



## **Brecknock Society and Museum Friends**

### **Chair's Spring 2023 Newsletter**

As I write, we are beginning, at last, to see signs of spring and I wanted to give you a foretaste of the Society's programme for the remainder of the year. Liz Bickerton, our Vice Chair and Membership Secretary, will continue to send emails with details of events, but you might like to note some dates in your diaries. There is a lot happening over the next few months.

### **Monthly talks**

We are delighted that these are proving so popular and Beryl Gibson and Libby Rees have speakers booked for the rest of the calendar year. They will all be at 11.30 on the second Saturday, apart from April, because of Easter. The next talk will be given by Sophie Clubb and entitled '**Charles I in Brecon - A good night's sleep**' exploring the popular belief that the King spent a night in the Elizabethan bed now displayed in the Brecon Gallery.

### **Sir John Lloyd lecture: 17 March**

We have already circulated details of this, but, as a reminder, it will be given by Dr. Peter Wakelin on the subject of Romanticism in British Art: the view from Breconshire. Tickets are going fast, so do book through Theatr Brycheiniog. If you are unable to attend in person, we are arranging for the event to be livestreamed and will circulate details of this in due course.

### **AGM**

The Society's AGM will be on 13 April at 3pm. It is likely to be in y Gaer, but we will confirm this in due course. The new senior curator, Dr. Kate Riddington, will join us to talk about her career to date and impressions of life at y Gaer after 3 months in post. It will be a good opportunity to welcome her more formally.

### **Henry Vaughan service**

The annual service commemorating the life of Henry Vaughan will take place at Llansantffraed at 3pm on Sunday 23 April. The speaker will be Professor Jonathan Post from the Department of English at the University of Los Angeles. He will take as his theme

Vaughan's poem 'They are all gone into the world of light.' The usual wreath laying will follow.

### **David Jones exhibition**

As many of you will already know, there will be a major exhibition, curated by Dr. Peter Wakelin, in the Sir John Lloyd Gallery, of the works of the artist and writer David Jones during his time at Capel y Ffin—"Hill-rhythms"-David Jones and Capel y Ffin- from 1 July to 29 October. It will include works on loan from major public and private collections in the UK. In parallel, the permanent gallery will display works in the y Gaer collection depicting the Llanthony Valley.

Work is also well underway on an associated programme of events. On the evening of 21 April (8pm), the Vaughan Association is hosting a talk by Dr. Hilary Davies, an expert on Jones's work, entitled Henry Vaughan, David Jones and the Welsh landscape. The venue is The Old Rectory Hotel in Llangattock, which is very appropriate since Vaughan spent 6 years in Llangattock as the pupil of the rector Matthew Herbert, although Vaughan would not recognise the building as it now stands. Tickets for the talk will cost £10 and can either be booked through the Vaughan Association website under Vaughan Colloquium 2023 or you can simply pay on the door. The website also gives details of events throughout the weekend if you wish to attend.

Dr. Rowan Williams will be opening the exhibition on 8 July and there will be other events over the course of that weekend. The Society is working closely on this with the David Jones Center in Washington DC and they are delighted to have the opportunity to hold their conference in Brecon. One event for your diary now is on 16 July at 4pm, when there will be an afternoon of poetry and music at Llansantffraed church. More details will be circulated as they become available.

### **Summer programme**

**16 May 6pm**-our May event is being organised jointly with Brecon cathedral. Dr. Martin Crampin, from the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies in Aberystwyth, will speak about the stained glass in the cathedral. Martin is the author of *Stained Glass from Welsh churches* published in 2014 and the excellent website- [stainedglass.llgc.org.uk](http://stainedglass.llgc.org.uk). His latest book *Welsh Saints from Welsh Churches* will be published in March and he may well be bringing some copies for sale.

**3 June:** a visit to Caerwent led by Sian Rees, an archaeologist and former CADW Inspector

**26th July :** The state of building works permitting, we are planning to visit the site of 'The Mansion House' at Bronllys Hospital. It has been used as the HQ of Powys Health Board and is now being renovated. The Pontywal Mansion dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is set in its own grounds. We hope that this can be followed by a visit to the Chapel in the Hospital grounds, which is a grade 2 listed building. At lunch time, we will make our way to the restored Gwernyfed walled garden, where we will have a walk, talk and lunch in its historic Messenger greenhouse. Further details will follow in due course.

**September- History Month events-further details in due course.**

**Brycheiniog**

As you know, Brycheiniog is normally distributed and for sale after the Sir John Lloyd lecture in March. Like many other publishers of journals, however, we have been experiencing the Covid tail. During lockdown, many authors took advantage of the time to complete articles, but research libraries and collections were closed and this has meant that their final reference checking before publication has been delayed. We are now back on track and Brycheiniog will be published in May with the usual broad range of articles and reviews. Copies will be available for collection and purchase at the 16 May talk.

**Frances Hoggan: another event of interest on 3 March at 1.00pm.**

You may also be interested to know that there will be a public unveiling of a plaque to Dr. Frances Hoggan, a pioneering medical practitioner and social reformer from Brecon, who played a significant role in the battle for women in the UK to study medicine in the nineteenth century. The plaque will be on the wall of Nicholls, 19 High Street, Brecon, the building where she was born in 1843. There is an article about Frances in volume 39 (2007) of Brycheiniog and in 1970, at a service in Brecon cathedral to mark the centenary of her graduation as a doctor of medicine, the Brecknock Society presented a brass ewer in her memory.

**To sum up**, we have a busy spring and summer ahead and we look forward to seeing you at Society and y Gaer events.

Elizabeth Siberry  
Chair BSMF