

Notes from Local Interest Group 28th April 2016

Present: Maureen Lloyd (ML), Avryl Lloyd, Margaret and John Price (JPH), Ginny Guy, Wendy and Dainis Ozols, Richard Martin, John Price Rhosgoch, Adrian Chambers, Peter and Pauline Spode, Grace Davies, Edwina Griffiths.

Apologies: Roy Lloyd, Sue and Phil Griffiths, Bethan Davies.

ML welcomed everyone and said that JPH would be the main contributor for the evening.

Sale of Council Farms in Herefordshire

JPH played us a recording of an item from the radio which was looking into the sale of Council owned farms in Herefordshire. Tenants have been served with notice to quit in 12 months time. The tenant farmers cannot afford to buy the farms because even a small farm would cost about one million pounds. Over 200 council owned farms have been sold in the UK since 2012. Although some tenants can negotiate a new lease with incoming landlords, not all have this opportunity. JPH said that this was obviously an item with local interest and he asked if anyone knew whether Powys County Council was considering doing the same, but no-one knew. There are three such farms in the local area – Glan yr Afon, Groesvaen and Vron Howey.

Betty Lloyd Reminisces

JPH then showed us part of a recording made by Grace Davies in November 2002. The event was a WI Open Meeting and the speaker was Betty Lloyd, who lived at the Castle in Painscastle and, before that, in the Post Office. Her Father had been the postman and she had helped her parents in the shop before she married Tom Lloyd and moved up the road to Castle Farm. Tom Lloyd's father had bought the farm in 1918. Betty was a keen student of local history and, because of her long association with the village, and indeed the area (she came to Painscastle from Aberedw as a child), she was able to draw on her years of knowledge and experience to keep a large audience entertained and enthralled for almost two hours.

In the section of the recording that we saw, she talked about the antics of the local youths and other local characters. Some of the most amusing anecdotes were about a man called Goodwin Pryce who lived at Whitehall and who the local youngsters used to tease. Also living at Whitehall, though in a separate dwelling, was Granny Roberts (Ada Roberts) who was a very popular lady. Whitehall was demolished sometime in the 1960s and there is now a new bungalow of the same name just opposite where the original building was sited.

She also spoke of how cider was once made outside the pub. It was pumped across the road to Gatehouse, then down to the well and finally to the Dyffryn; this is where the Post Office was located. She remembered a time when there were 84 children at the village school, with three teachers, one of whom was the head teacher. She made the point that people had much larger families in those days. Apparently two of the classes had to share a classroom and somehow the teachers succeeded in making this arrangement work.

After we had seen the film clips, JPH showed us data from a 1939 record which included some of the characters that Betty had mentioned in her talk, including her own family.

Everyone agreed that this was an amazing record of life in the local area in the early part of the 20th century and an incredibly valuable resource. GD should be applauded for her foresight in recording the meeting. Anyone who would like to borrow the DVD should contact ML.

ML mentioned that she had received an e mail from Bethan Davies, Betty Lloyd's granddaughter, saying that the family has some artefacts which have been dug up in the fields at Castle Farm and which she will bring to a future meeting of the group.

The meeting ended with some refreshments kindly made by Avryl Lloyd and Edwina Griffiths.