

Tel. 01874 62334

BRECONSHIRE LOCAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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BUILTH WELLS & DISTRICT HERITAGE SOCIETY

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CHRIST COLLEGE ARCHIVE

Contact: Felicity Kilpatrick
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**CRICKHOWELL DISTRICT ARCHIVE
CENTRE**

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**CRICKHOWELL & DISTRICT HISTORY
SOCIETY**

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CUSOP HISTORY GROUP

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HAY HISTORY GROUP

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www.Hayhistorygroup.co.uk

www.haytours.co.uk

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LLYN SYFADDAN HISTORY GROUP

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POWYS COUNTY ARCHIVE OFFICE

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www.powys.gov.uk/archives

Tel. 01597 826088

**REGIMENTAL MUSEUM OF THE
ROYAL WELSH**

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**TALGARTH AND DISTRICT
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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**YSTRADGYNLAIS DISTRICT HISTORY
AND LANGUAGE SOCIETY**

Contact: John Owens

johnowens38@talktalk.net

NEWS AND EVENTS

Brecknock Society and Museum Friends

The BS&MF programme for the year beginning April 2020 onwards was to have included a series of sessions in the Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery, (open to all and probably on a monthly basis on a Saturday morning), at which different exhibits/ displays would have been brought into focus. This would link in with the Interpretation Project being run by the Society following a successful application to the Garfield Weston Foundation, which provides information on 46 digital touch-screen terminals distributed through the galleries. For details see <https://brecknocksociety.co.uk/our-work/brecknock-museum/interpretation-project/>

Thus a morning on the exhibits of the Roman period was planned for a Saturday in May with a possible afternoon visit to the Roman y Gaer camp outside Brecon. Another session would have focused on the Courtroom etc.

Inevitably all these plans had to be put on hold but as a boost to morale and to draw on some of the fascinating information that members of the Interpretation project team have unearthed, we decided, as reported in the last issue of Hanes, to

produce a series of e-papers at 3-4 week intervals. These are posted on our website at <https://brecknocksociety.co.uk/brecknock-log-brecknock-society-and-museum-friends-occasional-papers/>.

The first two papers describe exhibits relating to Sarah Siddons in the Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery. The third covers the link between the original Brecon Theatre and charitable causes, while the fourth focuses on Llanhamlach Church, a significant landmark in the Breconshire countryside.



The church of SS Peter and Illtyd in Llanhamlach: more than meets the eye!

Possibilities for the Re-opening of The Museum & Art Gallery

The Society, as a local funding partner, has been seeking the latest information on this from Powys County Council. It is significant that the Welsh Government's recent announcement that museums can

reopen was coupled with a statement on the importance of such a move for the economy.

Peter Starling

Many members of the Brecknock History Forum will already have heard the news of the death of Elaine Starling's husband Peter In Hereford Hospital on July 12th.

Throughout his life, Peter was very much involved in community activities, as well as providing valuable support to Elaine, most recently in her roles with Brecon U3A and the Brecknock Society, and as the 'informal Secretary' of the Brecknock History Forum. By profession a geography teacher, he taught first in London and then, for many years, at Moorside School in Salford. He had a special interest in the field studies of upland areas, in conservation projects and in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. The latter part of his career was spent as an Ofsted inspector, after having been invited to apply for selection.

He gave much service as a school governor and after he and Elaine moved to Elaine's family home in Talgarth, he became a governor, later Chair of governors at Gwernyfed High School. Peter had a great (and eclectic) love for music and was a strong – and practical – supporter of Brecknock Synfonia.

I am sure that you will all join me in sending our sympathy to Elaine at this very sad time.

Crickhowell & District History Society

Crickhowell Agricultural Show 1912

The show took place on fields bordering the River Usk between the current Elvicta Estate and Crickhowell town. The poster advertising the show organised by the Crickhowell Agricultural Association notes that the 28th Annual Show was to be held on Monday 26 August. Entry cost one shilling and prize money of £200 was available. The President was Sir A B Tulloch KCB, CMG of Glaslyn Court and Vice Presidents included The Duke of Beaufort, Lord Glanusk, Lieut-Col Sandeman and Colonel Parkinson. The Great Western Railway Company provided a motor car between Brecon, Crickhowell and Abergavenny and the London and North Western Railway offered cheap tickets to Gilwern.

The Brecon and Radnor County Express (B&R) notes that the summer had been very poor one with much of the hay harvest around Crickhowell being ruined. The show, although receiving record entries for the classes, was plagued by bad weather. The B & R notes that 'the deluge which never ceased for a moment' turned the showground into 'a veritable quagmire' and 'spectators squelched through water and mud.'

Attendances had been falling for

some years. The Society's President and its new Secretary, Mr W V Jones of Clarence Villa, made great efforts to turn matters around but to no avail. The B&R notes that in Crickhowell 'The flags and bunting were there, on Monday only to flap listlessly over rain swept streets but no happy crowds.'

The Committee pressed on with a public luncheon in a marquee on the grounds although speeches were dispensed with. The Blaenavon Templar Prize Silver Band, under its conductor Mr J Bond was reduced to playing its music selections in a tent.

The conditions meant that the stock was not seen at its best but the number and quality of entries showed an improvement over recent years. Judges for the classes came from as far afield as Knighton and Leominster. The prize-winners featured many well known local farming families and the local gentry including Lord Glanusk, Mr Pirie Gordon from Gwernvale and Miss Solly Flood from Porthmawr.

The show was not a financial success. Gate receipts were only £20 and a loss of £120 was incurred. This followed on from a deficit from the show in 1911 and put the future of the show in doubt. A public meeting, chaired by Mr Evans of Ivy Towers was held in the Town Hall to consider how to make good the loss. The Secretary, Mr V W Jones and Mr Harry Beckwith JP, had given a donation of £70 towards the loss on 'the distinct

understanding that the town and district must do something'.

The meeting agreed that a carnival should be held to replenish the Society's funds. This was to be on Friday 27 September and consisted of a parade around Crickhowell and Llangattock led by the Abergavenny Borough Band and the Llangattock Scout Band. The procession numbered over one hundred hundred people and a large crowd lined the route. Participants adopted a variety of costumes including Napoleon, Tommy Atkins and Henry V. The collection taken during the parade amounted to £8. It is not clear from the press reports whether the Committee was successful in clearing the deficit.

Hay History Group

In the last article I gave an overview of several websites that enable a considerable amount of research to be undertaken from home. If you followed the advice you should have a document in chronological order which gives an outline picture of the history of a parish or lordship. You should also have a good indication of who the lords of the parish were, and the owners of the farms, major properties and lands. Often the lords are national figures and they draw income from vast estates across the

country. The records of their involvement in your chosen parish may be mixed up with their estate records associated with their main residence, in private muniment collections or in public archives where their records have been deposited. I find that the best way to research these national figures is to first look online at Wikipedia.com or the Dictionary of National Biography, then hunt down the original references and documents given for particular facts. Most entries in these biographies only give an outline of the individual and the real treasure is in the notes attached to each article. For each parish family I construct a pedigree and follow the parish properties down through generations of the family until they are sold. Many interesting facts will emerge during this process and the temptation to be sidetracked is inevitable and fun.

In the period before about 1650 Inquisitions Post Mortem (IPM) were undertaken on most estates where the deceased had land in more than one parish. These IPM's are held at the National Archives at Kew but many are also transcribed online at <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/search/series/inquis-post-mortem> They can also be found as calendars on <https://archive.org> .

For a large estate each IPM is separated into counties and much detail can be found in them. There are many IPM's for even small landholders.

One of the problems of constructing family trees is that earlier historians have often compiled incorrect pedigrees, so always go back to original sources, wills, deeds, etc. to check each relationship.

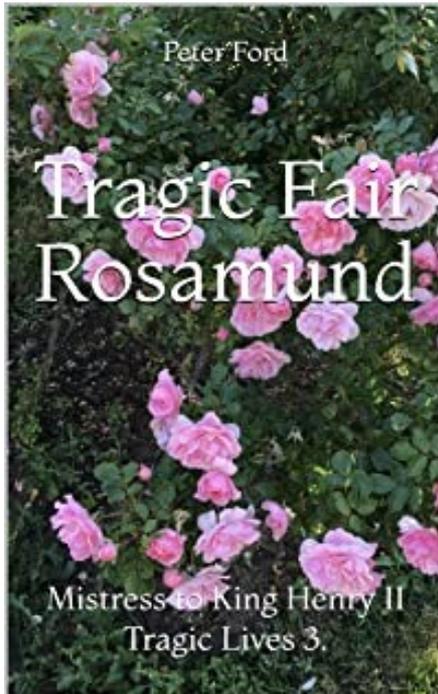
Other places to look for gentry is in the Alumni books for Universities. Oxford alumni from the earliest times to the 17th century were recorded by Anthony Wood and are found in his "Alumni Oxoniensis" and Cambridge University are found in "Alumni Cantabrigienses" both on <https://archive.org>. Records of the Inns of Court in London also have lots of information.

I could continue for a long time about resources but I think the above should give you a very good grounding.

Obviously the online catalogues for various Archives and Libraries will give many interesting leads to manuscripts and records. My best advice is to not take anyone's word but to look at the original documents - especially crucial ones. And above all enjoy your research.

Alan Nicholls

Tragic Fair Rosamund



Peter Ford, a member of the Hay History Group, has recently published the latest of his Tragic Lives local history trilogy. To add to Tragic Matilda: Lady of Hay. The Life of Matilda de Braose, and Tragic Mary Morgan: A victim of social injustice? is Tragic 'Fair Rosamund': Mistress of King Henry II.

While Rosamund lived at Clifford in Herefordshire the Clifford family had Breconshire connections. Rosamund's father Walter Clifford was lord of Bronllys and held land at Glasbury acquired from the monks at the Abbey of Llanthony Secundus. Rosamund's grandfather Richard fitzPons was with Bernard de Neumarche when he invaded the Wye Valley capturing Hay, Glasbury, Bronllys and Brecon, and helped to subdue King Brechan.



Rosamund's Tower at Clifford Castle

There are a few verifiable details about Rosamund's life, she was King Henry's mistress and lived at his palace at Woodstock, but like Matilda de Braose there are a clutch of legends and stories about her. She was named after a rose, she had two children, she lived in a maze, the only way in was with a silken cord, she was poisoned by the evil Queen Eleanor, or was it stabbed?

Is there any truth in them? How did they come about? Why is Rosamund the mistress so idolised, but Eleanor the wronged wife so demonised. This book explores the truth behind the stories, and the myriad of books, poems, plays and pictures that have grown up around this ephemeral heroine.

**Paperback available at [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)
Price £6.99**

Llyn Safaddeu History Group

As we are moving gradually out of lock down our group is looking forward to supporting a Llangors community based initiative drawing together many of the examples of projects completed by community members of all ages during this time. It is hoped that the projects will cover a wide range of outcomes such as; personal diaries, art and craft work, poetry, scrapbooks, family research and other outcomes. More information on this will be shared in future Hanes editions.

Our Memory Bench and diary at the former Talylyn phone kiosk, which is now a small railway museum and heritage centre, has encouraged community members to record their memories of growing up in the local area.

The following extract was written by Mary Kneath. " From four and a half years old I walked the tram road, (Brecon to Hay) and Ash path to catch the train at Talylyn with my sister Sue and friends to Brecon where we went to school. There were lots of children taking the same journey, some sticking their heads out of the `leather belted dropped down` windows, some rocking on the concertina joints between the coaches and some swinging upside down on the ledge of the luggage racks after the guard had gone past. We weren't always on time for the train and often waived at

the driver as he passed us hoping that he would wait for us at the station and if we ran fast enough we would be in luck."

From Sheep to Sugar - Welsh Wool and Slavery Article by Liz Millman, Director: Learning Links International for "Hanes" www.welshplains.cymru

Well, it would have been good to meet up with members to give a talk about this fascinating project but Covid put paid to that! But it's good to reflect on the research activities we undertook during the glorious summer of 2019, when travel was easy, meeting folks for coffee was great and libraries and museums were open. Gosh those were the days!

Learning Links International successfully applied to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to enable our small team of enthusiasts to engage with Community Research Volunteers to find out more about the history of the early woollen industry in Mid Wales and the links that Wales had around the Atlantic. We knew that cloth was woven in Mid Wales specifically for slave traders for use to purchase enslaved people from in West Africa and also to sell on for clothing for the enslaved workforces in the Caribbean and North America. However, few people knew about this hidden history and we wanted to understand more about the practicalities of the production of this woollen fabric, which became well

known as 'Welsh Plains' and was valued for its hard-wearing qualities in countries around the Atlantic.

It's 2020 now, and if we are to have any understanding of the current 'Black Lives Matter' challenges, then to have an understanding of our Welsh / English / Colonial history is key to this. To see Edward Colston's statue toppled is one thing, but to understand how our Welsh ancestors living in the rural valleys of Mid Wales were also implicated in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade takes more research.

Understanding our shared history has never been more important and we need to put our research alongside the other threads:

How much do we know about the activists and the poets in Wales the 1700's who decried slavery in the New World.

Do we have an understanding of the role that Welsh pirates and privateers played in both disrupting and protecting the trade triangle between European ports and West Africa, which was going out and coming back from North and South America and the many Caribbean islands colonised by the European superpowers of the time?

What do we think about the Welsh who left their homeland to cross the Atlantic to find a better life living in someone else's country and then find

records of their ownership of slaves?

All this is hard to come to terms with, as is the knowledge that custom built slave ships were produced in Welsh shipyards, for example J. Geraint Jenkins, in one of his many books 'Welsh Ship and Sailing Men' records that in Pwllheli 'A visitor in 1801 observed: "This little town seems in flourishing condition. I saw a large Guineaman on the stocks, fitted for 600 slaves".'

And as yet, we haven't even spoken of the well-known Welsh plantation owners and small scale slave owners who received compensation for losing their enslaved workforces or the income from the few slaves they had 'shares' in. The database created by the University College of London, 'Legacies of British Slave Ownership' www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs is fascinating and an ongoing development. Just search for 'Wales' under 'addresses' or check out 'Montgomeryshire'.

... but back to the community research project. The 'From Sheep to Sugar' project successfully engaged over 50 Community Research Volunteers. We were fortunate to have a great deal of support from Prof Chris Evans from the University of South Wales. His book '*Slave Wales: The Welsh and Slavery*', is a most informative and easy to read publication, and we were delighted that other advisors and academics from around the world and across the

UK took an active interest.

We found that the late J. Geraint Jenkins, had told the story so clearly in his out of print book *'The Welsh Woollen Industry'* (there are still a few cheap copies going on Amazon!) He tells us that 'Brecknocks' devised their name from the county where they were produced in the sixteenth century ... "and great fortunes were acquired in Brecon and the vicinity by the manufacture of woollen cloth - page 112". Mention is made later that this rough unprocessed "cloth intended for export was usually taken for dyeing by craftsmen employed by the Shrewsbury Drapers' Company before taken to London or Bristol". So clearly in the 1500's there was already evidence of a massive cottage industry with wool being brought into Wales, so great became the demand for this rough cloth that made Wales well known to the rest of the world as producers of 'Welsh Plains'.

J Geraint Jenkins quotes travel writers in the 18th Century, who witnessed the massive cottage industry which was then located further north in Merioneth, Montgomeryshire and Denbighshire. Arthur Aikin reports in his *"Journal of a Tour through North Wales and Part of Shropshire with Observations in Mineralogy and Other Branches of Natural History* (London, 1797) that the " purposes to which webs are applied abroad are various; including the clothing of the slaves in the West Indies and South America

which creates a large demand".

Thomas Pennant, who was a knowledgeable local commentator, reported the use of this cloth for "covering the poor negroes in the West Indies", hence the other, more pointed name: "Negro Cloth".

Our research found that the trade in Welsh woollen cloth was Wales main export in the 1700's. Jenkins clearly identifies the areas where Welsh Plains was specifically produced and told us how important the trade through Shrewsbury became. Then later in the 1700's Jenkins and others reported how 'factors' came to buy cloth directly from weavers to supply the increasing demand of the Liverpool slave traders.

We needed to understand this wider background, to set our focus into context and we engaged people with an interest in the crafts of spinning and weaving to explore just how this cloth would have been produced, then we linked up with people in local areas who had an interest in finding out why there were so many places called 'pandy' or evidence of these fulling mills in certain locations, and why small villages have industrial scale buildings with large windows, many of these now converted ,but still known as the local 'factori'.

We extended an invitation at the 'Wonderwool' show in April and we soon realised that this was a little known story that fascinated people. The project websites are still 'work in

progress' and although the NLHF timeframe has ended and Covid 19 means that the free and easy days of last summer are but a memory, there are still ways that local people can do local research into the little known history of the massive, complex and fascinating cottage industry, which clothed, family, friends and neighbours, but that also enabled the Plantation owners to fulfil their legal requirement to clothe their enslaved workers.

Spinning and weaving were literally cottage industries that engaged everyone in the community and flourished up to the advent of the mechanised looms and the spinning jenny that created the fabulous and famous Welsh cloth of later years. This is a national industry that we need to understand better, and to help our children understand the importance of some of the old buildings found locally, that are often taken for granted.

So, even if you only have your laptop to use for research at present, there is so much information on the internet, check Google, Wikipedia "Welsh Woollen Industry" and our bilingual websites have the film, the PowerPoint story and lots of links: www.welshplains.cymru and if you feel your findings will help us get a better, bigger picture, then please share your findings with us. We need to know more about the use of packhorses for transport, as well as the community use of the cloth. We

need to understand the way trade worked at that time, and we would love to find out more about the process of fulling and the lives of the fullers. We also need to know more about what the impact of the ending of the slave trade meant for the weavers and their families.

I'm sorry that I couldn't join you to tell this story, to answer questions or discuss this fascinating history, but we would be delighted to hear from you via the website

www.welshplains.cymru email me: lizmillman@yahoo.co.uk Stay safe!

This article was written by Liz Millman, Director of 'Learning Links International CIC'. Liz is a shared history researcher with a community education background. Liz has family roots in Anglesey and is a craft worker. She has also worked on community projects in Jamaica many times over the past 20 years and has set up the Jamaica Wales Alliance. Liz was able to lead the project along with fellow LLI Director, Caroline Sansom.

Llangynidr Local History Society

Like most societies our spring and summer planned activities have had to be cancelled, we had a walk around Beaufort in Ebbw Vale, with one of our local historians, and a lovely day planned at Sudeley Castle, both of

these we hope to be able to rearrange very soon. Sadly we have also had to postpone our trip to the D Day beaches and the Normandy memorial, this will be rearranged for Spring 2021.

So with all our spare time we have embarked on a census project, we have taken a snapshot of the village from each census year, collating the ages, birthplaces, occupations, and numbers within households. This has been a fascinating project and throughout a number of families have caught our interest and further research has ensued. Myself, I have delved into the Buckle and Sinnett families, where I have found stories as diverse as the workhouse and Oxford University, I am now waiting for various archive centres and churches to reopen to tie up a number of loose ends, so watch out on our website for the completed family histories. We have also managed to complete the transcription of our churchyard burial records which will now be easily searchable for research enquiries. A program I have thoroughly enjoyed is 'A house through time', as an avid family history researcher it has enthralled me, the amount and depth of research that has gone into this programme is just incredible and I still haven't worked out which comes first, finding the house or starting with a family?

Powys Family History Society

Powys Family History Society

The Powys FHS has since the last edition of Hanes been invited and participated in an On-Line Family History Fair organised by the Genfair organisation, which was different from a normal fair, but well worth the time spent engaging with the general public. Due to the travel restrictions in Wales we have only in the last couple of weeks been able to re-start the recording on Monumental Inscriptions, currently working on Builth and Talgarth churchyards.

We are now, following successful Zoom meetings for committee and general communications starting to look for speakers who can give the society Zoom presentations until we are able to re-start our face-to-face public meetings again. If you are a speaker on local or family history and would be willing to give Powys FHS a talk, contact philbufton@hotmail.com

The Cronicl was published in the normal hard copy, as there was some doubt in May if this would be possible, with life in general getting back to normal, we hope this will continue.



Following approval from Cabinet on 28 July 2020, Powys County Council will be re-opening its Archives and Museum Services, and extending library services. The County Archives will open for booked appointments from the week beginning 3rd August. Radnorshire Museum and y Gaer Museum will re-open from Friday 31st July, and Y Lanfa / The Wharf: Powysland Museum will be open from Saturday 1st August 2020.

To summarise y Gaer Museum we will be open as from tomorrow to visitors for limited hours only.

These hours will be -

Fridays and Saturdays

10.00-13.00 13.30-16.00

This is for visits to the Museum and bookable slots for the Library Public PC.

We are currently opening with staff only but we will have more details soon about the involvement of volunteers.

Please let me know of your availability to volunteer should we be given the go ahead for your invaluable help.

Safety of everyone using our cultural services remains paramount, and plans to proceed cautiously are made with the knowledge that it may be necessary to take a step back at any point, should cases of covid-19 increase.

Thank you all again for your support and we look forward to seeing you again soon

Best wishes
Cath