

HANES

NEWSLETTER OF THE BRECKNOCK HISTORY FORUM

ISSUE 24

SEPTEMBER 2007

I consider myself indeed fortunate to have known Elwyn for a number of years and will always be grateful for his unstinting support, friendship, and co-operation. It is so poignant that just a few days before he was due to present one of his trademark lectures at Brecon Library he fell ill and we were all denied a glorious opportunity to share and enjoy the company of one of our most illustrious and widely acclaimed historians.

Elwyn will always command my greatest respect; I feel privileged to have enjoyed his friendship. Our thoughts and sympathy are naturally offered to Elwyn's family.

If you have something to say, a question to ask, a view to promote then please contact:

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Closing date for January 2008 issue
1st.December 2007

Introducing The Forum

BRECKNOCK MUSEUM

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BRECKNOCK SOCIETY AND MUSEUM FRIENDS

Contact: Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507

BRECON CATHEDRAL LIBRARY

Contact: David Chatfield Tel. 01874 625957

BRECON LIBRARY: LOCAL STUDIES DEPT.

Contact: Chris Price Tel. 01874 623346

BUILTH WELLS & DISTRICT HERITAGE SOCIETY

Contact: Dave and Felicity Gill Tel. 01982 570230

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CRICKHOWELL DISTRICT ARCHIVE

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Contact: Catherine Richards Tel. 01597 826088

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Contact: Martin Everett/Lucy Jones Tel. 01874 613310

TALGARTH AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Contact: Jan Hughes Tel. 01874 711397

YSTRADGYNLAIS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Contact: Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306

Forum Newsdesk

The Brecknock Society and Museum Friends report that the National Library of Wales is engaged in a major exercise to put all Welsh Historical journals on the web - "Brycheiniog" amongst them. This means all back numbers pre 2002 will be available on-line. You may be able to help! "Brycheiniog's" new editor, Mr Brynich Parri, needs to trace all contributors to the journal for copyright purposes, a major and quite daunting task! A list of "lost" contributors is available at Brecon Library and at the Brecknock Museum - please have a look at it, and let Brynach know via brynach@drudwy.zx3.net - if you have any details of the authors or their literary heirs or executors.

The **Regimental Museum**, Brecon, is having a busy summer. There have been many educational group visits, with parties from schools and colleges in England adding to

the numerous regular visits by local schools. The Museum is particularly pleased to have welcomed more groups from Ysgol Penmaes, who enjoy artefact handling sessions, and to have had a first visit from a class of Brecon High School A Level History students studying the Boer War. Another landmark was reached when a pupil from Glanrhyd C.P. School became the 15,000th educational group visitor since their formal education provision began in 2000. Besides school groups, many varied youth and adult groups visit the Regimental Museum for formal and informal visits – do make contact to find out more if you would like to make a group booking. Currently, the Zulu War Colours are a major attraction: they are displayed on a custom-made, climate-controlled stand in the Zulu War Room while Brecon Cathedral's Havard Chapel – their usual home – is being de-decorated. This means there is indeed a rare opportunity to view the colours closely at ground level. They will remain in the Regimental Museum until December 2007.

Ystradgynlais Family History Society are celebrating a well deserved success in gaining a lottery grant for nearly £24,000 to acquire the complete run of "*Llais Llafur*" – the Upper Swansea Valley newspaper – and transferring this valuable resource to microfilm before being placed on deposit at Ystradgynlais Branch Library.

This important development means that for the first time the complete run – 1898 to 1971 – will be available at one location as, currently, researchers are having to access a split resource at the National Library of Wales and the Newspaper Library at Colindale in North London. The first batch of films will be available from September with the second batch hopefully being available by the end of 2007. For further information please contact Ystradgynlais Branch Library on 01639 845353.

Rural Life – A Hundred Years Ago Sunday Schools of Llandewi'r Cwm

One hundred years ago, in the parish of Llanddewi'r-cwm, there were numerous cottages in which were carried on small rural industries such as knitting, spinning and weaving. They were dotted along the main road from Dolinwydd to Pen-y-garreg, and also on the ranges of the Epynt Hills in the vicinity of Pant-y-llyn Lake over-looking the valley of the Wye. So far as the buildings were concerned the cottages were all much alike, and are, by now, swept into obscurity, but the name of one is still cherished, not as a cottage, but as the home of Sam Farr, the weaver, who died about the year 1873. The writer was fortunate enough, some time ago, when taking one of his usual strolls on the Epynt Hills to see an aged man resting on a stone on the hillside, and, when approached, he remarked that he was sitting on a stone he had often used in his boyhood days during his dinner hour when attending school at Tyhwntyn. He pointed to a spot close by and said "Tyhwntyn, a three roomed house stood there 75 years ago, occupied by Sam Farr, the weaver, and Nancy, his wife." The old man continued to talk on enthusiastically about his old schoolmaster, Sam, whom the writer gathered, wore a long beard and was as wild and romantic in appearance as the hills themselves, but underneath Sam's

roughly made garments was a heart of gold, full of the love of goodness and simplicity. He was a remarkable man, self-taught and a great student of the Bible, the only reading book used in his school. Sam Farr's day school did not compare favourably with others held at cottages in the district, as he could not afford to devote much time to it during week days, for, he was a weaver, who supplied a large number of farmers with woven material, and that was his chief means of livelihood, and, during certain periods of the year, he had to provide fuel for the winter, and early and late was to be seen cutting peat within a short distance of his home on a spot known, till quite recently, as "Old Sam Farr's Peat Plot." In addition to peat blocks, turf had to be provided for covering the fire overnight, for, owing to the scarcity of matches, and to save time in the morning, peat fires, in those days, were kept burning for years without being allowed to go out. Upon the removal of the turf the blaze would flare up and the kettle, which was suspended over the fire, soon boiled ready for the morning meal.

The house was very small, but it was sufficient for Sam and Nancy, who spent the long winter evenings there peacefully. Nancy singing as her knitting pins clicked, and Sam working his loom in harmony to her notes in the light of the rush candle. Sam Farr was the proud owner of Tyhwntyn, for his great-grandfather built the house in one night in the days when "Tai un nos" were numerous on the Epynt Hills. He also enclosed a sufficient piece of land to have a good sized garden from which a good supply of vegetables was obtained. The old man went on to relate that eighty years ago there were in Mid-Wales but few men whose name was more familiar than that of "Sam-y-Gweydd (Sam the Weaver), and to others he was known as "Sam-yr-Athraw" (Sam the Teacher). He did not receive the title of teacher from the success of his day school, as it was not one of the most prominent schools in the locality, but his Sunday school held the leading position in a very wide area, the Rhydgwillim Sunday School being second.

Sam Farr's home on the Epynt was less than half-a-mile from Pantyllyn, which was the chief water supply on the hill and from there he carried his daily supplies of drinking water. In his palmy days Welsh was the spoken language of the inhabitants of the hill and most of the residents in the lower part of the parish used the native tongue of Wales. Welsh was the language of the Sunday Schools, which were held at farm-houses and cottages in their turn, and, twice a year, at Easter and Whitsun, which were known as the "Pwnc Days," half a dozen of those schools met at one centre to recite portions of Scripture, and, as a rule, some well-known minister would act as a caechizer for the purpose of testing the knowledge of the scholars, and, when they failed to answer the teachers often filled the gap and a long discussion would follow. Sam Farr was not only a Sunday school teacher, but was a master in the art of debate, and many a catechizer had to give his hand to Sam, the weaver.

The Sunday school in those days, when held at farmhouses and cottages in their turn, was a great success, being attended by adults and children, and was a power in the land that continued till the Welsh language ceased to be the language of rural Wales.

With the passing away of Sam Farr and other stalwarts in Llanddewi'r cwm, the Sunday school of Tyhwntyn and Rhydgwllim ceased to function and the exodus of the people from the land to the industrial centres of South Wales made rural life lonely and unhappy.

The writer, after parting with his old friend, fell into deep meditation, not unmixed with sorrow at the thought of the passing of men of the type of good Sam Farr. Their old abodes have vanished, leaving not one stone upon another, but, turning his eyes to the eternal hills, he was gladdened by the thought that their unchanging majesty remained unaltered from those bygone days, and still magnified the greatness of the Lord, the Creator of all things. Standing on the spot where he had been told Sam the weaver had knelt to pray morning and evening, he could imagine he heard angelic strains being wafted on the wings of the wind, and he wondered if it were possible they were an echo of Sam's song from Beyond the Veil.

An extract from an issue of The Radnor express in the 1930's the editor is grateful to Mr Bryan Lawrence of Rhayader for his thoughtfulness and interest in bringing it to the editor's attention and so allowing its inclusion in the current issue of HANES.

A Landowner's Visit

Much valuable information on landowners' estates in Powys over the years, is contained in maps, schedules, property accounts, and Inland Revenue records. This impersonal detail is very useful, but to complement the picture, it is helpful to view the interplay between landlord and tenant. A rare example of such a diary account, is that of a visit paid by the 4th Marquess Camden, John Charles Pratt (1872-1943), to Breconshire during the Great War in September 1917. He stayed at the Castle Hotel during this period.

Tuesday, September 11th

Weather fine

1. Priory Cottage. Saw Mrs Lewis Williams (*Mrs Williams was the widow of the Marquis' agent, for many years who was Mayor of Brecon in 1893, and died undertaking the rent audit in 1912 aged 59.*)
2. The Priory. Mrs Maybery not at home, but saw her daughter Mrs Fowler, also Major H G C Fowler S W B. Mrs Maybery's son is now in the R F C. (*Mrs Maybery was leasing the Priory from the Camden estates, and in 1923 sold this to Wilfred Seymour de Winton, who bought the freehold for the Church.*)
3. Forge Villa Walked through the Priory Groves and called at the Forge Villa, saw the tenant Mr. Thomas, also his wife and children 2 daughters and 1 son. Returned to Brecon via the Hereford Road and called at
4. The Priory Woollen Factory and Mr. J L Williams explained the uses and working of the machinery which is driven by water power. (*Mr Williams was Mayor of Brecon in 1896, originally from Llanwrtyd. The mill closed in 1937.*) Walked up

King Street (a street of steps) and called at

5. Greenfields saw Miss Williams. (*where is Greenfields now? The electoral Register 1918 records Philip Pritchard Williams as being in residence, who was the son of Lewis Williams, and agent to the Marquis.*) Hence along Alexandra Road to Camden Road calling at
6. Cae Prior Tenant Mrs Kettle (widow), (*Mrs Kettle had been a tenant for many years, and in 1921 purchased the freehold of Cae Prior and 41 adjoining acres for £4,500, including most of present day Camden Crescent.*) Afterwards walked along Camden Road as far as
7. Glynarth But Mr Parry de Winton was not at home. (*Glynarth was built in 1891 for J Morgan Thomas by B E Jenkins with C Best as architect. It was also called Stanwardine and Tresilian during the 1920s/30s.*) After lunch went by car to
8. Lower Pontwilliam the largest farm on the estate. (*on the road between Brecon and Llandefaelog.*) Saw the tenant Mr Thomas Morgan (unmarried) also his sister Miss Morgan. Walked over part of this farm with the tenant and inspected some of his stock. Afterwards drove to
9. Danycrug Farm and saw the tenant Mr Thomas Walters also Mrs Walters, who however was rather unwell. (*the farm lies adjacent to Cradoc Golf Club.*) Family consists of 5 daughters (all young) and one son about 18 who works on the farm.
10. Llethergneuen Farm (Parish of Llandefaelog) saw the tenants Mr Sidney Prothero and his sister Miss Prothero. Afterwards went to
11. Pantllwyfen Farm (Parish of Llandefaelog) saw Mrs Davies and then had a chat with Mr Davies the tenant who was at work in a cornfield. Family 2 sons and 2 daughters. Returned to the Castle Hotel at 5 p.m. and at 6 p.m. received a Deputation from the Brecon Town Council.
12. The Deputation consisted of the Mayor, Mr Wm. Williams (who owing to disposition was not expected to be present) supported by Alderman E A Wright, Alderman D Powell (Deputy Mayor), and Councillor Miss Gwenllian Morgan.

Wednesday, September 12th

Six visits altogether, including Cwmfforch Farm, Parish of Merthyr Cynog, saw the tenant Albert Williams, also Mrs Williams and her eldest daughter. Family 11 children living 6 sons and 5 daughters, one son serving with the army in France. The eldest daughter when very young, lost her right arm so close to the shoulder, that an artificial arm could not be fitted, but the loss does not prevent her doing any kind of manual work. The girl is capable of such as sewing, knitting etc. Mrs Williams claims her ancestors have been tenants of this farm at least 200 years.

Thursday, September 13th

Five visits including The Camden Farm, Trecastle, where lunch was provided by the tenant Mr D J Jeffreys and Mrs Jeffreys. Family 2 sons and 2 daughters, both sons are at Shrewsbury School. After lunch Mr Jeffreys exhibited his Welsh ponies and Hereford cattle. (*In pre-railway days this house was The Camden Hotel and largely patronized by coaches*).

The Camden estate came into being in 1749 with the marriage of Charles Pratt to Elizabeth Jeffreys of the Priory, terminated in 1946 with the final dissolution of all the Breconshire properties.

Mr Anthony J. Bell

The editor acknowledges the researches of Mr Bell and for allowing his work to be included in the current issue of HANES.

One Hundred Years Ago - From The Columns Of The Brecon And Radnor County Times, 1) Friday August 16th 1907

BUILTH WELLS BLAZE

About two hundred years ago the town of Builth Wells was almost entirely destroyed by fire, and it is nothing short of marvellous that the same fate did not befall the picturesque Wyeside spa on Wednesday evening last. As it is five shops have been burnt to the ground, other premises have suffered severely, and the damage done will run into several thousand pounds. At one time the situation was exceedingly critical. It appeared almost a certainty that the whole of High Street and Broad Street would be enveloped in flames, with results too awful to contemplate.

It was between half-past five and twenty minutes to six in the evening when this outbreak was discovered. A lady passing down High Street noticed smoke issuing from the premises of Messrs Wood & Co., provision-merchants, who have shops in various towns in South Wales. It was the half holiday in Builth Wells, and Messrs Wood's establishment, like all others in the town, was closed, no-one being on the premises. The alarm was promptly given, and it was discovered that a fire was raging furiously in the building. There was no fire brigade to summon. Some eight or ten years ago the Urban Council disbanded the organization, and the whole of the plant that remained was an antiquated hose, which is in a more or less dilapidated condition. This was fetched, but it was once apparent that it was practically useless, and after a brief trial it was discarded.

The only method left to fight the flames was the ordinary household bucket. Scores of these utensils were speedily forthcoming and with the water from the River Wye and every available source the inhabitants made gallant efforts to extinguish the flames, which in a very short time spread to the right and left. Recognising the seriousness of the position, Mr John Morris, chairman of the Urban Council, telephoned to Llandrindod Wells, Hay, and Brecon for

assistance, and replies were received that the fire brigades of these towns would arrive as soon as possible on the scene.

Messrs Wood's premises are old and are composed principally of lath and plaster and burnt like matchwood. In a short time the fire spread to the premises occupied by Messrs Wyles and Co., boot merchants, who came to the town about twelve months ago, and who at great expense have very recently carried out alterations which made their shop one of the best of its kind in Mid Wales. Their valuable stock and fixtures burnt rapidly; the flames shot to a great height, and it was with difficulty that anyone could approach the building owing to the dense volume of smoke.

From Messrs Wood's the fire spread to a shop occupied by Mr Thorn, a fruiterer, who was at Llandrindod Wells when he quite casually heard that his shop was on fire. His feelings can be better imagined than described. The next building attacked was a sweet shop, the tenant of which is a Mrs Burgwyn, a widow lady over eighty years of age. The flames appeared to roll through these last two shops like a huge wave, and it was not long before the premises of the Beehive Company, boot merchants and clothiers, were involved. With five buildings ablaze it was little wonder that the inhabitants began to fear for the safety of the whole street. Separated only by a narrow passage from Messrs Wyles' shop is the Crown Hotel, and it seemed any odds that the flames would ultimately reach this building. On the other side the danger was even greater. Next to the Beehive is Mr T. G. Langford's ironmongery establishment. Here there was a scene of great activity. Gunpowder and paraffin stored on the premises, and a great deal of other stock, was speedily removed from the danger zone to a place of safety, and the workers re-doubled their efforts with the primitive extinguishers which they had at their command to fight the flames at this point. It was then recognised that the only way to prevent the fire from spreading higher up the street was by creating a division in the buildings. It was decided to demolish Mr Charles Whislay's printing works, which are sandwiched between Mr Langford's shop and the establishment of Mr J. Ward, chemist. Men set to work with a will, and the roof had been partly taken off when, at 7:00, the Llandrindod Wells brigade arrived on the scene. Operations on Whislay's premises were suspended, and the brigade, getting a plentiful supply of water from the Wye, devoted their attention solely to the task of preventing the fire from reaching Mr Langford's premises. Under Captain Millward the men worked smartly, and by eight o'clock the inhabitants began to breathe more freely, for it was seen that the brigade had succeeded in getting the fire well under control.

The danger was by no means confined to the one side of the street. Immediately opposite Messrs Wood's and Wyles' shops is Messrs J.J. Duggan's large drapery establishment. So intense was the heat from the burning buildings that Messrs Duggan's windows cracked and fell in and further destruction to the handsome frontage was caused by the falling debris, which would have set these premises also alight had it not been for the plentiful supply of water carried to the spot in buckets. Had Messrs Duggan's premises caught fire it is quite possible that the flames would have spread to the King's Head lane, where the houses, most of them ancient buildings, would have burnt

like matchwood. Mr T. Hammond's shop was also slightly damaged by the heat and falling timber.

The excitement during the conflagration was intense. There are hundreds of visitors in the town just now and they considerably helped to swell the dense crowd which assembled in High Street. Not a few helped the inhabitants to fight the fire fiend, and a great deal of valuable assistance was also rendered by farmers and others who flocked in from the countryside.

Considering the circumstances the crowd behaved remarkably well. Naturally, at first, there was some confusion and the absence of a trained brigade, with a recognised leader, was greatly felt. Soon after the outbreak a line of men was formed from the street to the River Wye, a distance of nearly a hundred yards, and buckets of water were passed from hand to hand with astonishing rapidity. Soon, however, the heat and smoke stopped up the narrow passage between the burning premises and the Crown Hotel, and then the water was taken to the back of the Beehive, conveyed up ladders, and poured on the flames. A wise step was taken when an open space was made on the roof between the Beehive and Mr Langford's premises, the progress of the fire being checked here for some time.

The Crown Hotel, the oldest licensed house in the town, was in great danger about seven o'clock, and it was decided to remove as much of the furniture as possible from the building. The flames were shooting across the narrow passage between the hotel and Messrs Wyles' shop, and men stationed themselves on the roof of the hotel and poured water on the sparks as they flew across. There was one very exciting moment. It was noticed that the wall of Wyles' shop showed an inclination to fall against the hotel, and thus spread the outbreak. A ladder was fetched and after several minutes hard pushing the wall toppled over on the inside and the threatened danger to the hotel was averted.

It can readily be imagined that the arrival of the Llandrindod Wells Fire Brigade was anxiously awaited. There were several false alarms and as the minutes sped by the excitement became more and more intense. At last the shout went up "Here they come," and the crowd cheered as the fire engine rattled up Broad Street at full speed. Capt: Millward soon found that the best place to fix the engine was on the bank of the Wye, and the men set about their work with commendable smartness. Very soon the shrill whistle of the engine announced that all was ready, and a sigh of relief went up when it was seen that two hoses were throwing up a capital supply of water on the burning building. The brigade worked splendidly and the cool and skilful way in which the men carried out their work is deserving of the highest praise. The firemen with Captain Millward were Messrs Powell, Morris, Greenwood, Morris, George, Gould, and Rogers. By 8:30 they had the fire well under control, but they were considerably handicapped from now on owing to the fact that the town was in darkness, the gas having been cut off at the main.

About 8:50 Supt. Flye, together with Vice-captain Vaughan and other members of the Brecon fire brigade, arrived in a motor car. They brought with them a hose, and, fixing the stand pipe to the town main, rendered considerable service

in playing on the ruins, which were smouldering up to a late hour.

At eleven o'clock, after three hours and twenty minutes hard work, the Llandrindod brigade handed over their task to the Brecon men and returned home amid the cheers of the crowd

It is certain that the service the Llandrindod brigade rendered on this occasion will not readily be forgotten in Builth Wells.

STRAY SPARKS

The fire is supposed to have originated on the second floor of Messrs Wood's premises. The cause has yet to be discovered.

The first attempt to enter the building was made by Messrs W. Pritchard and E. Griffiths. They bulged the front door open but were beaten back by the flames.

Three of the shops – Messrs Woods, Wyles, and the Beehive Company – are lock-up shops. The rooms above Messrs Wyles' premises are tenanted by Mrs Smith and family, who had nearly all their belongings destroyed.

Several people were slightly injured by falling glass and debris during the fire. It is remarkable that many of the workers did not meet with serious accidents in their gallant efforts to extinguish the flames.

The Brecon and Hay fire engines were despatched to Builth, but before they reached the town messengers met their captains and informed them that their services would not be required.

"I am practically penniless," remarked Mr Thorn, the fruiterer, to one of our representatives. "All I've got left is what I stand up in." It is pleasing to record that Mr Gilbert, of Llanelwedd, very kindly sent Mr Thorn on Thursday morning £5 to help to tide him over his great loss.

It is quite impossible at present to estimate the damage done, but a prominent local builder puts it down at £5,000. Others say this amount is likely to be considerably exceeded.

Builth Wells is famous for its choirs and its cricket and football teams. Perhaps the townspeople will now lose no time in seeing that they have also an up-to-date fire brigade.

the chairman (Mr John Morris) complimented the "County Times" for its extensive and accurate report of the fire.

The last big fire at Builth Wells occurred about fourteen years ago, when Messrs Price and Williams' timber works were destroyed.

It is impossible to give the names of any who worked so gallantly before the arrival of the brigade to extinguish the fire. All worked like Trojans and many risked their lives repeatedly.

Visitors from Llandrindod Wells and other places flocked into the town on Thursday to view the holocaust. By an early hour the wreckage had been removed and the street made passable.

On the 20th of December, 1691, Builth was entirely destroyed by fire. On that occasion letters of patent were granted by the Crown to empower the sufferers to collect alms from the benevolent and charitably deposed. Last Wednesday's fire raged for about two hours; the fire of 1691 raged for five hours, and with a gale of wind blowing at the time the flames consumed the dwelling houses of forty-one substantial families, with all their corn, furniture, effects, and merchandise, to the great impoverishment of the adjacent country and the decay of trade, Builth being then as now a very great and considerable market town. The damage sustained by the fire of 1691, as ascertained by the oaths of the sufferers, as well as of architects and tradesmen of different descriptions, amounted to £10,780, besides £2,000 sustained by persons who did not apply for relief.

2) Friday August 23rd 1907

BUILTH WELLS FIRE

ECHOES OF THE DISASTER

Scores of cyclists visited Builth Wells on Sunday to view the scene of last week's disastrous fire.

When the fire was doing its destructive work in the streets the flood in the river Wye carried away eleven boats belonging to the Improvements Committee. On the following day some were found at Erwood and others at Glasbury, all greatly damaged. Three are still missing.

At a special meeting of the Urban Council last Thursday votes of thanks were accorded the Llandrindod, Brecon, and Hay Fire Brigades for their services. Supt. Flye and P.S. Watkins were also thanked for the excellent work they rendered under most difficult circumstances. Incidentally,

Messrs Wyles Brothers, Ltd., have kindly promised to subscribe £10 towards the relief fund just opened by the members of the Urban District Council. The company, undoubtedly, has sustained great loss, but it is pleasing to find that they have sympathy for others and are anxious to help. The stock was nearly all burnt out, but all that was saved has been disposed of. We are informed that the company will open shortly in High Street, next door to the White Horse Hotel.

Builth Wells is famous for its choirs and its cricket and football teams. Perhaps the townspeople will now lose no time in seeing that they have also an up-to-date fire brigade. When the timber yard of Messrs Price and Williams was burnt to the ground on the 26th of October, 1893, the following paragraph appeared in a local paper: "The outbreak of fire has tended to show the great need there exists in the town of Builth for a proper fire extinguishing apparatus, and some of the members of the local board who witnessed the conflagration were heard to say that something must be done in the matter, for if a fire were to break out in the middle of the town, where the houses are so close together, there is no calculating the great mischief it could do".

At a meeting of the Urban District Council on Monday the chairman (Mr John Morris) reported that the committee which had been appointed had visited those who had sustained loss by the fire. Messrs Whislay Bros. estimated their loss at from £400 to £500; Mrs Burgwyn, from £40 to £50; Mr Smith put his loss at about £50; and Mrs Thorne produced a list of her losses, which were estimated at over £200. After some discussion it was decided to open a subscription list, and to make it known that at least £100 was required to meet pressing cases. The following sums were promised: the Chairman, £5; Mr H. Vaughan Vaughan, £5; Mr T. Hamar, Mr H.T. Price, Mr Gilbert Eadie, Mr John Pierce, and Mr James James, £1 1s each; Mr T. Worthington, 10s 6d. The chairman reported that he had received a letter from Mrs Harcourt Wood, Caerberis, asking what had been done for the sufferers who were not covered by insurance, and he would now let her know what the Council were doing.

SUBSCRIPTION LIST

We have been asked to publish the following letter of appeal:

Dear Sir or Madam, - The Urban District Council of Builth Wells beg to appeal to the inhabitants of Builth and district for subscriptions to assist the tenants who have suffered by the recent fire and who, unfortunately, have not insured their personal property.

The Council believes that at least £100 will be required to compensate to some extent the persons who have suffered, and they feel that in issuing this appeal they will receive the generous support of the town and neighbourhood.

Mr W. Snead Williams, manager of the National and Provincial Bank, and Mr David Thomas, manager of the London and Provincial Bank, have kindly promised to act as treasurers and to receive subscriptions on behalf of the fund.
– Yours faithfully

John Morris
Chairman of the Council

Aug. 28th, 1907.

Brecknock Bookshelf

A Selection of New and Recent Titles

Dates for your Diary

2007

September 6th (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Internet Night*. Ystradgynlais Branch Library 7:00pm. All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

September 8th (Saturday) Builth Wells and District Heritage Society. *Full day Field Trip based on "Industrial South Wales" – a coach trip departing from The Groe car park*. Details to be provided nearer the time. All information Mr Chris Mainwaring Tel. 01982 552689.

September 11th (Tuesday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Talk by Revd. Herbert Hughes "Howell Harris – Man of God with feet of clay."* 7:00pm Plough Chapel Schoolroom, Brecon. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

September 19th (Wednesday) Crickhowell and District History Society. *Val Williams – in costume - "A Personal History from the 1851 Census."* Scout Hall, Castle Road, Crickhowell, Crickhowell, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Margaret Finnis Tel. 01873 810004.

September 20th (Thursday) Llangammarch Wells Local History Society. Mr Howell Evans "The Reverend Theophilus Evans and his Contemporaries." Alexandra Hall, Llangammarch Wells, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Pamela Lewis Tel. 01591 610479.

October 1st (Monday) – October 6th (Saturday) Brecknock Museum. (Large Gallery) *Planetarium. October 4th is the 50th anniversary of the launch of Sputnik 1 and the beginning of the Space Age. Celebrate World Space week by visiting the travelling planetarium at the Brecknock Museum and seeing samples of real moonrock and meteorites. Find out more about the night sky and how humans have ventured beyond the Earth. Events for schools; please phone to check times of public planetarium shows. All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.*

October 4th (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Bring Along a Tree Evening*. Ystradgynlais Branch Library 7:00pm. All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

October 6th (Saturday) – December 1st (Saturday) Brecknock Museum (Small Gallery). "Reg Gammon." *This exhibition will celebrate the work of Reg Gammon, artist, writer and countryman who lived at Capel-y-ffin from 1939-1962. During this time Gammon illustrated articles for the News Chronicle, the Cycling Tourist Gazette and the Nylon Spinners Magazine, many of which recorded his experiences of working a small hill farm, and the people who were his neighbours. Following his death in 1997 at the age of 104 the Brecknock Museum has built up a collection of his paintings of the Llanthony valley in which he lived and these will be displayed together for the first time. All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.*

October 11th (Thursday) South Wales Victorian Society. 10:30 for 11:00 am at The Diocesan Centre, Brecon Cathedral. *Talk on what the Victorians spared and repaired. "The Medieval Church Screens of Brecknock." Mr Richard Wheeler, author of the recently published important book on the Screens of the Southern Marches. This will be followed by a tour of Brecon Cathedral and, after lunch, a walking tour of significant Victorian buildings in Brecon. All information Mr Richard Camp Tel. 01874 636647.*

October 13th (Saturday) Brecknock Museum. "The Big Draw." *Join this hugely popular annual event co-ordinated by the Campaign for Drawing. Materials are provided and everyone is welcome to join in. All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.*

October 13th (Saturday) – November 24th (Saturday) Brecknock Museum. (Large Gallery) "The Festivals of Nepal." *Brecon is home to many Ghurkha families from Nepal. Our Festivals of Nepal exhibition shows collections from the Liverpool World Museum and vivid and colourful photographs by Barbara Hind. Barbara has travelled to Nepal and the Himalayan mountain countries many times and has exhibited her*

stunning photographs worldwide. All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.

15th October (Monday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Mr Mark Lodwick, Finds Liaison Officer from the National Museum will talk and answer questions on: "The Portable Antiquities Scheme, recent local finds and research, and the interest in metal detecting."* 2:30pm Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

October 17th (Wednesday) Crickhowell and District History Society. *Mrs Margaret Gregory "The Monmouthshire Police Force."* Scout Hall, Castle Road, Crickhowell, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Margaret Finnis Tel. 01873 810004.

October 18th (Thursday) Llangammarch Wells Local History Society. *Mr David Geally "The Tonn Press."* Alexandra Hall, Llangammarch Wells, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Pamela Lewis Tel. 01591 610479.

October 29th (Monday) Powys Family History Society – Brecknock Group. *Mr Philip Whitcombe "How to start and develop your Family Tree" and Mrs Hilary Williams "A practical guide to using the internet."* Trecastle Village Hall 7:30pm. All information Mr Philip Evans Tel. 01874 754365 or Mrs Lynda White Tel. 01497 847229.

November 1st (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Details to be confirmed.* All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

November 13th (Tuesday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Talk by Mr Ken Jones "Election Fever! Five Parliamentary elections in Brecon 1865-9."* 7:00pm The Guildhall, Brecon. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

November 21st (Wednesday) Crickhowell and District History Society. *Mr Robin Williams "Newport: One Hundred Years of Engineering."* Scout Hall, Castle Road, Crickhowell, 7:30pm. All information Mrs Margaret Finnis Tel. 01873 810004.

November 26th (Monday) Powys Family History Society – Brecknock Group. *Mr Steve Clarke "An illustrated talk on Archaeology including local excavations at Bwlch, Llanddew, and Hay-on-Wye."* Kensington Chapel Schoolroom, Watergate, Brecon, 7:30pm. All information Mr Philip Evans Tel. 01874 754365 or Mrs Lynda Whyte Tel. 01497 847229.

December 1st (Saturday) – January 12th 2008 (Saturday)

Brecknock Museum. (Large Gallery) *"The Christmas Kitchen in Wales."* *Heart of the home! Kitchens have always been the centre of rural life. Before there were microwaves and food processors there were bottlejacks and butter churns, cauldrons and ale mullers, spice tins and sugar cutters. Discover more about cookery in the age of Mrs Beeton in this exhibition and take part in the Christmas cookery workshops.* All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.

December 6th (Thursday) Ystradgynlais Family History Society. *Annual Dinner.* All information Mrs Caryl Jones Tel. 01269 825306.

December 8th (Saturday) – January 19th (Saturday) Brecknock Museum (Small Gallery). *"Patricia Bostock-Riley: Weaver."* *After a long and varied career, including that of graphic designer – designing the layouts for the Mountain Centre and Craig-y-Nos for the National Parks, Brecon – Riley became interested in weaving in the 1980's. She went on to teach at West Dean College in Sussex. This exhibition will display her weaving, particularly her beautiful braids.* All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.

2008

January 19th (Saturday) – March 1st (Saturday) Brecknock . (Large Gallery) *"The Welsh Group: 60 Years – A Celebration."* *The Welsh Group, Wales' foremost association of professional artists, is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2008. During the last sixty years it has exhibited the work of some of the best known artists in Wales including Ceri Richards who was for a time its artist-President. To mark this anniversary, the current members of the Welsh Group will be showing a selection of their latest work.* All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.

January 26th (Saturday) – March 8th (Saturday) Brecknock Museum (Small Gallery). *"The Railways of Breconshire."* *This exhibition will trace the history of the railways of Breconshire from their arrival in Brecon in c.1862, to their closure in 1962 as part of Dr. Beecham's rationalisation of the railway systems of Britain. Railway companies looked at will include the Brecon & Merthyr, Neath & Brecon, and the Cambrian & Midland.* All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.

January 27th (Sunday) Powys Family History Society – Brecknock Group. *Annual lunch at Bishops Meadow Motel, 12:30 for 1:00pm.* All information Mrs Eirwen Jones Tel. 01874 754365.

February 18th (Monday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Illustrated talk by Mrs Wendy Camp*

“Francis Kilvert – his pastoral life.” Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery 2:30pm. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

February Half-Term. Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Closing date for entries in the Junior Schools History Competition (to be awarded in March).*

March 8th (Saturday) – April 20th (Sunday)
Brecknock Museum (Large Gallery). *“Ian Phillips Source to Stream: Water Through The Brecon Beacons.”* Described as a “rocky terrain of rivers, deep caves and spluttering waterfalls...and limestone uplands peppered with glass-like lakes”, the Brecon Beacons have been formed and are defined by water. The exhibition will show a series of lino-cut prints produced by the artist from his sketches made while walking the landscape. All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.

March 14th (Friday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *The Sir John Lloyd Memorial Lecture given by Professor Penelope Caulfield “Rhetoric, Radical Politics and Rainfall: John Thelwell in Breconshire 1798-1800.”* (Members will be given priority booking). The Guildhall, Brecon 7:30pm. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

March 15th (Saturday) – April 27th (Sunday)
Brecknock Museum (Small Gallery) *“Angharad Whitfield: Stained Glass.”* An award winning artist in stained glass, Angharad Whitfield combines contemporary techniques with traditional painting mediums. Drawing on her love of traditions of Welsh culture, mythology and storytelling, she creates contemporary pieces in glass which can take the form of small panels, wall-mounted light boxes or free-standing towers of glass. All information Brecknock Museum Tel. 01874 624121.

March 31st (Monday) Brecknock Society and Museum Friends. *Annual General Meeting 2008.* 2:30pm Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery. All information Miss Helen Gichard Tel. 01874 636507.

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