



**Brecknock Society  
and Museum Friends**

**Brecknock Society: Chair's Newsletter      Winter 2022**

As we approach the end of 2022, I wanted to update you on some of the things the Society has been doing and whet your appetite for the 2023 programme of events.

**Y Gaer**

**- Senior curator**

As you will know, Nigel Blackmore has left Brecon for a new job at Pontypridd Museum. He will be missed but we had an opportunity to say farewell and thank you when members of the Brecknock Society Council took Nigel out for dinner in Brecon in November. We look forward to meeting and working with his successor. Powys County Council has also advertised a new post of Assistant Curator, which is being funded by the Brecknock Arts Trust. This role will be critical in organising art exhibitions and making full use of y Gaer's significant art collection. The job description is on the Powys County Council website, so do spread the word.

**- Stakeholder groups**

It is frustrating that the key stakeholder groups on which the Society is represented have not met or worked effectively for some time. We will continue to press Powys County Council staff to relaunch both the Engagement Group and the senior Champions group, which we regard as key to delivering the vision for y Gaer and raising its profile not only in Brecon but Powys, Wales and the wider UK.

**- Monthly talks**

Many of you will have attended the monthly talks which the Society is organising on the second Saturday of each month at y Gaer and more are planned for 2023. We were able to arrange for the café to be open for the November talk and hope that it will soon be open on a daily basis. You will recently have received an email about the next monthly event on 10 December and we look forward to seeing you there.

**- NPTC**

The management of the café is the responsibility of Neath Port Talbot College (NPTC) and I am now regularly in touch with the Vice Principal, Gemma Charnock. I am due to meet her and the Chair of the NPTC Board, Rhobert Lewis, in January and have explained the importance of y Gaer as a venue for local events and organisations. I look forward to building on this partnership.

**- Funding support**

The Society has also been able to support the purchase of audio equipment for y Gaer; an overhead projector for the courtroom and postcards for sale in the shop.

### **- Exhibitions**

The excellent John Uzzell Edwards exhibition opened on 10 November and will run until February. It will be followed by an exhibition of works by the Welsh Group, which celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023.

In July there will be an exhibition, curated by Peter Wakelin, of the work of the artist and writer David Jones during his time at Capel y Ffin. This will include loans from major public galleries and private collections and Dr. Rowan Williams has accepted an invitation to open the exhibition. We are working with Peter, y Gaer and the Brecknock Arts Trust on a programme of events which is likely to include a conference, joining forces with the David Jones Center in Washington DC, and some literary events. So watch this space.

### **Brecon Beacons Historic Environment Action Plan**

The Society is represented on a core group of organisations developing a Historic Environment Action Plan with the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

The purpose of the Plan is, *“To promote the conservation, enhancement, celebration, and shared understanding of our historic environment for the benefit of current and future generations.”* A dedicated website is under development and will provide a dynamic platform for wider involvement as the Plan is progressed.

### **Future events**

It was good to see many of you at recent events such as Ken Jones’s talk about the Brecon Town Improvement Plan and Ruth Coulthard’s talk about the Gunpowder Works and we have an excellent programme planned for next year. We will send the usual reminders, but the calendar currently looks as follows:

- 9 January (3pm The Muse) - The Burney brothers of Hay: Forgotten heroes of World War Two- Hugh Purcell and Margaret Percy;
- 14 February (2pm Hay Castle) - Mari Fforde will be sharing more information about the Hay castle project following the Society visit earlier this year;
- 17 March - Sir John Lloyd lecture- Peter Wakelin speaking on Romanticism in British Art. The view from Breconshire;
- 13 April - Annual General Meeting
- 23 April - Annual Henry Vaughan memorial service at Llansantffraed Church (3pm);
- 15 May -Breconshire saints in stained glass. Dr. Martin Crampin from the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies in Aberystwyth will be the speaker and his book- Welsh Saints and Welsh churches-is due to be published in early 2023;
- 3 June- visit to Caerwent led by Sian Rees, an archaeologist and former CADW Inspector

In the meantime, all good wishes for Christmas and we look forward to seeing you at Society events next year.

Elizabeth Siberry  
Chair BSMF