



***Glamorgan Family
History Society***
*Cymdeithas Hanes
Teuluol Morgannwg*

Mountain Ash Rugby Football Club
“The Old Firm”
Season 1892/93



Back Row L-R: Dr E. P. Evans J.P., W. Beynon, T. Perrot,
Arthur Allen, D.S. Lewis, J. Phillips,
Frank Mills, W. Eynon, Harry Hale (Secretary),
Middle Row L-R: J. Murphy, T. Bishop, J. Sullivan, Ben Tiley Capt,
Joe Hoskins, J. Carey, F. Mears,
Front Row L-R: S.C. Lewis, J.H. Eynon, D.J. Thomas,
W. Bradford, Wat Phillips.

Source: The Old Firm's Proud Past – Martyn Ham

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Centre Insert: AGM Nomination & Postal Voting Forms
Membership Renewal Form, Gift Aid Form

Society's Objectives

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As a registered charity the main objectives of the Glamorgan Family History Society are to: encourage and stimulate research into genealogy and allied subjects with particular reference to the historic county of Glamorgan: to assist members in their private research; encourage the transcription and preservation of records of family history and the deposit of original documents of value in approved repositories; publish papers of genealogical value and interests; establish, to mutual advantage, relations with other organisations interested in genealogy and allied subjects; maintain a library and regularly publish a journal. The journal is the official publication of the Glamorgan Family History Society. Articles appearing in the journal may not be reproduced without the written permission of the Editor. Views expressed in articles and letters are not necessarily those of the GFHS.

*Image: Front cover: Mountain Ash RFC - see article by Martin Ashford. Inside cover: Bridgend Branch day out in Cowbridge, **Top:** The Physic Garden in Church Street; **Middle:** Members in the Council Chamber at the museum; **Bottom:** Cowbridge museum - see report by Penny Williams.*

SOCIETY OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Gwyn Rhys

Vice President: Diane Brook

Executive Committee & Society Trustees

Chairman
chairman@glamfhs.org.uk **Sue Hamer** 37 Sherbourne Close, Highlight Park,
BARRY, CF62 8AQ

Vice-Chair **VACANT**

Secretary/Events Coordinator
secretary@glamfhs.org.uk, **Jane Jones**
44 Hendrecafn Rd, Penygraig, RCT, CF40 1LL

Treasurer **VACANT**

Committee Members: **Ian Black, Jean Fowlds, Meic Jones, Penny Williams**

Branch Trustees: **Pat Rees** (*Aberdare & Cynon Valley*), **Sue Tiller** (*Bridgend*),
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(*Pontypridd & Rhondda*), **Janet Neilson** (*Swansea*)

Membership Secretary **VACANT**
Membership Team
membership@glamfhs.org.uk c/o 63 Clos Pwll Clai, Tondu, Bridgend,
CF32 9BZ

Editor
editor@glamfhs.org.uk **Jean Fowlds**
10 David Street, Blaengarw, Bridgend, CF32 8AD

Website website@glamfhs.org.uk **Billie McNamara**

Branch Secretaries/Contacts

Aberdare & Cynon Valley
aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk **Mrs Pat Rees** ☎ 01685 875528

Bridgend Secretary
bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk **Vicky Salmon**, ☎ 01656 663940
4 Heol Mair, Litchard, Bridgend, CF31 1YL

Cardiff & Vale cardiff@glamfhs.org.uk **Jenni Phillips**

Merthyr Tydfil
merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk **Suzanne Doolan**, ☎ 01685 385818
1 Park Terrace, The Walk, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8RF

Pontypridd & Rhondda
rhondda@glamfhs.org.uk **Jane Jones** ☎ 01443 434547
44 Hendrecafn Rd, Penygraig, CF40 1LL

Swansea
swansea@glamfhs.org.uk **Cherry King**, 11 Northeron, West Cross, Swansea,
SA3 5PJ ☎ 01792 413229

Please only telephone for confirmation of meetings dates, venues and times - all other enquiries please write by email or snail mail

EDITORIAL

Croeso! The end of another year is close, and we have to start thinking about what 2024 has in store for all us, and indeed for the Society. In order to keep its ongoing success we must have some new volunteers to take on the officer roles, otherwise as a charity the Society could cease to exist. The positions are not onerous, can often be done from home, and quite frequently can be fun, so take another look at the Chairman's message and put your name forward.

Meanwhile the Journal has some fascinating stories as usual - several themes have turned up this time: poverty and destitution in "China Girl", local politics with the last episode of Hugh Bevan's biography, the life of Joe Hoskins, a 'bad' man made good, an eminent literary talent in another of the Talfan Davies brothers, farming, religion, a policeman. and much more besides - you will not be bored!

You will have by now seen references to the Society's 50th anniversary on March 10th next year, and it would be great to hear from any original members about those early days, and if there are photographs then all the better. We at GFHS are looking into our own archives to see what can be found, and if we can manage a reasonable collection we will be publishing it in due course.

As for other topics, it has been recently announced that the National Eisteddfod will be held in August next year in Pontypridd, the first time since 1956, so if there are any family stories from that time, do let us have them.

March 8th will mark International Women's Day, and of course St David and St Patrick have their Saints' days on the first and seventeenth respectively, so these may also trigger some ideas for an article?

Meanwhile on behalf of all at GFHS, I wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and a good New Year.

Nadolig Llawn a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda i chi gyd!

Jean Fowlds, editor@glamfhs.org.uk

Don't miss the 'Cut-Off Dates'

Material for possible publication should reach the Editor before the following dates:

| | | | |
|-----------|------------|----------|------------|
| March | 20 January | June | 20 April |
| September | 20 July | December | 20 October |

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

AGM 17 February 2024

Nomination and postal voting forms for Society Officers and Trustees are included in the Centre Insert and must be returned to Hon Secretary, Jane Jones, by **1 January 2024**. Nominees will be announced on the website as soon as possible and included in the January newsletter. Postal voting forms need to be returned to Jane Jones by **10 February**. All Society Officers and Trustees serve for one year and are re-elected each year at the AGM. Branch Trustees elected at the Branch AGMs are confirmed at the AGM. Society Officers can serve in a particular role for a maximum of five consecutive years. Both myself and Jane Jones have served for five years and so will be stepping down from our roles. We also currently have a vacancy for Society Treasurer, Vice Chair and one Committee Member/Trustee. Please consider joining our Executive Committee in order that our Society can continue to function and provide the wide range of family and local history resources and opportunities as expressed in our objectives on our Contents Page.

The AGM will be held online via Zoom and will herald the launch of our 50th Anniversary celebrations. .

50th Anniversary – 10 March 1974

Various suggestions as to how to commemorate our 50th Anniversary have been suggested including a commemorative booklet, a buffet lunch and a webinar. Volunteers are needed to join a 50th Anniversary Group to coordinate these events. Details to follow in the March journal and online via our website and Mail Chimp Newsletter.

Welsh National Eisteddfod 3-10 August 2024

The Welsh National Eisteddfod returns to Glamorgan in 2024 and will be held in Ynysangharad Park, Pontypridd, 3-10 August. We are currently investigating the cost of having a stand as we did in Cardiff in 2018. You do not need to be a Welsh speaker to help out on the stand. Let us know if you are able to help for a day or so.

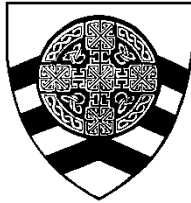
Please note the message from our membership team on page 42. We increased our membership fees as from 1 September so **if you have a Standing Order in place do not forget to update it to the new rates.**

In order to cover all of the events and facilities we offer we also need to increase our rates for extended research queries – see notice on page 52.

It only remains for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy New Year and success in your family history research.

Sue Hamer, chairman@glamfhs.org.uk

**Glamorgan Family History Society
Cymdeithas Hanes Teuluol Morgannwg**



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
and launch of our 50th anniversary celebrations

Saturday 17 February 2023

Online Via Zoom

Booking via Eventbrite
www.eventbrite.com

AGM Documentation will be
available on our website
by 10 February 2024
www.glamfhs.org.uk

Centre Insert:

Nomination and Postal Voting forms
must be returned to
Hon Secretary, Jane Jones as follows:
Nomination forms: 1 January 2024 and
Postal Voting forms: 10 February 2024

THE COLOURFUL LIFE OF JOE HOSKINS (1873-1906)

Professional rugby player, repeat offender
and prisoner, with a full military funeral
#20718 Martin Ashford

My grand-uncle Joseph HOSKINS was born on 14 May 1873 at 20 Stream Street, Mountain Ash, later living at 39 Glyngwym Street. A fine athlete as a young man, he performed prominently at Mountain Ash Sports winning many open handicaps, 120 yard events and hurdle races. His devastating speed was to serve him well in years to come as a professional rugby player.



Image Source: The Old Firm's Proud Past – Martyn Ham

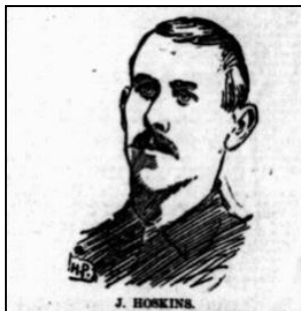
Life was clearly somewhat eventful in Glyngwym Street, his mother Elizabeth often quarrelling with neighbours and appearing before the magistrates. One occasion involving a fight where a milk jug and its contents ended up all over Elizabeth, the bench dismissed as a “women’s squabble” and a “trumpery case”.

On 13 April 1895, Joe married Margaret Jane ASHFORD at Pontypridd Registry Office, and they moved to 11 Graig Street, Mountain Ash. Joe was now working as a hewer in a local coalmine, and used his strength and speed to great effect playing as a wing three-quarter with Mountain Ash RFC from age 16. He was a member of the first “Old Firm” team that became Glamorgan League Champions in 1895/96, scoring 20 tries during that season, and was one of the first Mountain Ash RFC players to ‘go north’.

Joe signed for Salford RFC, making his debut on 4 September 1897 against St Helen’s, and became a prolific try scorer, crossing the line for 30 tries during the 1897/98 season, which made him the Northern Union’s and Salford’s top try scorer that season. Standing at 5ft 9in, and weighing 12st 6lbs, he played for Salford for three seasons, and is no. 38 on the Salford RFC Heritage List. He also played twice for Lancashire.

The Batley News reported on 7 April 1898, “*It was in August last that he went to Salford, and joined up with Tom WILLIAMS in a wing combination which set the*

whole of the Northern Union players talking. The beautiful tactics and fine running which Hoskins brought to bear in his play with his fellow countrymen have been without doubt the chief features in the success of the Salford Club”.



Photograph left:
Source: Batley News – 7 April 1898

Back home, though, things were not going quite so well. His mother was now an inmate of the Pontypridd Union Workhouse, and Joe was summonsed several times in 1897 for “neglecting to maintain” his mother. The court had ordered that he pay 2s per week towards her maintenance from his weekly income of 25s which he earned as a barman in Salford. Joe frequently failed to pay this sum, and ended up in arrears of 16s. It’s reported that he paid this at “the eleventh hour” in December 1897, thereby avoiding a custodial sentence.

Joe’s troubles were only just beginning though. He suffered a head injury whilst playing for Salford during the 1899-1900 season, which resulted in him seeing much-reduced playing time, but more significantly appeared to alter his behaviour for the worse.

He returned to live in Treorchy at 30 Tynybedw Street during 1900 and soon found himself in Pontypridd Police Court on 16 June on a charge of being drunk and disorderly, violence, threats to kill and assaulting a policeman. Whilst drunk, he had threatened a number of colliery officials, and then proceeded to “kick PC IVENS on the head, and threatened to shoot him”. His defence stated that the defendant sustained an injury to his head playing for Salford, and “*still suffered from its effects whenever he took intoxicants*”. Joe was fined £2 for assaulting the police and 10s for being drunk and disorderly.

Just six months later on 8 December 1900, Joe made his *fifth* court appearance of the year at Pontypridd Police Court, this time charged with stealing a tin of tobacco, value 2s 6d, from Thomas LEWIS, a refreshment-house keeper of William Street, Ystrad, Rhondda. When challenged by Lewis, he “*struck him in the mouth*”, but Lewis “*returned the compliment, striking the defendant down*”. Hoskins then ran off, but returned to the shop and asked to be searched. Lewis then reported the incident to the police, with the result that the box was discovered in a neighbour’s house. Joe said he could not recollect anything of the occurrence, and was fined 20s.

Joe seemed to be on a downward spiral though, and on 18 February 1901 was yet again in Pontypridd Police Court, again charged with violence, threats to kill

and assaulting a Policeman. The Pontypridd Chronicle reported the events under the headline, *“Desperate Assault upon the Police”*.

On the preceding Sunday morning the police were called to his home in Tynybedw Street, found a large crowd outside and heard a woman shouting *“Murder!”* On looking in through the window they saw the defendant brandishing a poker over his wife Margaret’s head.

When Joe saw PC JONES (a well-known Llwynypia footballer and reserve international) he shouted, *“Come here, Bob, and I’ll kill you dead, you –”*. It was reported, *“Hoskins struck Jones on the back with the poker. Police Sergeant GIBBON then drew out his staff and dealt defendant a hard blow on the shoulder. Hoskins at this time was most ferocious”*.

The court had had enough of Joe’s violent antics by now, and he was sent to prison for two months with hard labour for assaulting Police Constable Jones. Perhaps this was the turning point in his life though, as he never re-offended again and became a much-changed man.

Joe moved to 10 Woodland Terrace, Mountain Ash, upon his release in 1901, where he lived for five years until his death on 22 February 1906 at age 33 from *“Influenza and Acute Yellow Atrophy of Liver”*. He was buried in Aberffrwyd Cemetery in Mountain Ash three days later.



Joe’s grave in Aberffrwyd Cemetery - Source: Family photo

His obituary was most revealing though, and demonstrates the remarkable change in Joe during those last five years.

The Merthyr Express and Aberdare Leader reported on 3 March 1906 that a full military funeral was accorded to Private Joseph Hoskins, a member of the 3rd Volunteer Band, Welsh Regiment, in the capacity of drummer.

The cortege started from his house in Woodland Terrace, led by the Mountain Ash Volunteer Band playing the *Dead March* on the road, and the Mount Pisgah Choir also sang several hymns on the way to the burial place. The funeral procession included members of the general public, the members of Mountain Ash Football Team, the Volunteer Cyclist Corps, and members of the Volunteer Battalion, and numbered “*fully 2,000 people*”.

A firing party with arms reversed walked each side of the coffin, which was wrapped in the Union Jack, and at the graveside the firing party discharged three volleys over the grave, after which the *Last Post* was sounded by the bugler.

In December a grand concert of vocal and instrumental music was held at the Workmen's Institute for *‘the benefit of the widow and orphans of the late Mr Joseph Hoskins’*. The chair said he was “*pleased to see so many present, which testified that the late Joseph Hoskins, the once popular footballer and bandsman, was not forgotten*”.

Regrettably though, Joe's family endured further suffering over the following years, with three of his four sons dying before age 20. Richard enlisted with the Welsh Regiment in 1919 but accidentally drowned just one year later whilst swimming in Ferozepur, India, age 18, and Percival, a hewer at Lower Duffryn Colliery, was critically injured in a rugby match whilst playing for Mountain Ash RFC against Aberavon, and died that same evening at the cottage hospital from an internal haemorrhage. Percy was just 20 years of age. His third son, Clifford, died at birth in 1901, the year that Joe was gaoled.

Joe certainly had a colourful life, moving from being a superb athlete as a youngster, playing in the “Old Firm” side that won the Glamorgan League in 1895-96, and subsequently starring for Salford RFC as one of their greatest-ever wing three-quarters. Then seeing swift decline and hitting rock bottom as a violent and drunk offender, and serving time in prison, but emerging as a changed man and ultimately becoming a well-known and highly-respected member of the community. A remarkable rollercoaster journey!

Joe's life shows only too well that personal strength is so often about so much more than brawn.

ANEIRIN TALFAN DAVIES

#11208 JOHN P LETHBRIDGE

Introduction and Early Life. My previous articles looked at Sir Alun Talfan DAVIES QC, the Reverend Goronwy Talfan Davies and Elfyn Talfan Davies. Here I look at their brother Aneurin.

Aneurin Talfan DAVIES was born on 11 May 1909 at Islwyer in Penboyr Rural District in Newcastle Emlyn Registration District in Carmarthenshire. He was the second of four sons of William Talfan Davies a Calvinistic Methodist minister and Alys/Alice Davies, nee JONES.

The 1911 census shows Aneurin Talfan Davies living at his birthplace with his parents and their older son Elfyn four, their younger son Goronwy three months, and Mary Jones nineteen.

Aneurin Talfan Davies studied at Gowerton Grammar School. He left in 1923, aged fourteen, allegedly because he believed its staff were biased against the Welsh language. He was apprenticed to a pharmacist in Gorseinon and then in Temple Street, Swansea. He then moved to London. After a fortnight at the enormous King's Cross International Pharmacy he got a post at Palmer's Green Pharmacy in North London.

Aneurin qualified as a chemist and druggist on 20 July 1932, aged twenty three. He ran branch pharmacies in the North London suburbs of Kenton and Harrow on the Hill and at Watford north of London. He worshipped at the Charing Cross Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel and attended theology and literature classes there. In 1935 a poem by him won second prize in the free verse category at the Caernarfon National Eisteddfod.

Marriage and return to Wales. On 1 June 1936 Aneurin Talfan Davies, twenty seven, married Mary Anne EVANS, twenty three, a Barry teacher, at Calfaria Baptist Chapel in Cadoxton in Glamorgan. According to their marriage certificate her father was George Evans, a retired coal tipper. He had married Abigail JENKINS on 29 November 1896 at Tabernacle Hayes in Cardiff but they were childless..

Mary Anne Davies née Evans was born Mary Anne MORGAN on 10 September 1912. Her parents were Thomas Edward Morgan, a blacksmith, and Mary Morgan née Jenkins, who died on 19 September 1912, aged forty one, at 95 Woodland Road, nine days after her only child was born. The baby was fostered and then adopted by her uncle and aunt, George and Abigail Evans. Thomas Edward Morgan later remarried and had more children.

Aneurin and Alun Talfan Davies established a Welsh language literary magazine *Heddiw* in 1936. Aneurin and his friend Dafydd Arwyn Jenkins edited it. They published many Welsh writers. It was printed on a hand-set printing press, and initially at Aneurin's Watford home. It survived until 1942. Aneurin's play *Y Wawr* was published in 1936. It was about the first translation of the bible into Welsh by William SALESBURY in Elizabethan times; and was first performed in Swansea in 1937.

In 1937 Aneurin set up a pharmacy at 9 Heathfield Road, Swansea. His sign included *Fferylllydd* the Welsh for pharmacist. Its backroom was a meeting place for him and his friends to discuss Welsh verse. He lived at 9 Chaddesley Terrace in Swansea. In 1937 he and William Herbert REESE had a joint volume of poems *Y Ddau Lais* (the two voices) published on the advice of William Griffiths the head of the Welsh Section of Foyle's Bookshop in London.

In 1940 Aneurin and Alun Talfan Davies began publishing a pamphlet series *Llyfrau'r Dryw*. Forty-four appeared between 1940 and 1952 when the *Llyfrau'r Dryw* publishers was founded. It was one of the most important late twentieth century Welsh language publishers and eventually became the *Christopher Davies Press* named after one of Aneurin's nephews. It published much of Aneurin's work including some travel books. Most of its output was aimed at ordinary Welsh readers. The firm no longer operates.

Children. Aneurin Talfan Davies and his wife produced three children. Owen Sion Talfan Davies was born on 29 March 1938 in Swansea; worked for the BBC; married Rita May STREET a TV presenter on 16 December 1959; and had one son.

Owen Sion Talfan Davies was mortally injured in a car crash in Scotland and died in hospital there on 24 October 1963 aged twenty five. Julian PETTIFER and a woman colleague were also in the car and were injured but recovered. Aneurin Talfan Davies wrote two poems in memory of his son who he described as *Hoywlanc lluniaidd a llawen* i.e. a handsome, joyous and high spirited lad.

Geraint Talfan Davies was born on 31 December 1943 in Carmarthen Registration District. He was a journalist and broadcaster and active in Welsh cultural life. He was Chairman of the Welsh National Opera from 2000-2003 and 2016-2016. In 1967 he married Elizabeth Sian Vaughan YORATH. They were to have three sons. Geraint Talfan Davies is now retired and very kindly gave me important information about his family history.

Elinor Talfan Davies was born in 1946 in Cardiff Registration District; qualified as a nurse at University College Hospital in London in 1967; and in 1968 married a surgeon. They were to have four children. Her husband died in 1991

aged fifty-one and she later remarried. She rose high in the nursing profession and was active in Welsh cultural life.

The Swansea Blitz. Swansea port, docks and oil refinery were seen as important targets by the Nazi Luftwaffe. Swansea suffered many air raids of which the heaviest were over the three nights 19-21 February 1941. Two hundred and thirty people were killed and more than four hundred injured.

Geraint Talfan Davies published his father's first-hand account of the Swansea Blitz. I obtained a copy from the Welsh Agenda website. It is titled *A Monument to the Horrors of War*, but was first published in Welsh. Part of it was published in English in *We shall never surrender - Wartime diaries 1939-1945*, (Macmillan, 2011). If you want to understand what is happening in the Ukraine you should read it.

Aneirin Talfan Davies's pharmacy and home were destroyed. Compensation was eventually paid for property damage but not for lost business.

The BBC. Later in 1941 Aneirin joined the BBC first as a part time news reader and then as a part time radio talks and features producer. He moved to Ty Croes in Carmarthenshire and then to London. In 1944 he was received into the Church in Wales, and his *Yr Alltud*, an introduction to James Joyce, was published.

Aneirin Talfan Davies moved to Barry in 1945 and worked for BBC Wales in Cardiff. He produced several Dylan Thomas radio talks giving Thomas some much needed income. They were personal friends. In 1946 and 1948 Aneirin had published in Welsh two studies of TS ELIOT. In 1947 Aneirin wrote and had published a Welsh translation of Christina ROSSETTI'S poem *Goblin Market*.

Gwyr Llen, a collection of essays edited by Aneirin about prominent early twentieth century writers was published in 1948. In 1950 a strict metre poetry anthology edited by him, *Blodeugerdd o Englynion*, appeared.

Aneirin began commissioning long poems for BBC radio in 1951. One was James Kitchener Davies's *Swn y Gwynt Sy'n Chwythu*. That year Aneirin established the literary magazine *Llafur* which appeared biannually until 1957. In 1951 *Myfi Sy'n Magu'r Baban* a book collection of radio feature programmes, edited by him, was published.

In 1952 Aneirin was appointed West Wales BBC Representative to replace Thomas John PICKERING who had died aged 59. Aneirin returned to Swansea. In 1954 his book *Munudau Gyda'r Beirdd* was published. In one

chapter he described Wales's rich literary and Christian inheritance which he called *Yr Etifeddiaeth Dda* - the good inheritance.

In 1957 Aneurin was appointed BBC Wales Deputy Head of Programmes. In 1958 another anthology of strict metre Welsh Poetry *Englynion a Chywyddau* that he edited, was published; and the University of Wales made him an honorary MA.

On 16 September 1958 a *Guardian* letter from Aneurin replied to one by Philip TOYNBEE that had criticised National Eisteddfods. Aneurin admitted that Nonconformist Ministers dressing as Druids "*in a parody of sacred things*" was hard to take seriously; and that much prize-winning Eisteddfod poetry was low grade. Eisteddfods helped maintain Welsh identity but were not the "*focus of real creative activity*". He praised the Saunders LEWIS play *Brad* (treason) that had been televised on the BBC.

Aneurin and Alun Talfan Davies founded the Welsh magazine language *Barn* in 1962. Aneurin edited it for some years and contributed a regular column *Ar Ymyl y Ddalen* (*in the margin*). His book *Dylan Druid of the Broken Body* was published in 1964. Aneurin maintained that Dylan THOMAS was essentially a religious poet.

In 1966 Aneurin was appointed BBC Wales Head of Programmes after Hywel Davies died. Aneurin worked hard to bridge the gap between the Welsh and English language Welsh cultures. He realised that Welsh writers who wanted to make a decent living by their work needed to write in English as well as Welsh.

On 3 August 1967 Aneurin Talfan Davies's Welsh language pageant play *Y Wawr* (see above) first published in 1936 was performed on BBC Wales. The scenes of the play spanned from 1567 to 1800. 1967 was the four hundredth anniversary of the publication of William Salesbury's translation of the New Testament into Welsh.

After being made a senior BBC executive Aneurin carried on writing and editing. His *Astudio Byd* was published in 1967 and *Gyda Gwawr y Bore* in 1970. In 1970 he was awarded the OBE.

Politics. On 11 May 1950 Aneurin Talfan Davies was elected an Independent Barry Town Councillor for Holton Ward getting 1,780 votes. The defeated Labour candidate Brynley (or Brinley) WILLIAMS got 1,244 votes.

Aneurin sat on six Barry Council committees – Health; Entertainment and Seaside Activities; Town Development; Public Libraries; Barry Memorial Hall; and Housing Management. As a Barry Councillor he sat on Glamorgan County

Council Divisional Health Executive.

Aneirin was a governor of Barry Boys' Grammar School and Barry Girls' Grammar School; vice chair of the Barry and District Primary Schools Board of Managers; and helped promote a local Welsh Language Nursery School and a Welsh language Primary School. In 1952 after returning to Swansea he stood down from Barry Town Council.

Religion. On Thursday 21 December 1950 the *Western Mail* reported that Aneirin Talfan Davies, of Barry, was elected a Llandaff Diocese lay member of the Church in Wales Governing Body. On Friday 22 February 1951 it reported his appointment to that body's Standing Liturgical Commission.

After returning to Swansea Aneirin was a Lay Member of the Church in Wales Governing Body for Swansea and Brecon Diocese. On Friday 30 September 1955 the *Western Mail* reported that he had spoken in a Governing Body debate on the use of revisions to the Book of Common Prayer in church services.

From 1969 to 1974 Aneirin was again a Llandaff Diocese Lay Member of the Church in Wales Governing Body. In this period he lived at 98 Pencisely Road in Cardiff.

Final Years. In 1970 Aneirin retired from the BBC aged sixty one. His wife died on 4 December 1971, aged 59 at their 98 Pencisely Road, Cardiff, home. A few weeks after she died he suffered a stroke but he continued writing.

In 1975 Aneirin published a volume of his own poems *Diannerch Erchwyn a Cherddi Eraill*. In 1979 his book *David Jones: letter to a friend* was published. The poet, artist and scholar David James JONES (pseudonym *Gwenallt*) had been a personal friend.

Aneirin became increasingly confined to one corner of a book-lined room in his Llandaff flat. He died on 11 July 1980 at Priory Street Hospital, Carmarthen, aged 71. His last published work was a posthumous column in the July-August 1980 issue of *Barn*.

Reputation. Aneirin Talfan Davies has a Dictionary of National Biography entry and a longer online Dictionary of Welsh Biography one. The *Western Mail* gave him obituaries on 15 and 16 July 1980. Alun OLDFIELD-DAVIES the Director and then Controller of BBC Wales from 1945 to 1967 wrote the second one. The *Times* gave Aneirin one on 17 July 1980.

For Welsh language readers the Welsh Arts Council and Oriel Bookshop in

1992 published for REES's biography of Aneurin titled *Bro a Bywyd – Aneurin Talfan Davies 1909-1980*. It was launched at the 1992 Aberystwyth National Eisteddfod.

A note. Brynley/Brinley Williams who Aneurin Talfan Davies defeated at Holton in 1950 remained in politics; rose to be Mayor of the Vale of Glamorgan; and died in office on 18 December 1974.

Thanks and Acknowledgements. Apart from those I have named above, particularly Geraint Talfan Davies, I must thank John RICHFIELD of the Church in Wales; Dan EDWARDS of Cathays Branch and Heritage Library; the staff of Glamorgan Archives; the Baptist Historical Society; and Katharine OWEN of the Vale of Glamorgan Libraries.



SOME ASPIRATIONAL FARMERS OF WEST GLAMORGAN #11132 John Cullwick

I found the article in Journal 151 by Janet Neilson fascinating. It was about Captain Ancell Clement GREGORY (1878-1942). His brother Major Fleming Clement Gregory, MC (1884-1917) seems an equally interesting character. Ancell died in Western Australia and Fleming died in Palestine (killed in action).

The Gregorys were a farming family in Llandilo Talybont, which appears to be a village near Pontarddulais - in West Glamorgan in those days. The father of Ancell and Fleming was Edward Gregory (1840-1882), who left the village and became a grocer at 37 High Street, Swansea (employing 6 men and 3 boys at the time of the 1881 census).

These farming families have thrown up so many interesting ancestors. Men and women who were fiercely independent, often very God-fearing. They were real achievers. My mother-in-law was Edith Margaret WATTS (1918-2015) and she was brought up on Ty Ucha farm in Pendoylan (Pendeulwen). The Watts' were quite a family – her father Arthur Watts Ty Ucha (1886-1973) was brought up on Plas Llanmihangel farm at the close of the 19th century and was the oldest of 12 children (it was a huge farmhouse and each had their own bedroom!!!). Watts Coaches in Bonvilston (Tresimon) was established by her brother Roland Watts.

Watts and Morgan, the Estate Agents, were established by 2 of her uncles. Edith often mentioned one of her great-grandfathers - John MORGAN of

Llantrithyd - who was just 5 months short of 100 when he died in 1930. An accomplished bard “Ioan Trithyd”, he was also considered the finest farmer in the Vale and won very many prizes.

I found some notes written in 1915 by TM PRICE of Boverton that may be of interest:

“John Morgan of Llantrithyd was born in 1830 in Old Ty Uchaf farmhouse. The farmhouse was demolished in 1895, and rebuilt later that same year. His ancestors had resided at Ty Uchaf for about 600 years without a single break.

He carried on a butchery business in addition to farming - and held a stall in Cardiff Central Market for 37 years. He handed the stall over to his second son William Morgan, of Maerdy Newydd Farm near Bonvilston”.

When TM Price wrote this note, John Morgan “Ioan Trithyd” was 85 and had 40 grandchildren and one great grandchild. My mother-in-law Edith Margaret Watts, of Ty Ucha Farm, was not born until 3 years later in Jan 1918, and she was the eldest of 5 Watts great-grandchildren (Margaret, John, Morgan, Roland and Evan) - all born before he died in 1930. Probably old John Morgan (1830-1930) had a lot more great-grandchildren and probably a lot more stories could be told about the Morgans of Ty Ucha. And the Gregorys of Llandilo Talybont.



THE NAME *NEPHI*: A CLUE TO YOUR ANCESTOR'S RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Jill Morgan

Towards the middle of the 19th century a set of names begin to appear in the census and vital records for England & Wales which have ancient Hebrew and Egyptian origins – and this in families with standard Welsh or English surnames. An example of this is the name *Nephi* (pronounced ‘neef-eye’ with various spellings in the records). There are references to the name *Nephi* in the Apocrypha – ancient writings which were not included in the King James Bible - and “Nepi” was also one of the names of the Egyptian grain god (the “p” in Egyptian apparently often pronounced as ‘ph’). So there is solid evidence of the ancient origins of the name.

In Glamorgan, references to individuals named *Nephi*¹ begin to occur in 1846. Although there are not large numbers of them – only 27 identified between 1846 and 1900 – they’re part of a larger group of about 300 in the UK, beginning in 1840. In Glamorgan they can be seen variously in the Aberdare, Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath and Swansea areas, the majority in Merthyr.

But how did this unusual name find its way into 19th century South Wales? In 1837 missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (‘Mormons’ or LDS church) first arrived in Liverpool and began establishing congregations in Lancashire. They subsequently made their way south into Herefordshire and over the border into Monmouthshire, with the first recorded South Wales converts in Skenfrith in 1841. The missionaries carried copies of the *Book of Mormon*, which the LDS church uses as a companion scripture to the Bible. The first book or section of the *Book of Mormon* was written by a man called *Nephi*. Hence the name *Nephi* began to appear in convert families, in the same way that names such as *Amos*, *Daniel* and *Isaac* are found in 19th century families of other Christian denominations.

These are the surnames of the Nephi’s found in Glamorgan (some of the 19 names shown here occurring more than once):

| | | | |
|----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Adams* | Beynon** | Bishop** | Collins |
| Cox** | Davies | Gregory* | Griffiths* |
| Hardee* | Jones** | Lewis*/** | Llewellyn |
| Morgan | Nicholls** | Rees* | Thomas* |
| Tucker** | Vanstone | Williams | |

Seven of these are known to have emigrated and died in the United States (marked with an asterisk); another seven (marked with double asterisk) are known to have died in Wales. The remaining individuals have been difficult to trace beyond their births and some census records. Some have dropped the name Nephi – perhaps because of disaffection from the LDS church. But these are the highlights of some of their lives:



Nephi LEWIS, born in 1855, appears with his parents, Lewis and Eleanor, on the 1861 census in Cardiff Road, Aberdare. The <https://saintsbysea.lib.byu.edu/> website shows the family emigrating in 1869. Nephi marries and settles in Malad, Idaho, a town established in the 1850s by immigrant Welsh ‘Mormon’ converts.

¹ These were identified using the *findmypast* databases, supplemented by websites such as www.welshsaints.byu.edu, <https://saintsbysea.lib.byu.edu/> and <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/chd/>

Alma Nephi DAVIES, born in Tredegar in 1877, appears in Glamorgan census records with his parents (William and Eliza) and siblings in Llanwonno. His mother's maiden name was BISHOP, and she had a brother named Alma Nephi (born 1856). When the younger Alma Nephi married in 1901, he is listed as Alma, having apparently dropped the Nephi (although Alma is also a name found in the *Book of Mormon*).

Alma Nephi HARDEE was born in Llangunnor (1878). His family emigrated when he was just four, and settled in the coal-mining area of Carbon County, eastern Utah. He died in 1924 in a mine explosion, the death certificate adding *death instantaneous*. He was one of 173 miners trapped underground because of the explosion. He left behind a wife and six children.



Other *Book of Mormon* names also appear in census and vital records, eg *Lehi* and *Moroni*. More modern names which occur in 19th century 'Mormon' families include *Brigham*, *Hyrum*, *Parley* and *Lorenzo* – in honour of early LDS church leaders.

The name *Nephi* continues to appear in vital records in the UK as it is given to new generations of converts; with the increasing diversity of the population, it's also just as likely to be connected to a middle-eastern family name. But if you find a 19th century ancestor with one of these unusual names, you most likely have also found an ancestor with links to the early 'Mormon' church.

Finding the name *Nephi* is a great relief after the repeated Johns, Davids and Williams, but it also offers new data sets worth exploring, related to the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints.

A WELSH CHRISTMAS PINATA

Fill with sugared plums a large paper bag, and tie with string around the top to keep it closed. Then suspend it by the string from the centre of a large door-frame (a folding door, for instance, is ideal), or to the ceiling, if convenient. Each of the children must be provided with a long stick. They are then led one at a time to within reach of the bag, and direct them to try while blind-folded, to strike the bag with the stick, they are allowed three attempts; after which, if they are unsuccessful, they must give up their place to another. The play goes on in this manner until someone strikes the bag so as to tear a hole in the paper; upon which the sugar-plums fall out, and are scattered over the floor, whence all the children can scramble for them.

Monmouthshire Merlin. 24/12/1859

CHINA GIRL

#1801 Clive Davies

The entry in the Cardiff Workhouse Register was stark:

1847 Mary Ann DAVID, Bastard of Mary David, Parish to which belongs, Bonvilston.

Mary Ann David of Cardiff Workhouse was baptized on 25th July 1847 at St Marys in the centre of Cardiff, the illegitimate daughter of Mary Ann David 1825-1892. Mary Ann was the eldest of her mother's three surviving children. Two others died as infants. My great-grandfather, James Rees David/Davies 1849-98, and Henry David/Davies 1858-99 were her younger brothers. In the 1850s the family's David surname became DAVIES, a common occurrence at that time.

The 1851 census found Mary Ann in Sutton Road, Bonvilston, a village 5 miles west of Cardiff where her mother had been born:

*William Griffiths, Head, Mar, 33, Agricultural Labourer, born Glam Llantrithyd
Wife Sarah, 30 & children Daniel 10, Mary 7, Llewellyn 8 months, All born
Bonvilston*

***Mary Ann David, Parish Relief, 4, Pauper (Nursing/Bastard), born Cardiff
Workhouse***

Parishioners were often urged to house pauper children, as the pittance they were paid was less of an imposition on the parish than the cost of keeping the child at the Cardiff Workhouse. The Griffiths family would also have an unpaid, tiny drudge to assist in household chores including the care of young Llewellyn.

Mary Ann also featured amongst those paupers receiving outdoor relief that was charged to the parish of Bonvilston. During this time she was probably placed in the care of another family or families including those in the adjacent parish of St Nicholas.

*Mary A David 25/9/1855 Orphan 25 weeks = £2 10s aged 8 of St Nicholas
" 25/3/1856 " 26 " = £3 5s " 9 " "
" 25/3/1857 " 27 " = £3 7s 6d " 10 " "
" 25/9/1857 " 26 " = £3 5s " 9 " "*

Mary Ann would have been an easy prey to physical and sexual exploitation as she was without a caring family. The 1861 census confirms her downfall. Mary Ann, barely 14, was supposedly working as a charwoman in China, the red-light district of Merthyr Tydfil, then the largest Welsh town. Three young charwomen

in one house in this area would indicate that they were pursuing more lucrative work.

The 1861 census – China, Pontystorehouse, Merthyr Tydfil

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----|--------|------------|----------------------|
| **John Welsh | Head | 18 | Single | Coal Miner | b. Glamorgan Merthyr |
| Mary Ann Smith | Boarder | 19 | Single | Charwoman | b. Glamorgan Merthyr |
| Priscilla Williams | Boarder | 20 | Single | Charwoman | b. Breconshire Cefn |
| Mary Ann Davies | Boarder | 15 | Single | Charwoman | b. Glamorgan Cardiff |

** John Welsh had abandoned coal mining by the 1881 census when he was dwelling at 11 The Cellars in China with a young female lodger. They gave no occupations.

Guardian Angel – Brian John 2007

Many of the boys belonged to a class known as “The Rodney’s” and they survived on begging and petty thieving, sometimes on their own account and sometimes under the control of older and experienced criminals. They measured their status by the number of times they had been arrested and convicted, and they had no respect either for the police or the magistrates. On appearing in court, they postured and bragged, swore at the magistrates and took pleasure in demonstrating that they were beyond control and beyond redemption. They actually seemed to enjoy their short spells in gaol, for there they were able to luxuriate in clean clothes, dry accommodation, and food in their bellies.

Keith Strange

‘China’ was a den of drunkards, thieves, rogues and prostitutes, whose general behaviour was completely foreign to the normal hard working respectable Welsh Chapel way of life. It was said that the term ‘China’ might have arisen because Britain had a long ‘Opium War’ with China and the early nineteenth century newspapers are full of stories of China as the dreadful land of our enemies, and foreigners; equally ‘China’ in Merthyr Tydfil was the land of undesirables and foreigners (possibly also the place where opium could be smoked). China was in the news and it was known that here was the ‘Forbidden City’ which no one could enter and return from alive. Few strangers were able to return safely from ‘China’ in Merthyr Tydfil with all their possessions. The attitude of police was that you entered China at your peril; certainly the police themselves did not dare go into China. Entering China was not easy as the district was bounded by water, a dangerous smoking tip and a row of large dwellings, the entrance to ‘China’ was under an arch and there were door-keepers to send messages warning the residents.

The locality was known as 'China' from earlier times as this 1846 case illustrates:

Mary Ann MORGANS, aged 21, a young woman from the locality of China fach, Merthyr, was charged with having stolen one sovereign, thirteen shillings, and one cotton handkerchief, the property of Joseph Richards of Merthyr.

The jury considered a few minutes and returned a verdict of guilty. Sentenced to 7 years transportation. The prisoner was carried out of the dock in a state of insensibility.

In 1869 and 1870 Mary Ann was again to feature amongst the list of paupers in Cardiff Workhouse with intermittent stays there during those two years. The register of St Marys, Cardiff reveals the reasons for her sojourns. Mary Ann Davies' residence at the baptism of her illegitimate son, James, in August 1869, was given as that very place, the Workhouse. She gave birth again the following year with tragic results:

Cardiff Quarter Sessions: 13/7/1870

Mary Ann Davies Unlawfully endeavoring to conceal the birth of a child by secret disposition of the body – 1 month's imprisonment.

On the 1871 census she was at 11 Stanley Street, Cardiff, an area notorious for its brothels, hovels and drinking dens, a squalid slum:

*Mary A Davies, Head, 23, Single, Dressmaker, b. Glamorgan, Cardiff
Augusta YOUNG, Lodger, 20, Single, Dressmaker, b. Gloucestershire,
Charfield*

A horrifying description was given in the Cardiff Argus, 10th January 1891 of Stanley Street, a byway between David Street and Mary Ann Street where the large John Lewis store now stands:

"Stanley Street, as a street, has no existence. It is almost a cul de sac from Bute Terrace, only a few feet wide, having in the centre of it a narrow channel into which is poured all the liquid refuse, slops, etc, from the houses on each side.

The stench from the lower portion of this open gutter is in summer often abominable. The street, or rather pitched footway, forms the drying ground of the occupants of the houses. A clothes line, common to all, extends from one end of the alley to another and this is, in fine weather, constantly in use.

In the summer the street forms a kind of general washhouse and women, in a semi-state of nudity, whose clothes are often nothing but a collection of dirty

*rag*s with old earthenware pans placed on broken chairs occupy the day, give an appearance of cleanness to their children's clothing.

There are about 40 houses in this street, many consisting of two rooms one over the other without a back door or an opening in the back wall to give ventilation. There is scarcely a house with a window but in which a number of panes of glass are not broken and the aperture is filled with old rags. There is not a house but in the lower half of the outer door is not honeycombed and large portions eaten away by rats who early in the morning make the street and houses a kind of happy hunting ground for their species.

The bedroom is reached by a staircase rising from the lower rooms, and entering through an opening in the floor like a trap door. Police found a woman and her baby sharing a wooden projection to a house which sheltered a donkey, and homeless children were often found sleeping under carts."

A lodging house kept by a Michael Harrington contained 54 people and a police inspector told TW Rammell, the Board of Health Inspector, on a visit to Cardiff in 1849 that, "There were no beds and the children slept in old orange boxes. In this communal cesspit, the lodgers hoarded belongings which included rags, bones, salt fish and rotten potatoes.

Mary Ann Davies unsurprisingly often fell foul of the law as these records from the Cardiff Quarter Sessions show:

18/1/1870 *Unlawful wounding - Acquitted*
25/6/1875 *Unlawful Wounding – 4 months imprisonment*
1/1/1877 *Larceny - Acquitted. She was also known as Mary Ann DRIVER*
1/1/1883 *Larceny before convicted of a felony -- 4 months imprisonment*
7/4/1891 *Unlawful Wounding – 4 months imprisonment*

She was not found on later censuses, perhaps in prison, assumed a different name, married or had met an early death.

Her son, James Davies 1869-1920, was cared for by her mother and brother James as can be seen on the 1871 census. The family were then living at a cottage near the 'Dusty Forge', a tavern at Michaelston-super-Ely on the outskirts of Cardiff:

| |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| James Davies, Head, Unmarried, 22, Ag. Labourer, b. Glam Cardif |
| Henry " Brother, " 13 Scholar, b. " " |
| James " Nephew, " 1 b. " |
| Mary REED* Mother, Marr. 49, Washerwoman, b. Glam, Bonvilston |

* In 1864 Mary Ann David had married Robert Reed 1799-1880, an elderly blacksmith.

MOSES REED: A VALLEYS LIFE

#10189 David Barnard

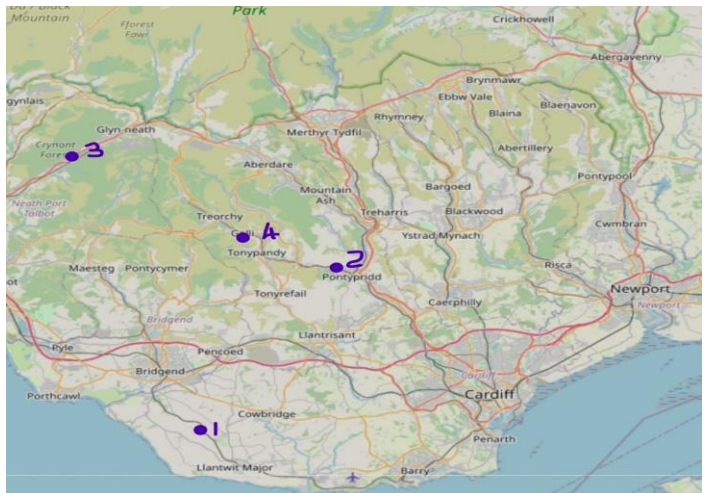
In the nineteenth century there were two pillars of life in the South Wales Valleys: Coal and Chapel. The majority of lives lived would have featured or been influenced by coal mining or chapel life or both. This was certainly true of Moses REED.

However, Moses Reed did not start life in the South Wales Valleys but rather at Wick in the Vale of Glamorgan in an area of flat open landscape. His father, William, was an Agricultural Labourer married to Mary POWELL from Defynnog in Breconshire. Moses, born in 1844, was their second child with Jane having been born in 1840/1.

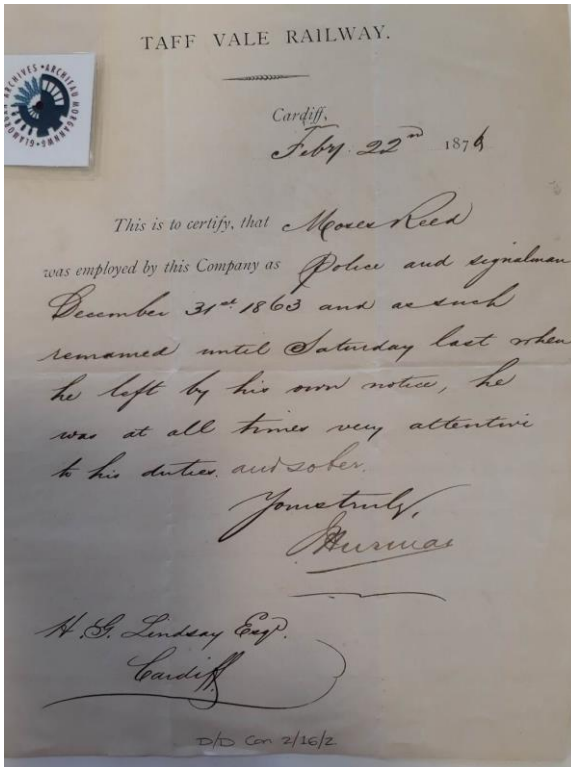
By the age of six the family had moved to Trallwn in Pontypridd, and from then on Moses never left the Valleys.

William Reed died in 1860, and maybe this was when young Moses began his working life. At the 1861 census, Moses, aged seventeen, was living at home with his widowed mother and working as a coal miner. They were then living at the Graig above Pontypridd so perhaps Moses was employed at the Graig Colliery.

The © Open Street Map map shows the area of South Wales where Moses lived. The first location is Wick on the coastal strip; the second is Hopkinstown outside Pontypridd where Moses worked for the Taff Vale Railway; number three is Resolven in the Vale of Neath where Moses was in the Glamorgan Constabulary and the fourth is Gelli where Moses and his wife Ann lived out their later years.



Although Moses worked for a time as a Coal Miner, at the end of 1863 he joined the Taff Vale Railway being employed as Police and Signalman¹. So Moses



had moved from the dangerous life of mining coal underground, and this may have given him the confidence to start courting. At any rate, towards the end of 1865, Moses married Ann MORGAN at Sardis Road Chapel in Pontypridd² and their first child, Gwilym, was born in 1868.

In the 1871 census, the family were living at Hopkinstown in the lower Rhondda valley and Moses' occupation was listed as Railway Police. Moses remained with the Taff Vale Railway for just over twelve years until February 1876¹.

The Taff Vale Railway wrote a letter, lodged at Glamorgan Archives, certifying that Moses had left their

employment of his own notice and he was at all times very attentive to his duties and sober¹.

Moses must have decided that the life of a policeman suited him since in February 1876 he joined the Glamorgan Constabulary³ and in the census of 1881 he is listed as a Police Constable living in Resolven in the Vale of Neath at 46 Company Street. There were two other Police Constables living in Resolven at this time: Martin MARKHAM aged 44 with his family; and Mark Bevan THOMAS aged 42 who lived in the Police station with his family. These three police officers looked after a parish of 1293 individuals⁴.

Although Moses joined the force as a normal police constable, for much of his career he was attached to various collieries owned by Messrs Cory Bros. This seems to have begun at Resolven. However, in early 1884, at one o'clock in the morning, Moses and a fellow PC were on duty on a railway bridge over the river. They were attacked by a group of fifteen men throwing cinder slags at them and were even shot at when one of the men pulled a gun. Fortunately, the officers were unhurt but were forced to retreat leaving the suspected salmon poachers in charge of the river⁵.

Moses moved to the Middle Rhondda later in 1884 and after spending some time at Ton Pentre attached to the Pentre Colliery he moved to Gelli where he was the officer stationed at Gelli colliery.

In July 1897, after Moses had moved on from Ton Pentre to Gelli, the following news item was published:

A very sad accident happened recently in the Ystrad Rhondda area. The subject of our lines is Acting-Sergeant Moses Reed who is about 53 years old. The day of the Treorchy fair, he had occasion to be at Ystrad's constables' court, until the afternoon. After finishing his work there, he went towards his home to prepare himself for his duty at the fair. To be clear, near his residence there is a Siding related to the Gelli mine, and before coming to the garden gate there is a bend in the road over which the steam engine makes a pass.

On this day, as on other days, the machine was working full wagons in the direction of the coal boilers. Somehow Mr Reed's foot went under the wheels, and it was badly damaged.

The same afternoon the injured limb had to be amputated, and this added to the sorrow even more.

He is recovering as well as can be expected, under the skilled care of Dr WE Thomas, Ystrad, and his assistants⁶. (Translated from the Welsh using Google Translate)

So this would seem to have been the end of Moses' career in the police force. However, according to police records Moses did not leave the force until New Year's Day, 1898. His length of service was 21 Years 10 months and he left superannuated with a pension of £54 12s³.

It would have been difficult in 19th and 20th century South Wales to live independently from the coal mining industry. It tended to pervade life and entangle all professions. So it was that although Moses had left the coal mines early in his working life, they quickly took back influence through the lives of his children. In Resolven in 1881, Gwilym the eldest child of Moses and Ann, at twelve years of age, was working as an errand boy for the local coal mine office. Ten years later, living in the Rhondda, their four eldest sons were all employed at the collieries: Gwilym was working as a Colliery Engineman; Rhys was a Colliery Brakeman; Evan was a Hydraulics Worker; and David Henry was employed 'Changing Ropes at the Colliery'.(7)

One cannot help wondering whether conflicts occurred during the miners' strikes when Moses was the colliery officer and his sons had colliery related jobs. Significantly all the sons were working above ground.

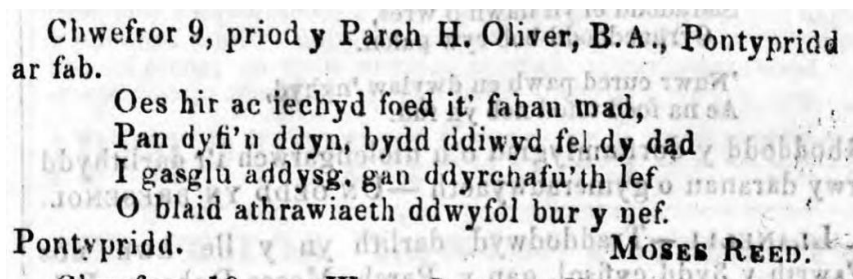
Even prior to the accident, tragedy had struck: David Henry died in November 1894 at the age of seventeen; their third child, Rhys Powell, died the following year aged twenty-three; and their ninth child, Albert, died at the age of sixteen in 1900. It's a tough life when you outlive your children.

However, by 1901 having lost three sons, their youngest son, John was indeed working underground as a Coal Hewer. Alfred was an Ostler, working with the colliery horses but above ground. Although the accident in 1897 was the end of Moses' police employment it was clearly the movement of coal at the colliery that brought it about. And even in 1901 we find Moses employed as Coal Weigher.

In 1911 Moses is listed as a Police Pensioner living at No 2 Gelli Cottages with his wife Ann, daughter Elizabeth, son John Penry. Also in the house were married son, Alfred, and his wife and children. In 1921 the household consists of just Moses, Ann, and his widowed son John Penry. Moses declares his age as 76 years 11 months. They are living at 2 New King Street, Gelli.

Moses would appear to have been an enthusiastic church member for most of his life. As a young man he attended Sardis Road Chapel, Pontypridd under the ministry of Rev Henry Oliver. When the minister's wife gave birth to a son Moses contributed his own verse to the announcement in the local paper. The birth announcement of David Thomas Oliver in Y Gwladgarwr on 14 Feb 1863 included the four-line verse written by Moses⁸, roughly translating as:

"When grown a man you will be hardworking like your father, get an education, and by preaching your voice will teach pure heaven".



I could not discover where, in Resolven, that Moses worshipped but after he moved to the Rhondda, he became an ardent enthusiast for the Welsh Congregationalist cause. According to one newspaper he was one of the oldest members of Bethesda Church, Ton Pentre, where he acted as Sunday School Superintendent⁹.

After the move to Gelli, Moses and his wife became founding members of Bryn Seion Welsh Congregational Church in Gelli. Moses was for many years a

deacon there¹⁰.

The couple were sufficiently well-known and respected that the Glamorgan Gazette printed a Celebration of their Golden Wedding in 1915¹¹.

On Wednesday, 21st October 1925 Moses and Ann celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Moses died three months later on 6th December at home at Troedyrhiw House, King Street, Gelli, and was buried at Llethrddu Cemetery, Trealaw¹². His widow, Ann, survived until April 1935 when she died at the house of her son John. At that point Ann had 3 sons and 2 daughters, 25 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren¹⁰.

As well as his involvement with the life of the church, Moses appears to have enjoyed writing. In 1896 we read: "*The policeman Moses Reed gave an excellent address on the 'Duty of religious people to support the Sunday School'*".¹³

In July 1897 at a literary meeting in Gelli church "*The president of the meeting was Acting-Sergeant Moses Reed, Ystrad ... Acting-Sergeant Reed is from the ancient village of Wick, near Bridgend, and he is a highly recommended writer.*"¹⁴

Moses spent more than twenty years in the Glamorgan Constabulary but never seems to have lived in a Police Station nor to have risen higher than Acting-Sergeant. There are places where he is referred to as Sergeant Reed or as Colliery Sergeant, but these appear to have been signs of respect. Moses lived for over twenty-five years after his life in the police force and those years seem to have been years well spent.

References

- 1 Letter from Taff Vale Railway at Glamorgan Archives(D/D Con 2/16/2), Used with permission of the South Wales Police Heritage Centre.
- 2 They were married on 21st October 1865, at Sardis Chapel, Pontypridd, by the late Rev Henry Oliver, Glamorgan Gazette, 22 Oct 1915, p8
- 3 Glamorgan Archives. DCON 3/1 Register of Constables
- 4 1881 census, Resolven at FindMyPast
- 5 South Wales Daily News, 11 Feb 1884
- 6 Tarian Y Gweithiwr, 1st July 1897 p4
- 7 1891 census, Ton Pentre
- 8 Y Gwladgarwr, 14 Feb 1863, National Library of Wales, Copyright unknown.
- 9 Western Mail, 8 Dec 1925, p8
- 10 Caerphilly Journal, 13 April 1935, p4
- 11 Glamorgan Gazette, 22 October 1915, p8
- 12 Western Mail, 8 Dec 1925, p8
- 13 Tarian Y Gweithiwr, 16 July 1896
- 14 Tarian Y Gweithiwr, 7 January 1897

HUGH BEVAN, BRIDGEND MERCHANT AND PHILANTHROPIST (1821-1898)

PART 4

#20252 Guy Bevan

The story of a boy from Merthyr Tydfil who made his way through life in the Victorian Age, earned his fortune in Bridgend and almost built a railway and dock on the River Ogmore.

In previous parts of this biography we have learned of Hugh's life in the community, politics and business in South Wales. In a surprising move to Somerset at the age of 71 in 1892 he still maintains his place in the public eye.

Just over two months later the Langport and Somerton Herald of 3rd December 1892 carries a letter from its newest reader as he seeks election to the local School Board of Langport Eastover and Huish Episcopi:

"Ladies and Gentlemen - At the request of several of the Ratepayers of the District I have consented to be nominated as a Candidate for a seat on the School Board.

I should not have agreed to do so had I not found that there were six Candidates representative of the Established Church party, as against one Non-Conformist, and I am of the opinion that Non-Conformists should be properly represented on a Board which has control of the education of their Children, I consented to this course, and beg to offer you my services....." (he then outlines his knowledge and experience in his previous roles).

*"I am, Ladies and Gentlemen, Your obedient Servant,
Hugh Bevan, Meadow View House, Langport, 29th Nov, 1892".*

However, on this occasion Hugh collected only 137 votes and was not one of the five men elected (with between 214 and 385 votes), possibly because he had only been in the area for a few weeks.

Just why Hugh and Louisa decided to move from Pembrokeshire to Somerset is not clear. However, once they are settled in Langport, Somerset, Hugh stepped forward and actively joined the local Methodist congregations in that county. The West Somerset Free Press of 21st October 1893 shows him preaching in the Watchet Wesleyan Chapel. Preaching is of course by no means new for Hugh, and according to the newspapers of the time Hugh remained deeply engaged in preaching and Methodist good works over the next few years. Kelly's Directory for 1895 shows he and Louisa living at Meadow View House in

Langport.

In May of that year however, a newspaper notice announced that an auction would be taking place of the property of Mr Bevan, who had left the neighbourhood, and it appeared Hugh, now aged 74, has moved away to Weston-super-Mare, and although Hugh himself has permanently moved out, he has left his wife of fifty years, Louisa, living at the Meadow View House. Clearly something had happened to cause this apparent separation, although what is not clear, and later events suggest that it is not just a rift in the marriage.

Later that year Hugh Bevan is recorded living in Ormonde Villa, Arundell Crescent, Weston-super-Mare, one of the substantial Victorian villas in a road which is now called Southside (Kelly's directory of 1897).

On 8th September 1897 Hugh Bevan's wife Louisa died from heart disease aged 73 at the couple's former home of Meadow View. They had been living apart for over two years by this time, the death being notified by "*LM Price, niece of the deceased*", who was present at the death and had presumably been her companion or nurse.

Louisa's death certificate states that she was, nevertheless, the "*Wife of Hugh Bevan, Retired Merchant*", and according to the cemetery records, she was buried on 11th September 1897, not in Langport where she had died, but 30 miles north in Milton Road Cemetery, Weston-super-Mare, the town where Hugh now lived. Her gravestone is somewhat difficult to read now but says: "*In Loving Memory of Louisa, the Dearly Beloved wife of Hugh Bevan, who departed this life on 8th September 1897, aged 73.*" The grave is only about 300 metres from Hugh's home so, whatever had caused Hugh and Louisa to live 30 miles apart for the final two years of her life may not have been a lack of love or affection.

The normal period of mourning for a Victorian widower was a year (for widows, two years), and on 30th September 1898, just over a year after Louisa's death, Hugh Bevan, now aged 77, was married for the second time to Sarah Jane STOATE, a 54 year-old widow of independent means and 23 years his junior. They married at the Wesleyan Chapel in Weston-super-Mare. The marriage certificate states that at the time of their marriage Hugh lived at Stafford Road, Weston-super-Mare. In stating his "*Rank or Profession*" Hugh is no longer a tradesman but is a step above. Now he is a "*Gentleman*". His late father Thomas the elder was stated to be a "*Farmer*". At the time of her marriage Sarah Jane Stoate was resident in Watchet, Somerset.

The wedding of two mature adults may well have been a relatively low-key celebration, and a brief notice in the Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser

on 5th October 1898 is all the press coverage I have found. It incorrectly gives the 29th as the wedding date and also refers to the widowed Sarah Jane as “Miss” Stoate, and not withstanding Hugh’s current address, and having lived in Weston for two years, he is “*Mr Hugh Bevan of Langport.*”

Hugh’s new wife, born Sarah Jane HARDING, had married her first husband, John Stoate, at Keynsham in 1884 at the relatively late age of 40, and he had died, an active Wesleyan of The Green at Watchet, only six years later on 29th Dec 1890 aged 54. His estate was worth over £11,000, of which Sarah Jane received £4,000, which was to be held in trust to provide an income during her lifetime, plus the house at The Green. When Hugh first arrived in Somerset he had preached with John’s brother, James Stoate, and so the social circle of the Watchet Wesleyan congregation was almost certainly how Hugh and Sarah Jane had first met.

No lengthy honeymoon was taken following Hugh and Sarah Jane’s wedding as only a few days later the Bristol Mercury reports Hugh Bevan, as ever, presiding at a public meeting following a preacher’s convention at the Regent Street Wesleyan Chapel in Weston-super-Mare.

But just eighteen days after the wedding, on Tuesday 18th October 1898 Hugh Bevan dies suddenly, at the age of 77. His death certificate says that he died at the couple’s new marital home, St Albyn’s, Trewartha Park, Weston-super-Mare, of “*Acute Bronchitis (6 days)*” and “*Heart Failure (2 Days)*”. Hugh is stated to be a “*Provisions Merchant (retired)*”.

The South Wales Echo of 20th October 1898 records the sad event. The notice recalls him as senior partner in the firm of Bevan and Lloyd in Bridgend and as chairman of the “*old Local Board*”, meaning the Local Health Board. Another obituary lists his home as St Albyns, Trewartha Park, Weston-super-Mare. Trewartha Park is a road which consists of substantial Victorian homes.

Hugh Bevan’s funeral was on Friday 21st October 1898. “*The mourners in the first carriage were*” his brother (Thomas the younger), “*Mr Bevan jun, (nephew)*” who was probably my great grandfather John Wesley Bevan, who lived in Weston-super-Mare at the time, and “*Miss Bevan (niece)*”, probably Thomas the younger’s eldest unmarried daughter, Elizabeth BEVAN. Also in that first carriage was “*Mr LLOYD*”, Hugh’s long term business partner from his days in Bridgend.

Hugh’s new wife of one month, Sarah Jane Bevan is not mentioned amongst the mourners although her brother “*Mr Harding (brother in law)*” was in the third carriage. The whole sad event was carried at length in the Weston-super-Mare Gazette and General Advertiser on Saturday 29th October 1898. The report

mentions “*The very sudden and pathetic circumstances*” of Hugh’s death. “*Pathetic*” meaning something invoking pity, rather than its more usual modern usage as a derogatory term.

Later in the same report, a friend of Hugh’s for fifteen years (possibly his business partner Daniel Lloyd) describes him in a funeral oration. Much of the description talks of his religious devotion but records: “...*his striking presence and nervous utterance, announcing the hymn and reading it in his measured and impressive manner, for, though he himself had no voice to sing, he was remarkable as a reader of hymns for others to sing....Impulsive and uncertain in some of his movements, he never wavered in his heart’s trust and life’s aim. He had abounding energy leading him to earnest activity.*”

Hugh is buried in grave Tu 1590 in Milton Road Cemetery in Weston-super-Mare in the same plot as his first wife Louisa. My wife and I visited it in October 2020 in a heavy drizzle. The text on the grave (quoted in part earlier) says: “*In Loving Memory of Louisa, the Dearly Beloved wife of Hugh Bevan, who departed this life on 8th September 1897, aged 73. Also of the above Hugh Bevan who entered into rest the 18th day of October 1898, aged 78 years.*” He was actually a year younger. There is further wording beneath this, probably a religious text, but we could not decipher it.

So Hugh, married for the second time to Sarah Jane just over two weeks earlier, has been buried with Louisa, his late wife who had died two years before. Six months after Hugh Bevan’s death, the Bristol Mercury 17th April 1899, reports on his estate:

“*LOCAL WILLS. Letters of administration of the estate of Mr Hugh Bevan, of 9, Trewartha park, Montpelier, Weston-super-Mare, for many years senior partner in the firm of Bevan and Lloyd, of Bridgend, Glamorgan, provision merchants, who died on the 18th October last, aged 76 years, only a few weeks after his marriage, have been granted to his widow, Mrs Sarah Jane Bevan, by whom the late Mr Bevan’s personal estate has been valued at £2,952 19s 3d, and the whole of his estate £3,792 3s 7d gross.*”

Hugh had died intestate, and the documents available from the Probate state that administration of his estate was granted to Sarah Jane Bevan, his widow of “*only a few weeks*” (as it says in the article above). Intestacy law has not changed since Victorian times: if there is no will and no children (as was the case here) then the estate passes to the widow.

But Hugh was an intelligent businessman, so why was there no valid will?

Hugh had lost his first wife Louisa two years earlier in 1897 and had recently re-

married Sarah Jane so presumably he was not expecting to die any time soon. Perhaps there was an earlier will which was no longer valid (perhaps because of Louisa's death), but a new will had not yet been prepared or signed, because there just hadn't been time after Hugh's marriage to Sarah Jane.

There does however seem to have been some issue with Hugh's lack of will, because in June 1902, three years after his death, a further award was made from Hugh's estate to his brother Thomas Bevan (by then a retired senior "insurance superintendent" living in Bristol). Thomas, who now received the house at Trewartha Park "effects £850", presumably must have been able to provide some proof that Hugh had intended to leave him some of his estate. Sarah Jane had been reasonably wealthy in her own right, having inherited the income from £4,000 plus a house in Watchet, recently sold, from her first husband, although by the date of the above grant in 1902 she herself had died.

So ends the story of Hugh Bevan, businessman, preacher, political activist, philanthropist – someone well-known in South Wales and beyond in his day, and yet a relative whose achievements had been totally unknown to my generation until now.

It is an object lesson in how knowledge fades, but also - to me - an encouragement to keep delving into the family story. Who knows what else might turn up?

As a coda, I mentioned Priory Mill in Brecon earlier and I have written a short history of that mill and its inhabitants over time. It is privately published and if anyone is interested in a copy (£9.99 incl UK P&P) do contact me through enquiries@melinddu.co.uk.

Cardiff Register Office Change of Location - Winter 2023/2024

Please note that from October this year Cardiff (Birth, Deaths and Marriages) Register Office has relocated from City Hall to the Glamorgan Archives and Insole Court premises whilst building work and refurbishment takes place over the Winter – for further information see Glamorgan Archives report on page 37.

BOOK REVIEWS

PORTH FARM, COAL AND TOWN.

A small history of mining in the Rhondda.

David Robinson

The author, David Robinson, is a retired teacher and a descendant of those who farmed at Porth in the Rhondda Valley, South Wales. He found an envelope on which his grandmother had written Porth on it, a reminder that his great uncle, Richard Morris, in his family tree had recorded that his ancestors had once owned a farm at Porth but that little was known about the farm or the people who lived there. This book is the result of the research he has completed.

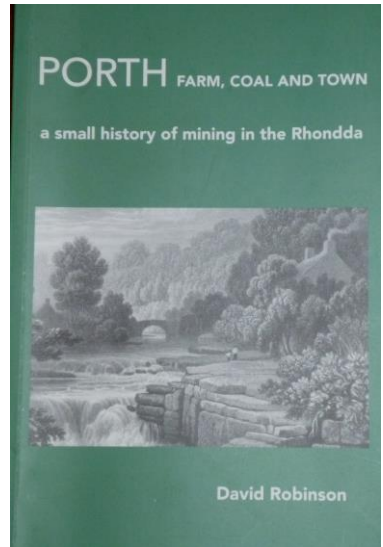
The period it covers is roughly 1840 to 1940; the changes through this period are quite staggering, as they were in most mining valleys, from a rural farming valley to a busy, noisy, bustling mining valley, and then to a mainly residential area with only light industries and where most people have to travel from to find work.

The author describes the farm and its family and how a town was built on the land. He then considers technical and economic aspects of coal mining and finally discusses what happened to the people in the valley when their work disappeared. His enthusiasm and interest in the area really comes across in the pages of this book.

The cover has a stunning engraving of the River Rhondda cascading over rocks in a picturesque valley near the author's ancestors' farm, and inside the photographs and maps are used effectively to complement the written content which is well-written and informative.

The author has spent a great deal of time researching this book, and there is an excellent detailed references section and full details of the sources of the illustrations, as well as a comprehensive index.

I would have liked a few more personal accounts of valley life from the inhabitants of Porth, but the author does go into a great deal of detail which he



acknowledges in the Preface: "much of minor interest is included for the record, and the reader is invited to skip where the narrative becomes too detailed for them." This is a genuine comment, though I am sure that anyone interested in the Porth area will find plenty of information in this book that will interest them and that they will not want to skip.

Published by David Robinson. York 2023
ISBN 978-1-3999-4696-4

Ian Black

LETTERS/EMAILS TO THE EDITOR

- I have received a request for help from Lynda Newbury, who wants to trace the descendants of the family of Evan and Bridget Thomas who resided at 35 Margaret Street, Pontygwaith, from 1901 to 1964. They were originally from Llangynidr in Breconshire but their place of birth does vary on census returns. Evan was a carpenter and he married Bridget in Bedwelty Parish Church in 1874 before moving to the Rhondda in the 1890s. Their 9 children, Evan, Thomas, Isaac, David, Sarah Ann, William John, Edith, Ivor, and Lewis, were born between 1875 and 1895.

- I have also heard from Colin Davies about his attempts to catalogue families and employment status in a mining valley, which has thrown up serious anomalies in the information produced by some Family Research agencies. An article will be written in a future edition so that researchers are made aware of some of the pitfalls to look out for.

News from London Branch of Welsh Family History Societies

Annual Visit to the National Library of Wales (NLW) Aberystwyth

We are planning a visit to the NLW next Summer to once again enjoy the fantastic genealogical resources of the National Library of Wales. In the evenings we can share our discoveries and disappointments, eat, drink, socialise, discuss and plan for the next day!

Please let us know as soon as possible whether you would be interested in joining the group in Summer 2024 and any date constraints you may have. This will determine which week is selected and the number of flats booked. It may be possible to join the group for part of the week.

Publications

A reminder also that we have the following CDs available please contact Bill on billqi@aol.com should you wish to purchase copies or if you wish to have access to the Welsh Debtors database.

- Jewin Welsh Chapel (Calvinistic Methodist) – baptisms 1837 to 1920
- Welsh contributors to the rebuilding of St Paul's.

RootsTech 2024

Registration has opened for RootsTech 2024 which will take place in Salt Lake City Utah and online on 29 February - 2 March 2024.

[Home](#) • [RootsTech](#) • [Family Search](#)

There will be over 200 on-demand class sessions, presentations and speakers. Participation in the virtual event is free. At present I've only identified one Welsh Heritage in person session by Mary McKee (Head of Digitisation at Find My Past) on "Tales of Resilience: Discovering England & Wales Poor Law Union Records" and one online session by Eleanor Ayton (Senior Community Executive at Findmypast) on "Hiking Into The Past: The first steps in your Welsh family history research adventure."

The RootsTech On-Demand Library has over 1500 webinars listed including 38 Welsh Heritage sessions (some are England & Wales and also New South Wales!!) but some are specifically for Wales including one from Beryl Evans on "Til death do us part: Exploring Death in Wales". Link to the On Demand library below.

[On Demand](#) • [RootsTech](#) • [Family Search](#)

Please contact editor@glamfhs.org.uk if you can help or for further information.

Printed Family Trees and Charts

Do you want your Family Tree printed for you on one sheet of paper? We can print your tree from your own computer genealogy program files no matter what program you use.

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See your tree before you buy or pay a penny. Every customer previews their tree on their own dedicated website before deciding to buy or pay a penny. Prices start from as little as £25 for a 500 person tree. We also produce a wide range of other Family History charts, books and gifts for the genealogist. FULL MONEY BACK GUARANTEE if you are not satisfied with any of our products.

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email: info@genealogyprinters.com

NEWS FROM GLAMORGAN ARCHIVES

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2023

Rhian Diggins

Staff

- The Cardiff Registry Office team are moving into the Archives building in October and will be renting three rooms and storage space in the repository. This will bring in considerable income to the service, as well as enhanced benefits such as increased footfall and raising the profile of the service amongst members of the public. Building work has been taking place during September to accommodate these changes.

Access and Community Engagement

- We held a successful Open Doors event on Saturday 23 September. 60 people attended for a tour behind the scenes and to view a selection of documents from the collection. These include a number of sports related items, and an appeal was made for additional records to improve the representation of local sport within our collection.
- Our events programme continues. On 4 July Nic Hodges from the Victorian Barry Experience spoke on 'The Demon Drink', which explored the tensions between the temperance movement in Barry and those residents who enjoyed a drink. On 20 July Norena Shopland gave a talk based on her new book, Women in Welsh Coal Mining.
- The next event in our programme is a talk by Dr John Kenyon on Llandaff Cathedral: History, Art and Architecture. This will be held at Glamorgan Archives on Thursday 9 November at 11am.
- We continue to promote records from the collection through our blog at glamarchives.wordpress.com. We're currently highlighting records of Stephenson & Alexander, Chartered Surveyors and Auctioneers, relating to notable properties in South Wales.
- Work on our project to produce a Research Guide to Sources for the Study of Minority Ethnic History continues. We have recruited 3 paid researchers and 14 volunteers who are busy undertaking research.
- We continue to offer monthly 'Ask the Experts' family history advice sessions, with the support of members of the Cardiff Branch of GFHS, for which we are very grateful.

Collections

- In September we moved over to our new cataloguing system, Epexio. This is now being used for the staff side of our collection management work. The main difference that you will notice is our new public catalogue, which should improve searching of the collection. It can be accessed via our website, or directly at

- <https://canfod.glamarchives.gov.uk/>
- Notable accessions received recently include:

Cardiff Reform Synagogue Records (D1718)

The Cardiff Reform Synagogue was founded in 1948 as the Cardiff New Synagogue (CNS). The following year, it became a constituent member of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain. The congregation worships in a converted Methodist chapel on Moira Terrace, which they acquired in 1952. Records have been received through the Jewish History Association of South Wales. Papers include correspondence, membership applications, newsletters, magazines, orders of service, AGM papers, building and maintenance papers, Council meeting minutes, synagogue rules, Youth Association documents, Ladies Guild records and photographs.

Sessions and Sons Ltd, of Cardiff and Gloucester, Records (D1951)

Records of a long-established firm of builders' merchants have been donated by a family member. Jesse Sessions (1804-1894) purchased two brickyards in Gloucester in 1838, and began his business of brick and tile manufacturing, later becoming a general Builders' Merchant. He opened a branch at Penarth Road, Cardiff, in 1857 (with later subsidiary premises in Newport and Swansea).

In the first half of the twentieth century, Sessions & Sons sold a wide range of internal and external fittings for both domestic and commercial buildings as well as basic building materials. They also owned, and operated from Cardiff and other south Wales ports, a succession of ships engaged in sand and gravel dredging in the Bristol Channel. In 1962 the company was sold to Sharpe & Fisher Limited of Cheltenham.

Business, property and shipping records together with photographs of company directors have been received.

St Fagans Branch Conservative Party Records (D1956)

Records of a local branch of the conservative party have been donated by the Welsh Conservatives. Papers of St Fagans Branch include AGM and committee minutes, 1969-1973, women's section AGM and committee minutes, 1928-1954, and a membership book, 1969-1972.

Ogmore Constituency Labour Party (D1957) / Ogmore and Garw Labour Party Records (D1959)

A collection of labour party records has been received from the Secretary of the Ogmore Constituency Labour Party. Items comprise minutes of the Executive Committee and General Management Committee for the period 1982-2006. Ogmore Constituency Labour Party was created in 1918 under the auspices of

the Labour Party. Owing to the changes in parliamentary boundaries it will draw to a close during October after 105 years of existence, and with continuous Labour Party representation at Westminster throughout this period. In addition, records of Ogmore and Garw Labour Party were also received. Items include minutes of monthly and annual meetings, administrative papers and annual statement of accounts covering the period 1959-1975.

Llandough Hospital Records (DHLL)

A collection of twentieth century patient registers has been transferred from Llandough Hospital. The items were stored in the Hospital's academic library and will be added to an existing collection of records held at Glamorgan Archives.

Deri Primary School Records (ECG19)

Records of a local school have been donated by Darran Valley History Group. Deri (British) Mixed and Infants School was built and opened in 1869. In 1886 the building was enlarged to provide for 200 children. By 1905 capacity had increased to 240 mixed and 191 infants. In 1913 a separate mixed school opened to provide for 270 children, with the original building continuing to be used for 191 infants. In 2023 Deri Primary School teaches 91 children aged 3-11 in the original school buildings.

Items received include a logbook, admission registers, School compendiums, Teachers' attendance registers and papers relating to the maintenance of the school.

Mid Glamorgan Mission Methodist Circuit

The former Superintendent Minister of Mid Glamorgan Mission Circuit has deposited the baptism registers of several churches from the Rhondda. Churches comprise Elim Methodist Church, Trealaw, Tonypandy Methodist Central Hall (Mission) and Zion Methodist Church, Tonypandy.

Cardiff Council update: 06 October 2023

Registration Services are moving – temporary relocation to Glamorgan Archives and Insole Court.

Changes to Registration Services in Cardiff

Registration Services in Cardiff will change temporarily over the winter, with the registrations of births, marriages and civil partnerships due to move from City Hall while the building is closed for essential maintenance.

From October 10th the Register Office will be based at Glamorgan Archives (Clos Parc Morgannwg, Leckwith, Cardiff, CF11 8AW). The offices will be open from 9.00am – 4.00pm Monday – Friday.

All copies of birth, marriage, civil partnership and death certificates will be

issued from the new premises, which will hold all statutory birth, marriage, civil partnership and death records.

Glamorgan Archives will also host all legal register office weddings and civil partnerships, where only the couple plus two witnesses are in attendance. Larger marriage and civil partnerships, which currently take place in the St David's Suite at City Hall, will move to the newly licenced Llandaff Suite on the first floor of the historic Insole Court. The suite offers two rooms – the Cedar Room, which holds 20 guests, and the Walnut Room which has a capacity of 40.

Birth registrations will also take place at Glamorgan Archives and a successful service providing birth registrations in Hubs around the city, by appointment only, will also be expanded.

CHURCHWARDENS' ACCOUNTS FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

A searchable national database of all surviving churchwardens' accounts from the earliest known c1300 to c1850 has been created and is located on the Univeristy of Warwick 'My Parish' portal. When new documents, new manuscript transcripts or extracts and printed sources are located, they will be added to the database. My Parish *'serves as a platform to exchange ideas, showcase projects, launch initiatives, advertise events, solicit collaborations and find materials on parish history, art, heritage and culture'*.

The churchwardens were responsible for the finances of the parish church. The accounts list the annual income through church rates, rents of church property, special collection and burials. Therefore, through the accounts it is possible to estimate the wealth or poverty of a parish, mark the changes in religious policy and follow the changes this caused to furniture and furnishing. Many historians have used the accounts to look at levels of education, the celebration of local and national events, changes to furnishings, communion attendance, social events within the parish, and much more. The accounts can also help with adding meat to the bones of genealogical research as many parishioners are named in the accounts.

My Parish also contains a very comprehensive list of digital and other parish resources including printed and online records. Membership to the portal is free and can be made by individuals or groups.

The Churchwardens' Accounts Database can be accessed via: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/myparish/projects/cwa/

SOCIETY NEWS & REPORTS

ABERKENFIG RESOURCE CENTRE

Our regular twice monthly opening sessions are gradually getting busier. We have had several local members calling in for advice as well as visitors from further afield. We have had a visitor from Australia with family in the USA, South America and Australia, along with two different families from the USA: one looking for a Parc Slip ancestor and the second just dropping in from Texas unannounced. All the family stories were really interesting and we asked the researchers to write something for the Journal.

The annual stock taking was completed over the summer and the PAT testing will take place early in the New Year. The database of family trees is ongoing along with the card indexing, the sorting of the fiche is complete and the maps are being reviewed and re-organised. Flyers have been distributed to publicise the monthly Saturday 'library' sessions which are now taking place in the ARC. The ARC review and training in updating the master database are on hold for the moment.

Various booklets and CDs along with other research materials were taken to the Bristol and Avon FHS Fair and although we had no sales on the day we did receive orders later. We also sold some of the bargain books to those with an eye for a bargain. Several people we spoke to said they would probably visit the ARC to continue their research in the next months.

The ARC continues to be open for research sessions on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month - see poster next page.

Penny Williams, arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2024-2025

Please note increase to membership fees, which from September 2023 are £20 for UK and £25 for Overseas membership, so standing orders will need to be adjusted if you are paying by that method. Other ways to pay are by cheque or preferably online via our website. Renewal forms are included in the centre pages.

membership@glamfhs.org.uk

ARC OPENING DATES

2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month
10am - 2pm

2023

November 8th & 22nd

December 13th

CLOSED ON 27th NADOLIG LLAWEN

2024

BLYWDDYN NEWYDD DDA

January: 10th & 24th

February: 14th & 28th

March: 13th & 27th

April: 10th & 24th

May: 8th & 22nd

June: 12th & 26th

July: 10th & 24th

August: 14th & 28th

September: 11th & 25th

October: 9th & 23rd

November: 13th & 27th

December: 11th

CLOSED 25th NADOLIG LLAWEN

For further information and to book contact:

arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

Please note we will be introducing new research charges as from
1 January 2024

ABERDARE/CYNON VALLEY BRANCH

No Branch Meeting was held during August.

In September we had a research and project up-date session, and work is continuing well on Aberdare Leader Obituaries for 1951-1960. We are very grateful to branch members for volunteering to undertake this work.

On Tuesday 10th October we held our first research session in Aberdare Library. This was well attended, and we are holding these every month in the upstairs room in the reference library.

Our Branch AGM was on Thursday 12th October where the following branch members were elected as Branch Officers and Society Branch Trustee for the next twelve months.

Aberdare Branch Committee

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Chairman | Mervyn Pugh |
| Vice Chair | Robert Lake |
| Treasurer | Pat Rees |
| Secretary | Pat Rees |
| Events & Social | Carol Powell & Pat Rees |
| Branch Research Consultant | Haydn Williams |

Pat Rees was nominated to represent our Aberdare Branch on the Executive Committee.

Following the AGM Rob Jones gave us an excellent talk based on the Early Years of Old Trecynon.

We now have our own Facebook page dedicated to Aberdare/Cynon Valley research only.

Aberdare-Cynon Valley Family History
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/267516402738315>

Pat Rees, aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk

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BRIDGEND BRANCH

Our recent speakers have been very successful with a larger number of members than usual attending. In August one of our members, Nick Davey, spoke about Jacob Matthews who built much of the large suburb in central Cardiff along with the Temperance Hall in the city. In September we heard from Norena Shopland about the research for her excellent new book 'Women in Welsh Coal Mining'. Our next speaker, later this month at our AGM, is Gwerfyl Gardner speaking about Welsh drovers and deliverers. We are planning a research session in November and a social event in the New Year. Several speakers are in the pipe-line for 2024 and hopefully the members will continue to support these events.

We have continued to open these talks via Zoom and several people prefer this option. A new set of speakers and a web-camera have been purchased and these worked very well on the two recent talks. It ensured that everyone in the actual meeting could be heard during the Q and A.

During the summer the Branch started what will hopefully become a regular visit programme with a visit to Cowbridge. A small group of us visited Cowbridge Museum – housed in the cells of the old town gaol – in the morning. The displays were informative and slightly disturbing about the severity of the punishments for what were insignificant crimes (petty theft being a prime example). The cells have a wide range of artefacts related to the history of the Town and the volunteers were very well informed and helpful. We spent the afternoon at the Physic Garden where again the volunteers who gave us a fascinating tour were brilliant. Everyone enjoyed the day and hopefully more will be planned in the coming months – probably indoors over the winter. Any ideas for venues would be very welcome.

Two branch members joined two of the Cardiff branch members to run a stall at the Bristol and Avon Family History Fair in September. We had a busy day talking to people trying to track down missing relatives and mingling with the other Societies. It has been quite a while since fairs like this were shut down during to Covid so it was nice to see them starting up again. Hopefully we can have a presence at future events

Our Branch AGM was held on 16th October. The 2022 AGM report was agreed by all the members present. The 2022-2023 Chair, Finance and draft Accounts were presented and the Accounts have been forwarded to the Auditor ready for the Society AGM in February. The Branch Committee was re-elected as follows:

Chair: Nancy Thomas; Secretary: Vicky Salmon; Finance Team: Sue Tiller, Liz

Krolzig, Nancy Thomas; Membership: Sue Tiller; Library: Liz Krolzig; Programme Manager: Penny Williams; Committee members: Paul Jones & Mari Morgan.

Future meetings, research sessions in the local libraries, and Branch activities were discussed. The formal business of the AGM was concluded and the members enjoyed a fascinating talk 'My grandfather was a milk courier', by Gwerfyl Gardner.

Penny Williams, bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk



CARDIFF & VALE BRANCH

It has been a year of change for the Cardiff and Vale branch of Glamorgan Family History Society, as we handed the online talks, which we had been coordinating since September 2020, over to their own dedicated branch, and resumed our in-person programme in Cardiff following last year's AGM.

Taking into account preferences expressed in a survey of branch members, we planned to hold monthly meetings on Tuesday afternoons at Glamorgan Archives. In November we looked at Plymouth Estate records, followed by a talk from Stephen Rowson on the Cardiff photographer HJB Mills. Due to a shortage of volunteers, we subsequently opted to hold these meetings every other month. Nick Davey led a meeting on non-conformist records in February, followed by a session on education records in April, and a focus on poor law records in June. We are grateful to the team at Glamorgan Archives, in particular Rhian Diggins, for helping to facilitate these sessions.

Fourteen branch members attended a visit to the Family Search Centre in Rhiwbina in July. Thanks go to Karen Prior for organising this event, and to Abigail from the Family Search Centre for hosting us.

A number of branch members, including some committee members, have been unable to attend afternoon meetings at Glamorgan Archives. We have therefore decided to reintroduce evening talks during the forthcoming year in alternate months. We are grateful to Cardiff Bereavement Services for giving us use of the chapel at Cathays Cemetery to host these talks.

Our evening meeting in September featured an excellent talk by Norena Shopland on the subject of 'Women in Welsh Coal Mining'. Thanks go to Tracey Sims for providing refreshments, and to Andrew Elias and Douglas Knight for helping to manage entry to the venue.

Further evening talks at Cathays Cemetery are scheduled for November, March and May, with afternoon meetings at Glamorgan Archives in December, February, April and June. There will be no meeting in January, and in July we hope to organise a local visit or walk.

Our committee this year has been without a Chair, Vice-chair or Secretary, however Stephen Fairhurst has continued to serve as Treasurer; we are grateful for his commitment to this role.

Other branch committee members over the past year were Diane Brook, Karen Prior, Ann Konsbruck, Jeremy Konsbruck, Jenni Phillips and Judith Thomas, with Nick Davey co-opted to the committee. We have very much appreciated the contributions made by committee members this year and would like to thank them all for their hard work.

Thanks also go especially to Sue Hamer, who has continued to provide considerable support despite standing down as a branch committee member last year, and to Jane Graves for assisting us with social media and communications, particularly in relation to the branch AGM.

Diane Brook, Ann Konsbruck, Jeremy Konsbruck, and Judith Thomas have not sought re-election to the committee this year, and Jeremy Konsbruck does not wish to continue as branch trustee.

At the branch AGM held on 3 October 2023, attended by twelve branch members, Jenni Phillips was elected as branch Chairman for the next year, with Stephen Fairhurst continuing as Treasurer, and Karen Prior as a committee member. Nick Davey agreed to be co-opted to the committee for a further year. The AGM was followed by an engaging talk from professional genealogist Morag Peers on 'The Reformatory School Movement'.

We would very much appreciate other branch members coming forward to join the committee, and in particular it is essential that we fill the position of branch trustee before the main Society AGM in Spring 2024.

Jenni Phillips, cardiffmeetings@glamfhs.org.uk

National Library of Wales/Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru Welsh Tithe Maps Survey

We have had a request from the NLW to circulate our members with a link to a survey they are currently carrying out in order to make improvements to the home page of the Welsh Tithe Maps project. This is your chance to comment on the ease of their search engines etc.

<https://places.library.wales>

PONTYPRIDD & RHONDDA REPORT

We have had quite a good year, with excellent speakers and better attendance, with a few new members. It is with sadness that we report the untimely death of Dean Powell, of Llantrisant Museum, who gave excellent and entertaining talks. We shall miss him.

In June we had a belated 25th Anniversary celebration party for the branch which was formed in 1995. Three of the original members are still with us, Jan, Jane and Neil. We had a birthday cake and sang Happy Birthday to the branch! We enjoyed the goodies which members had brought and also a good number of raffle prizes too. Afterwards we split into teams and had fun with the quizzes which Jane had brought. We all enjoyed the evening and thanks to everyone who came.

At the AGM, despite the low number of attendees the majority of the Committee agreed to stay on.

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Chairman | Michael Jones |
| Vice Chairman | Neil Gazzard * |
| Treasurer | Creighton Sims |
| Secretary | Jane Jones** |
| Projects/Research | Deborah Cooke |
| Publicity | Neil Gazzard |

* Neil took over from Dave Shewring who retired due to ill health

** Jane would like to retire as secretary as she has held the post for many years. Unfortunately there were no volunteers.

Committee:

Eira Morgan Angela Hughes Ryland Williams John Phillips



MERTHYR TYDFIL BRANCH REPORT

Our September meeting was altered at short notice as Edwyn Parry was unable to give his talk as arranged, but fortunately Steve Brewer came to the rescue and gave a wonderful, well-illustrated talk. This meant that the October meeting was the one that we ought to have held in September before Steve Brewer kindly swapped dates; Edwyn Parry gave his comprehensive and interesting talk entitled, 'D Day to VE Day: the 53rd Welsh Division'. We are fortunate in having members who can deliver a wonderful talk to the group and in November we have one of our members, Barrie Jones, speaking about his own

ancestors, 'Crimes and misdemeanours, a family tale'.

Our obituary project is still on-going as Michael Donovan has finished work on the Merthyr Tydfil obituaries from 1920 to 1929 and Andrea Heggie has begun to check 1930.

We have met up with some very interesting visitors researching their family history. Walter Mathews and his son spent a week in Glamorgan researching the Merthyr Tydfil Mathews family. It was challenging and unusual as his family left Wales in the late seventeenth century. On his return, Walter compiled a massive volume on his family of nearly 300 pages! He kindly donated a copy to the Merthyr Tydfil Branch and another to the Glamorgan Family History Society. Walter continues to be remarkably enthusiastic and is sending his children and grandchildren back to Wales in July 2024 to learn more about life here in the seventeenth century.

Carolyn Jacob, merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk



SWANSEA BRANCH

The Swansea Branch GFHS AGM was held on Mon 9th October 2023 online, with only three members present. The accounts were presented, showing £30 was paid out during the past year with no other transactions.

The branch needs a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Meetings Secretary.

The group who have, for many years, been transcribing records at the Swansea Archives has dwindled in numbers. They plan to complete transcribing the records they have started and after that will "cease to meet" unless some new volunteers come forward.

Members continue to meet in the archives every month. One of the archivists gives a talk on records available. In September we learned about Clip Corner, which is an archive made available by the National Library in Aberystwyth. It is video clips from all over Wales which can be accessed on two dedicated computers at the archives (Civic Centre).

We booked Elizabeth Belcham to speak after the AGM, but decided it was not worth her giving her time to speak to only three people; she agreed with our decision, and we hope to book her to speak in the future.

Cherry King/Janet Neilson, swansea@glamfhs.org.uk

WEBSITE REPORT

Billie McNamara (Tennessee) is now carrying out the daily website administration and also coordinating new developments. A number of volunteers have come forwards: Jan Mulreany is adding events, Anouska Osborne is learning how to set up pages and Debra Ricks, one of our Australian members, who runs the Queensland GS website, is also now on board to help with future developments which will include uploading the backlog of past journals, updating and adding members interests and looking at Nick Davey's places of worship project and the ARC personal name index cards.

Sue Hamer & Billie McNamara, website@glamfhs.org.uk

ONLINE MEETINGS REPORT

The Online Branch continues to have good attendance to its twice monthly Thursday evening events, a formal talk followed by a less formal 'Coffee and Chat' session. A programme for the rest of 2023 is now in place with preparations also underway for a possible whole day Webinar as part of the 50th Anniversary celebrations. Volunteers are being trained to undertake the administration needed for each session, eg checking attendees. Anyone interested in helping with the Webinar or monthly sessions please contact:

Sue Hamer, arlein@glamfhs.org.uk

RECENT EVENTS REPORT

Glamorgan FHS had a stall at Bristol & Avon FHS fair at BAWA in Bristol on Saturday 23rd September 2023. We were represented by Jean Fowlds, Douglas Knight, Jenni Phillips and Penny Williams. This was our first in-person fair since the pandemic. We were busy with research queries for most of the day, including some enquiries that could be answered with reference to data held on the Society laptop. It was noted in particular that several enquirers were not aware of the Welsh Newspapers website hosted by NLW, which proved to be a popular resource in terms of signposting for further research ideas. Some book sales were made, mostly from the second-hand collection rather than GFHS publications, and some new members were signed up. We were grateful for assistance provided by Nancy Thomas with sorting out things to be brought from the ARC to the fair, and to Jean for transporting everything to Bristol in her car. Members who represented the Society at this fair are potentially interested in attending similar events in future, as it was an enjoyable day and there was a good level of interest and engagement in the Society's activities from visitors to the fair.

Jenni Phillips, cardiffmeetings@glamfhs.org.uk

A COWBRIDGE DAY OUT

Photos – inside front cover.

Now that the world is coming back to life after lock-down, the Bridgend Branch felt it was time to reintroduce the much-loved 'day out'. So, in August a small group of us headed off to Cowbridge for the first of what will hopefully be a growing programme of visits.

Cowbridge is a surprisingly old town with a history dating back to the Roman occupation when a settlement was established along the Roman road across south Wales. There are significant remains of the medieval walled town and the footprint of the medieval homes still dictates the layout of the High Street. There are many old buildings behind the more modern facades, along with the medieval castle ruins and the old church in the village of Llanblethian.

Our morning visit was to the old gaol now used as the Town Hall. The building has two rows of prison cells first built around 1560 during the reign of Elizabeth 1st. They remained in use until the 19th century and housed at different times criminals, the destitute and the first local woman to be transported to Australia. There was also a cell for the condemned awaiting their execution. The museum displays are housed in the old prison cells and this gives a real feeling of what it was like to be 'banged up' here in the Victorian era. There are number of excellent displays about law and order in the town, famous or infamous cases in the area and the resulting severe punishments handed out in court, sometimes for quite trivial crimes (minor theft being a perfect example). Youth crime was a serious problem with many of the youngsters (under the current age of legal responsibility) being repeat offenders, probably because of the situation in which they and their families found themselves. Poverty was not considered an excuse even when there were no alternative ways to feed your family. The cells contain a wide variety of artefacts related to aspects of town history along with local fossils and archaeological finds, some from the Roman military base in the town.

The museum is staffed by very helpful and well-informed volunteers and is well worth a visit. The Museum is open on the first Saturday of each month from 10 am until 4 pm but visits can also be made at other times by arrangement. Volunteers would also be very welcome. For further details contact pierce316@btinternet.com or telephone 01446 773248.

The afternoon was spent at the nearby Physic Garden on Church Street in the grounds of the Old Hall. In the 18th century the garden was laid out by the EDMONDES family with formal beds and paths. The garden became the kitchen garden for the Cowbridge Grammar School in the 1920s. By the 20th century the garden had become abandoned and overgrown, but it was taken

over by a charity with an army of volunteers and has been given a second lease of life.

Although it was late summer there was still a wide range of fruit trees and plants, many of which have been used for medicines for centuries and all of which are highly decorative. We had a great tour led by two very engaging volunteers. They had a wealth of knowledge about the history and use of the plants, most of which would not be recommended in the modern age! Medlar trees, a grape vine, woad, a range of old-fashioned geraniums and some beautiful lavender beds were among the highlights. A return visit in the autumn is recommended when the gingko tree should be at its most magnificent.

The Physic Garden is open every day and plants are for sale on Thursdays. A visit is highly recommended. The Garden has a website with all the details you need at www.cowbridgephysicgarden.org.

We also called into Holy Cross Church, close to the Garden and the Old Grammar School which had been re-purposed as private flats. The church has some beautiful stained glass windows and some elaborate memorials to the great and good of the town. It also has links to Richard III and his wife Anne Neville.

We are hoping to do more visits during the coming months – maybe an indoor visit to one of the record offices over the gloomy winter months. Please get in touch if you have any suggestions about places we could visit or if you would like to be kept up to date on our plans.

Penny Williams, bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk

Research Charges as from 1 January 2024

- Members and non-members
 - First half hour free then
 - £10 per hour
 - maximum 2 hours
- Research request form on website
www.glamfhs.org.uk
or contact: arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ABERKENFIG RESOURCE CENTRE

arc2@glamfhs.org.uk

Saturday Opening Dates & Times

10–12

December Closed

13 January

10 February

16 March

ABERDARE BRANCH

aberdare@glamfhs.org.uk

2 pm Second Thursday in the month at Cynon Valley Museum

Dec - Christmas lunch

11 January: Izzy Parker from Wales Gene Park to give us a talk on DNA as it relates to Family History Research/Ancestry

8 February ; a Research/Project up-date session

14 March: Guest Speaker

Aberdare Library Research Sessions

Tuesday 9 January 2-4

Tuesday 6 February 2-4

Tuesday 12 March 2-4

BRIDGEND BRANCH

bridgend@glamfhs.org.uk

Len Evans Hall (next to the ARC) at 7.30 pm third Monday each month

December- no meeting, Nadolig Llawen.

15 January - Branch Social

19 February

18 March

For further information contact the Branch

CARDIFF & VALE BRANCH

cardiffandvale@glamf.org.uk

First Tuesday in the month, times vary

Tuesday 5th December 2023, 2pm – Glamorgan Archives – Coal Records

January 2024 – no meeting

Tuesday 6th February 2024, 2pm – Glamorgan Archives –
Crime and Punishment records

Cathays Cemetery Chapel Meetings (doors open 6.45pm)

Tuesday 5th March 2024, 7pm – Cathays Cemetery chapel –

Talk: Jenni Phillips – *The Rule brothers: three Cardiff sea captains*

MERTHYR TYDFIL BRANCH

merthyr@glamfhs.org.uk

2 pm Soar, Welsh Centre, Pontmorlais on the 2nd Tuesday of each month

Members gather in Soar for a chat at 1pm.

12 Dec: Merthyr Tydfil Shops - Carl Llewellyn

9 January: Huw Williams - 'The Crawshay family of Cyfarthfa revisited'

February 13th: 'Dust to Dust: Celebrations of Death in 19th Century and Early
Twentieth Century Wales'

12 March

For further information contact the Branch

PONTYPRIDD & RHONDDA BRANCH

rhondda@glamfhs.org.uk

Third Tuesday 7 pm at Pontypridd Museum

December – No Meeting - Nadolig Llawen

16 January

20 February

19 March

For further information contact the Branch

SWANSEA BRANCH

swansea@glamfhs.org.uk

2pm at West Glamorgan Archives for a talk by one of the Archivists
followed by time for research

Oystermouth Road, Swansea, SA1 3SN

December – No Meeting – Nadolig Llawen

9 January

13 February

12 March

For further information contact the Branch

ONLINE BRANCH (Ar Lein)

arlein@glamfhs.org.uk

Talks at 7.30 pm

Thurs 14 Dec: The Welsh Community in Nanaimo, Vancouver Island,
BC, Canada (1860-1914) Dr Gethin Matthews

Thurs 11 Jan 2024: Researching Welsh Ancestors – Gill Thomas

For more information and register for our online talks on Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/glamorgan-family-history-society>

Further updates on Branch meetings and events are posted on our website and
on social media. <https://www.glamfhs.org.uk/events>

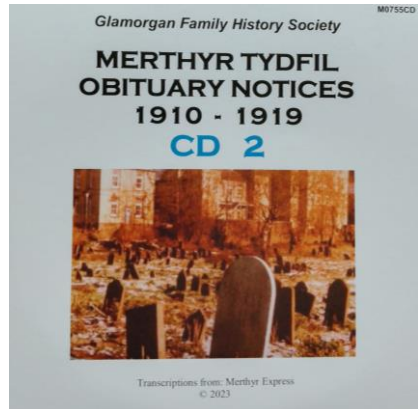
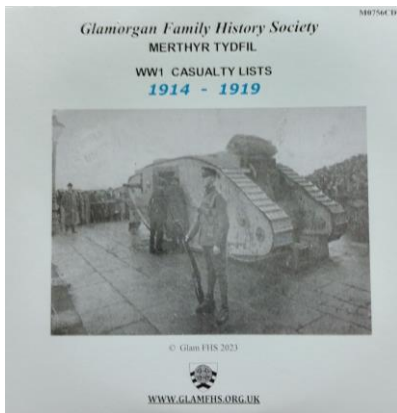
NEW DOWNLOAD PUBLICATIONS

CD Downloads

M0207CD Nantyyffyllon Schools Admissions Registers for Junior School (1903-1922) and Infants (1917-1924). This one is a **Download Only** as CD has not been published but is in the CD section.

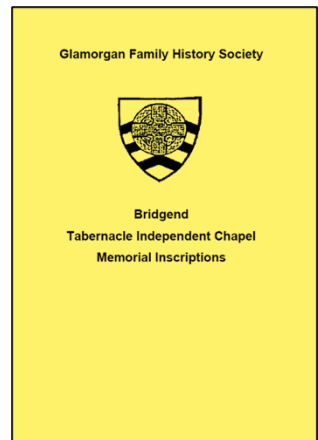
M0755CD Merthyr Tydfil Obituaries 1910-1919 (this is from CD2) - (CD1 is already on sale as Download)

M0756CD Merthyr Tydfil WW1 Casualties 1914-1919



Memorial Inscription Booklet Downloads

A0414 Aberdare Trecynon, St Fagans
B0702 Bonvilston, Carmel United Reform Chapel
B0703 Bonvilston, St Mary's Church
B0704 Bonvilston, Zoar Presbyterian Chapel
B0803 Bridgend, Tabernacle Independent Chapel
B0805 Bridgend, Ruhamah Welsh Baptist Chapel
S0703 St Brides Minor, St Bride
S1909 Swansea Waunarlwydd St Barnabas
C1002 Colwinston, St Michael
C1204 Coychurch, St Crallo
C1205 Pencoed, Salem Calvinistic Methodist
E0302 Ewenny, St Michael



Downloads may be purchased via

www.genfair.co.uk

Glamorgan Family History Society Cymdeithas Hanes Teulol Morgannwg



50th Anniversary 1974-2024

Please let us have any stories, reminiscences,
photographs etc for inclusion in our
celebratory 'Llyfyr 50'

If undelivered please return to:

63 Clos Pwll Clai, Tondy, Bridgend, CF32 9BZ