

Notes from Local Interest Group Meeting 31st October 2019

Present: Wendy and Dainis Ozols (WO, DO), John (JP) and Margaret Price, Roy and Avryl Lloyd, Neville Harley, David Price, Joan Lloyd, Edwina Griffiths, Joan Hughes, Shirley Meredith, Cherry and Victor Williams, Grace Davies, Richard Thomas (RT), Helen Barnett

Apologies: Maureen Lloyd, Tim Francis

In ML's absence, WO opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She explained that John Price had very kindly offered to provide the content for the meeting in ML's absence.

JP said that he would be showing a number of short film clips, most of which were of the various outings that the group has gone on over the last few years and which he has been videoing as a record of what we do. However, he also explained that a couple of the clips had been provided by Avryl Lloyd.

We started the evening with a clip of the WI "Kitchen Band" playing on the programme "That's Life", probably in around 1986. We could recognise many of the "musicians", who included Avryl Lloyd, Edwina Griffiths, Betty Lloyd (x 2), Phyllis Lloyd, Iris Lloyd, Jenny Smith, Joan Meredith, Sheila Meredith, Vicky Gore and Val Price. This was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone and was a lovely way to begin the evening of "memories".

JP then went on to show us some clips from LIG outings. These included:

The Garth 28/07/16 We walked up to The Gun on the Garth and then explored the Iron Age hill fort on the same hill. Although this was July, it was a cool and damp evening, but everyone enjoyed the views from the Gun and then some refreshments which people had brought to share.

Visit to Rhosgoch Bog 30/06/2016 We were fortunate to have, as our guide, the renowned local wildlife expert, Ray Woods, and we enjoyed yet another damp evening learning about the ecology of this very important and rare raised bog. Despite the poor weather, members found wildlife, such as a wonderful Scarlet Tiger moth and Common Darter dragonfly, as well as numerous wildflowers, all of which Ray identified for us.

Rhosgoch Mill 31/08/17 On a wonderful sunny evening, the group was shown around the Mill by Rev Janet Russell. This was before major work on the restoration of the building had begun and people noted how much has changed in the intervening two years. Many of the old features of the Mill, such as the mechanisms for working the grinding stones, were still in place. Janet had also provided a number of old photos of the Mill and her family for people to look at. This visit had attracted a very large crowd.

The Lane – Maes Awyr 31/08/17 Following the visit to the Mill, the group was welcomed by John and Evelyn Bally at Maes Awyr. John showed the group the hangar where the small planes are kept and explained how the airfield came into existence. Afterwards, the group had a rare treat as Evelyn had put out her collection of Victorian toys for everyone to see and "try out".

Begwns Ponds 29/06/17 This visit was led by Hannah Shaw and Penny Williams, both from the Freshwater Habitats Trust. They explained how important the ponds on the Begwns are; in fact, they are "flagship ponds" because of the excellent quality of their water and amazing habitats for rare species, such as pillwort, that they provide. This was another very well attended outing, but again the weather was not particularly kind.

The Ciliau 10/07/17 This visit was courtesy the owner of the house, Roger Capps (who unfortunately was away on a trip), and Emma Beynon, who very kindly showed us around. This was a fantastic opportunity to see a very special and important house and was another very popular visit.

Curlews on the Begwns and the Maesllwch Estate 29/03/18 This was a film that JP had made of a couple of talks in the Village Hall. Firstly, Stephen Mullard and Chris Ledbury, from the Radnorshire Wildlife Trust, talked about the project to monitor the curlew population of the Begwns. Attendees were asked whether they would like to be part of the monitoring scheme. This was followed by a most interesting illustrated talk given by Ken Jones about the history of the Maesllwch Estate and the deWinton/Wilkins family, and their links with the East India Company and Wilkins Bank (now Lloyds) in Brecon.

Llanbwchllyn Lake 28/06/18 This was a very special visit, led by the volunteer wardens of the Radnorshire Wildlife Trust's reserve, Stephen and Judy Mullard. We were blessed with exceptionally good weather and were privileged to have been taken to parts of the reserve not normally accessible to the public. This was a rare treat to see a very special local wildlife site at a time of the year when the flora was particularly interesting.

Llandeilo Graban Cefnige Mill and the Motte 26/07/18 The mill is now a ruin and very overgrown, but members enjoyed exploring what was left and hearing ML's stories about the mill and its residents. We then went on to explore the Motte, courtesy the Pugh family from Cwrt y Cribin. Once again, we enjoyed a wonderful evening with many members climbing the rather steep motte and exploring the deep ditch.

Bottledock and Penisarplwyf 26/07/19 Sadly, despite having done very extensive research for this visit, ML was unable to attend and so we relied heavily on Elwyn Jones and Andrew Simmonds to show us the site of Bottledock. Afterwards, we were welcomed into Elwyn and Caroline's wonderful and very historic home (house dates from 1641), where we were also given much needed refreshment after our walk up the slope from the Bachawey.

Old Buildings in Painscastle 29/08/19 This was a tour of some of the older buildings in the village, including the site of the Old Shop and Nap House, the Post Office, Dyffryn and the Pub, Castle Farm and finally the old School (now the Village Hall). The group was shown around the newly refurbished Castle Farm by Iris Lloyd and learned a great deal about its history and the Lloyd Family, who own it. The visit to the Village Hall included a display of old photos and reminiscences of what it was like to be a pupil there from Cherry Williams, Roy Lloyd and Ken Lloyd.

Lower Pentre The final clip of the evening was one provided by Roy and Avryl Lloyd. This was a film, probably dating from around 1988, showing Lower Pentre, where Roy's Aunt, Ivy, and her husband, Harold, lived and farmed. It showed the family (Roy, his father AJ and Harold) cutting, rowing up and collecting the hay, as well as Lisa and James Lloyd riding a pony and bicycle respectively around the yard. There were also some clips of Painscastle village and in one scene Roy's mother, Olwen Lloyd, could be seen tending her front garden. In this section, the pub looked quite different because the film was made before the fire. This was a wonderful insight into rural life in the 1980s and everyone particularly enjoyed this clip.

WO thanked JP for providing such an entertaining selection of clips and for helping us to remember all of the wonderful trips that we have been fortunate enough to enjoy. She also thanked RL and AL for providing their most interesting input to the evening's activities.

Finally, Richard Thomas asked whether he could bring to the attention of LIG members a consultation process that might be of interest to some. The consultation process ends on 15th November 2019 and so it is important that people should be made aware of this as soon as possible. The link is: <https://gov.wales/draft-national-development-framework>

The consultation (initiated by the Welsh Assembly Government) is about the need to develop more green energy in order to decarbonise energy supplies within Wales. The plan is to have 70% of energy coming from renewables by 2030. The key priority in this part of Wales is likely to be the development of wind energy and solar power. A map of priority areas has been drawn up and

Painscastle and the surrounding land fall into Priority Area 7 of the map. Basically, Painscastle is at the centre this area, which includes the Begwns, and is an area the Welsh Government are identifying as a priority area for large scale wind and solar development to be directed towards, with a presumption in favour of large scale on-shore wind and solar energy development in these areas, and an acceptance of landscape change and a focus on maximising benefits and minimising impacts.

