



ISSUE 83

February 2024



### Editorial

Although it is a quiet time of year it is nice to see that many history projects are underway across the county. A good range of articles in this edition, and a few events for your enjoyment. Don't forget to book your tickets for the Sir John Lloyd Lecture on 15th March.

Hanes is published every 3 months. The next edition is to be published on May 1st 2024. Please email any articles or information about events etc. with the heading "HANES" to [alan.j.nicholls@btinternet.com](mailto:alan.j.nicholls@btinternet.com) by April 30th 2024.

### *Introducing The Forum*

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#### **BRECON LIBRARY**

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#### **BRECONSHIRE LOCAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

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**CRICKHOWELL & DISTRICT HISTORY  
SOCIETY**

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**CUSOP HISTORY GROUP**

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**HAY HISTORY GROUP**

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**LLANWRTYD & DISTRICT HERITAGE  
& ARTS CENTRE**

Contact: Rob Thomas  
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[www.llanwrtydhistorygroup.com](http://www.llanwrtydhistorygroup.com)

**LLYN SYFADDAN HISTORY GROUP**

Contact: Roger Reese  
email: [roreese2013@gmail.com](mailto:roreese2013@gmail.com)  
website - [llangorshistory.wales](http://llangorshistory.wales)

**POWYS COUNTY ARCHIVE OFFICE**

email: [archives@powys.gov.uk](mailto:archives@powys.gov.uk)  
[www.powys.gov.uk/archives](http://www.powys.gov.uk/archives)  
Tel. 01597 826088

**REGIMENTAL MUSEUM OF THE  
ROYAL WELSH**

Contact: Richard Davies / Celia Green  
Tel. 01874 613310

**Y GAER – BRECON LIBRARY &  
BRECKNOCK MUSEUM**

Tel: 01874623346

**YSTRADGYNLAIS DISTRICT HISTORY  
AND LANGUAGE SOCIETY**

Contact: John Owens  
[johnowens38@talktalk.net](mailto:johnowens38@talktalk.net)

## NEWS AND EVENTS

### *Brecknock History Forum*

The Brecknockshire History Forum meets usually four times a year. The next Forum Meeting is taking place in the Crickhowell information centre at 10.30 am on Friday March 8th. This is an open invitation. If you would like to attend and have not attended before please could you let Elaine Starling know by email:  
[elainestarling10@icloud.com](mailto:elainestarling10@icloud.com)

### *Brecknock Society and Museum Friends*

**Sir John Lloyd Lecture  
15th March 2024**



The Brecknock Society's annual lecture will be given by Dr Ben Guy, Assistant Professor in Celtic in the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at the University of Cambridge. His subject is Brychan: Fact and Fiction.

Brycheiniog, the ancient Welsh name for Breconshire, took its name from a person called Brychan. This begs an obvious question: who was Brychan? The lecture will trace the history of Brycheiniog from the earliest Middle Ages through to the Norman Conquest, searching for glimpses of the 'real' Brychan in the 'Matter of Brycheiniog', the legends, and the famous lists of his saintly progeny. Tickets (free) available from Theatr Brycheiniog

### **The history of the wildlife of the river Usk - John Gibbs**

Last autumn, I took part in a History Day, organised by the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park to celebrate the Park's Heritage Environment Action Plan. Speakers were encouraged to focus on one of the five themes of the National Park and, in speaking with the title 'The Natural History of the River Usk: past and present', I touched on three of the themes: water, nature recovery and climate. One of the pictures that I used is shown below and a YouTube version of this talk is available at <https://youtu.be/VvzpcGGySzl>



## **Salmon Spear as used by poachers. Brecknock Museum, y Gaer**

Since then, I have continued to investigate the subject, seeking to produce an expanded version of the talk, and, in due course, a written article for the Brecknock Society's journal 'Brycheiniog'. I have already obtained some interesting additional material. Thus Elizabeth Siberry and Bob Wilcher, members of the Vaughan Association, have drawn my attention to two relevant references in Henry Vaughan's work. Thus in a poem called 'The Storm', he compares the colour of the river in flood with that of his own blood. And in a 1678 poem, originally in Latin, called the salmon, he describes a fish seizing an artificial fly and itself being caught and eaten:

*Accept this salmon caught in the  
rushing weir,  
when he had battled up from the  
bottom to the topmost waters.  
The false attraction of a simulated  
insect deceived him;  
a fly made of feathers, painted with  
colourful markings.  
As he seizes it, he is seized; heedless  
he swallows, and is himself doomed to  
be swallowed,  
and the catcher of the fateful morsel  
is made a welcome catch in turn.  
Blessed rest! The richest reward of  
this miserable life!  
How safely he could have remained  
hidden in those still pools!  
As he seeks the roar and tumult of the  
foaming torrent he is swiftly made a*

*prey to my hooked bait.*

As a metaphysical poet, Vaughan has an underlying meaning to this poem, as is illustrated in the last two lines:

*What a pregnant emblem of great  
matters these trifles form!  
The weir is the world; the salmon,  
man; and the feather, deceit.*

Bob Wilcher points out that, in general, Vaughan is not very specific in his references to the plants and animals that he would have seen about him. As he puts it, Vaughan was a poet 'who clearly responded very powerfully to the natural world (especially stars and clouds and light) but was also working with an older emblematic view of Nature than that developed by the later Romantics'.

**WANTED!**  
**River Usk wildlife records**

New & Old, Dead or Alive!  
Have you any wildlife records in  
diaries, lists, phones, reports?  
If so please let BIS know about them.

[info@bis.org.uk](mailto:info@bis.org.uk) 01874 610881

All records will help inform the Breconshire  
Usk Ecological Baseline Project  
&  
Help target future wildlife recording

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Biodiversity Foundation

**BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION SERVICE**  
FOR PLYN AND BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK  
GŦRANWYBETH GŦRFFITHOETHY FFRAMWYBETHY  
PŦRYS A PHARC, CENEIDIAETHY BANNAU BRECHENIDŦR

I would very much welcome additional references to literature and prose passages that relate to the natural

history of the Usk from readers of Hanes. However, If you have straightforward records of wildlife associated with the river, please send them direct to BIS: the Biodiversity Information Service for the National Park and Powys (see below). It should be noted that, despite the specific reference to the Usk in the poster, the BIS staff are interested to receive riparian records from other catchments in the BBNP and Powys.

## *Builth Wells and District Heritage Society*

Hello and a happy new year to you all,  
I hope the Xmas week has been a peaceful and happy time for you all. Here we are entering another year and I would like to thank each and every one of you for your support and good wishes throughout 2023. It has been a struggle at times with the volatility of utility bills and ever rising prices but thanks to the support of our membership and the generosity of several organisations and individuals, we are managing to keep our heads above water - Just!  
Sales of books and other items at the heritage centre have been quite good and our members meetings have seen some great speakers. I have yet to see the balance sheet, but I believe the meetings are showing a small profit. Membership is due for renewal in March and I hope you all continue your marvellous support and come

and see the great speakers and events we have planned.

**February 9th** at Wesley Church - The Zulu Wars - Duncan McDonald at 7.30

**March 8th** at Wesley Church - The Luther Davies Family - Alison Skipper at 7.30

**April 12th** at Wesley Church AGM at 7.30

We are planning a film show and old photographs following the AGM

Please look into the Heritage Centre where we have some great books and pictures on sale besides our free research facilities. The Heritage Centre also has a very smart **meeting room that is available for hire** at reasonable rates. We also can do **photocopying** for a small fee. Please try and support us and help to keep this community asset open. Please note that we allow local organisations free use of one of our windows to promote themselves. The window needs to be booked in advance of course. Commercial organisations can also make use of the window for a fee.

Lastly and most importantly, I must mention our wonderful **Volunteers** who give so much of their time to support and keep the heritage centre open. Thank you so much from us all at. Have a safe and healthy new year and I look forward to seeing you all real soon.

Mal

## *Crickhowell District Archive Centre*

### **From the Civil War to the Green Man Festival**

Back in 2019 a germ of an idea was born amongst the trustees of Crickhowell District Archive Centre (CDAC). Three historians living in the area decided to research and publish a book on five of the most significant houses in Crickhowell - houses that have witnessed the lives of people, their passions, world events and politics, social change and economic fluctuations from the Civil War to the Green Man Festival.

The research began and, although hampered by the pandemic, the bones of the largest and maybe the most significant book published by CDAC began to come together.

Five houses were chosen.

Dan y Parc can be traced back to at least the seventeenth century and its later owners included members of the ironmaster Kendall and Crawshay families. Gwernvale hosted royalists during the civil war as did Cwrt y Gollen. Llangattock Park was built as a summer residence for the Duke of Beaufort and Joseph Bailey was another ironmaster attracted to the

area, building his own grand mansion at Glanusk in the 1820s.

Each of the three authors has undertaken extensive research using all the resources available to them including the Crickhowell District Archive, Powys Archives and the National Archives. Photographs, prints and paintings from public and private collections some of which are being published for the very first time illustrate the book. They have captured the history of the houses, the families that occupied them, the varied uses to which the estates were put and, sadly, their demise as some of the houses are long gone.



**Cwrt y Gollen**

Elizabeth Siberry, quoting the sale particulars for Cwrt y Gollen in 1891, shows the extent of that estate and gives a picture of what it looked like at the end of the nineteenth century versus the modern housing estate and army training camp as it is now:

## *Llyn Syfaddan History Group*

“.....an ancient and commodious mansion occupying a ‘sheltered position in its extensive and sheltered park, encompassed by gardens, shrubberies, plantations and park lands.’ The house consisted of an entrance hall, dining room, drawing room, study, library and various domestic offices on the ground floor; a drawing room, morning room and eight principal bedrooms on the first floor and six bedrooms and staff quarters on the second floor. ....”  
Sadly this amazing property was destroyed by fire in 1909.

Similar revelations about the greatness of the houses are found in the other chapters written by Ryland Wallace and Eliane Wigzell. The book “Great Houses of Crickhowell” will be launched on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm at The Clarence Hall, Crickhowell. Tickets available via [www.crickhowellarchives.com](http://www.crickhowellarchives.com). The website will also have the facility to pre-order the book priced at £16.99 from 12<sup>th</sup> February.

### **Newport Medieval Ship**

On 11<sup>th</sup> April Dr. Toby Jones has kindly agreed to talk about the Medieval Ship project, for which he is the curator. The talk will take place in the Llangors Youth & Community Centre at 7.30pm (postcode LD3 7TR). Entrance is free with a retiring collection for donations.

Dr Jones, a nautical archaeologist, has been working to discover the secrets of this clinker-built ship since 2004. He’s worked on many other projects around the world but this one is really special.

The wooden ship was found buried in the mud of the River Usk in June 2002 and is the most complete 15<sup>th</sup> century merchant vessel ever found. Years of research have revealed that she was probably built in the Basque country and was active from about 1449 to 1469 and her cargo was probably wine and iron.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century Newport was a small town standing on the west side of the River Usk. It was a minor port in those days but had a town quay with an inlet in which the Newport Ship found its final resting place.

In early 2002 the Riverfront theatre and arts centre was under construction in the heart of Newport. The



Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust worked on the site and in June began investigating some oak timbers which were found along one of the proposed wall lines. It gradually became apparent that they had a find of international importance resulting in the recovery of several thousand timbers and over 1,000 small finds.

Many artefacts were discovered which gave a vivid picture of life on board. A finely-carved boxwood game, wooden tools, clothing fragments, leather shoes and boots, wooden bowls, pottery fragments from jugs and bowls and wooden combs all gave clues as to how the sailors lived on board.

Later in 2002 Newport City Council announced plans to bury the remains after scientific analysis had been carried out. This seemed outrageous and prompted the formation of the "Save our Ship" campaign which involved media coverage, a flotilla of boats sailing up to the site and a petition of over 6,000 signatures being presented to the Welsh Assembly. All that effort was successful as on 23 August 2002 the Welsh Government announced a £3.5 million plan to excavate, conserve, and eventually display the Newport Ship.

The project of recreating the ship and researching the finds is currently based in a warehouse on an industrial estate but Newport City Council is working

on a plan to display the ship, and artefacts, in a prominent location in the city once the conservation and restoration work has ended.

## *Powys Family History Society*

### **Powys Family History Society**

We are now looking forward to our 2024 Monumental Inscriptions recording sessions, as we look to re-start in the spring, which by the time you are reading this will be just around the corner.

We are however open to new volunteers coming and helping with this project next year. We meet on a Tuesday at 10am and stay as long as we are able to, usually about 3pm, if you would like to come and help with this very interesting project, e-mail [philbufton@hotmail.com](mailto:philbufton@hotmail.com) There are about 1000 stones to record in this one graveyard. Once recorded they become a publication on our webshop. All our publications are available on our webshop. <https://www.powysfhs.org.uk/wordpress/shop/>

See the full list of Zoom Meetings on our website under the Meetings tab. You do not have to be a member to join the Zoom meetings, just contact [philbufton@hotmail.com](mailto:philbufton@hotmail.com) for information. <https://www.powysfhs.org.uk/wordpress/meetings-by-zoom/>



Our Next Zoom Meetings are:

**Tuesday 6th Feb**

Ian Waller - Railway Ancestors

**Tuesday 5th March**

Linda Hammond - Buried deep but not lost forever

**Tuesday 9th April**

Jean Renwick (AKA Dianne Chadwick) writing historical novels based on real people

Local group meetings are now to be found on a separate page; all group meetings are listed here  
<https://www.powysfhs.org.uk/wordpress/meetings/>

<https://www.facebook.com/PowysFamilyHistorySociety/>

Phil Bufton. Chairman PFHS  
[philbufton@hotmail.com](mailto:philbufton@hotmail.com)

## *The Radnorshire Society*

The Radnorshire Society, established in 1930, is concerned with the archaeology and history of the historic county of Radnorshire (now part of Powys).

We welcome new members, whether they live in Radnorshire or further afield. Benefits of membership include access to our Archive and Library, a copy of the current year's Radnorshire

Society Transactions, plus lectures and field visits to local sites of interest. An Executive Committee manages a programme of public lectures and excursions, oversees the running of the Society's local history library, (including its important archive of Radnorshire related material), and deals with a wide range of enquiries from correspondents world-wide. The Field section is the research arm of the society. It organises a separate programme of talks, research, and field trips, and also publishes an annual illustrated newsletter. The Transactions of the Society is issued annually in a bound volume and is an important scholarly publication incorporating academic research and archive material.

See: <https://radnorsociety.org> for details of events

## *Brecknock Forum*

### **Brecknock History Forum**

Abbreviated Minutes -  
November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2023, Brecon Cathedral

- 1) Welcome. In the absence of John Gibbs, Mike Williams, chaired the meeting.
- 2) Review of 2003 Brecknock History Festival in September.

a) Hay

Alan reported that 1,000 booklets were printed and distributed across the area as far to the south as Ystradgynlais, to the west Builth and Llanwrtyd Wells, and to the east Crickhowell. They cost 20p each and were paid for from 'Sacred Places' funds.

Hay hosted three events: there was a talk by Alice Thorne on Heap, the BBNP plan on Heritage. It highlighted how large the area covered by the Parks is.

The second event was a Pub tour which was fun but poorly attended.

The third event was a pop-up Museum in the Castle. About 120 people attended. There were displays from Hay, Cusop, and BS&MF.

Libby Rees reported that she and Liz Bickerton ran a stall at Hay Castle within the pop-up Museum they included information about y Gaer, Saturday Morning talks.

b) Llanhamlach

Mervyn Bramley reported by email on the events at Llanhamlach, which was read by Mike Williams.

- 1) David Morgan has produced a report on the development of the village.
- 2) The information / hanging that was produced to hang in The Old Ford Inn as a result of Inns and Pubs events has proved to be very popular

and is now on permanent display in the Inn.

3) 42 attended a talk on Llanhamlach. There was a further 40 attendees on the History of the Old Ford Inn. The Church in Llanhamlach put on an event which had 110 attendees.

c) Llyn Syfadden

It was reported that from the wider area, The Black Cock at Llanfihangel Talyllyn put together masses of material including information on three lost pubs. They also included information on 'The Refresh' which was located at Talyllyn Station. The Black Cock was well attended.

In Llangors itself two pubs, The Red Lion and The Castle, there was a lot of material which has been loaded onto the Society website.

e) Llangynidr

Rosemary reported that the village had at one time 11 pubs. Today there are two. A lot of people ended up in the Red Lion. Research has been put on the website.

f) BLFHS

The Society produced a booklet on the Society's research. 150 have been sold and there has been a reprint. Pubs in Brecon and Llanfaes were researched. There were 120 businesses in 90 premises. Alison reported that

the price of printing had risen.  
The booklet is to be reviewed in  
*Brycheiniog*.

g) Cathedral Centenary Event  
The Diocesan event at Royal  
Welsh took place on a very hot  
day. The Medieval Fayre at the  
Cathedral was well attended and  
received. It has been decided to  
repeat the fayre next year.

There was a brief discussion about a  
theme for next year's festival which  
representatives were asked to discuss  
with their members. The two  
suggestions are 'local Women' or a  
theme based on events which are  
local to the individual societies.  
Mike talked briefly about a proposal  
to follow up the names of women  
who contributed to the portrait of  
Gwenllian Morgan located in the Guild  
Hall, who was Mayor of Brecon.  
Elizabeth Siberry Chair BS&MF and  
Brecon Story are involved.

### 3) News from Y Gaer

Assessing information on Items in the  
Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery  
collections.

John has pursued the question raised  
at an earlier meeting about access to  
the Search the Assets Platform. The  
latest email from Kate Riddington  
states: "The 'Search the Assets  
Platform' should be live soon, which is  
where we will have collection  
information on some objects available  
via the website".

This was not what was understood  
would happen by the volunteers who  
worked on the original proposed  
online index.

Mike asked Amanda if there was  
index online for the Regimental  
Museum. The reply was that there  
was an index of accessions, but it is  
not online. Linda Kells enquired about  
the location of the diaries she  
transcribed for the military museum.

Alan stated that he had understood  
that the y Gaer index was funded by  
the lottery fund.

Mike will request that John brings this  
up at the next Champions meeting.  
Work at present is underway to put  
the secondary labels on the bounce  
pads. This is being led by Ann Rees  
and Mervyn Bramley. The pads that  
failed are being replaced.

The people who volunteered before  
do not want to be Gallery invigilators.  
At present Linda Kells is working and  
sorting documents for y Gaer.

There is no index online of the assets  
the Museum holds. The information  
that was recorded has to be accessed  
in the Museum via Jacqui.

Alison Noble wanted to remind y Gaer  
about its Natural History and Geology  
Collection. The question was asked  
about the location of the Naturalists'  
Library. Libby invited Alison and her  
husband to talk with her about the  
possibility of a Saturday morning talk.

#### 4) BBNP Heap.

The Heritage Environmental Action Plan (HEAP) was launched on 14<sup>th</sup> October. The event was booked via Eventbrite and until that site was accessed there wasn't a programme available. It was a reasonably well attended meeting in the Guild Hall. There were a number of talks and the programme is described in Hanes. John Gibbs gave a talk on "The Natural History of the Usk".

The HEAP is not being printed but is available online at <https://bannau.wales/wp-content/uploads/HEAP2023ENG-for-printing-small.pdf>. Mervyn has suggested to Alice Thorn that those heritage locations such as Llandetty Church and churchyard, that are recognised by members of The Historic Environment Partnership, should be able to have some site branding (BBNP icon for their publicity and / or a reference on the National Park website). Concern was expressed that the document was the project and that nothing else would follow.

It was recognised that the Parks covered a huge area. The amalgamation of the Archaeological Trusts into one organisation for Wales could benefit all areas, though originally Wales was divided up so that the Trusts like CPat and Dyfed could concentrate on their own immediate area.

Mike reported that there was a suggestion via the *Brycheiniog*

Editorial Board that a conference be organised to bring local societies etc together to discuss common issues.

#### 5) Sacred Places.

Alison has so far been unable to get a statement from BFLHS Treasurer with regard to the money being held on behalf of the History Forum. She suggests that another group takes over the monies and ask for cash. John has written and had no satisfactory outcome. The Hanes booklet in the summer was paid from accrued funds. As an estimate, Alison believes the funds to be £1,200. Alan suggested that we set up our own constitution to obtain our own bank account.

Llyn Syfadden is going away to discuss the proposal with their society to take over the money.

#### 6) BHF taking stock

Today, we have had attendance by Zoom. It was suggested that we had some meetings by Zoom and others face to face. We have the money to buy a licence.

It was felt by members that they had in the past enjoyed a visit to the locality attached to a meeting. Please can you discuss with your members whether Zooming would be appropriate. Alison Noble, if required, will set up a zoom trial meeting.

## 7) *Brycheiniog*

Mike briefly described proposals for the future of the journal. Cost of producing the journal are the main concern. We could print on demand. Back journals are online but not the current ones. The next issue will have articles on the following:

The Sir John Lloyd Memorial lecture.  
King' Coronation (many of the hymns were written in Brecon)  
Brecon Castle  
Liberal Election Victory of 1875  
Henry Vaughan  
Report on Farmsteads

Mike has been in touch with Christ College. They have some Journals for sale (see attached below).

### Publications Group

Mike reported that there is a proposal to look at producing a County History to be published in 2030. A managing editor is being sought. It should involve academia, local societies etc. It is very early days at present. The Society are also, with the aid of a researcher, hoping to produce Ken Jones research. As has been done with Sister Bonaventure's work.

## 8) Around The Groups

### A) Regimental Museum

1). July 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> 2024, there will be in Brecon a celebration of the life of the Zulu King Goodwill and a Zulu choir will visit as part of the

Choir Festival. The Theatre are involved. There will be an exhibition, craft workshops, schools will be involved, and there will be choir concerts in Brecon and Pontypridd.

There is also the intention to produce a book. Grant funding has been sought. More precise details will be published next year.

2) On the third Wednesday of every month, the public are invited to a coffee morning with the Curator of the Regimental Museum from 10 to 11 am.

### B) Hay.

At the end of the month there will be a number of history talks at Hay Festival. Please look at the programme online.

### C) Llangors / Llyn Syfadden

January Talk on Love spoons.  
February Social and a Buffet.  
April Newport Boat Project talk by Toby Jones.

There is a gentleman in Llangors who is collecting envelopes and gives talks. If anyone is interested, contact Yvonne Beaven.

In September 2024, the History Festival will celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society.

D) Saturday morning Talks at y Gaer organised by the BS&MF 11.30 am

11<sup>th</sup> November Brynmawr Furniture.

9<sup>th</sup> December Reading of Christmas in Wales. Mervyn Bramley will give an update on work in y Gaer.

January 2024 Dean of Brecon on Funeral Traditions.

February 10<sup>th</sup> Anthony Seys Llewelyn on Working of the Assizes Court.

There is a Nepalese Project at y Gaer in April.

E) Llanygynidr

Rosemary reported that last Saturday John gave a talk about Farmsteads.

Jane Collier was suggested as a name for a talk on the Canal.

F) BFLHS

Alison reported on the combined organisational meeting next Wednesday by the War Graves Commission in the Cathedral. The advert is in Hanes and the Beacon. It starts at 6pm. There will be a retiring collection. Alison reported that she is standing down from BFLHS. There is a new secretary who will be coming from Llandeilo. She will no longer be attending the Forum.

She did ask if there was anybody who had website skills who could help her sort out some issues. There are two boxes of 'Sacred Places' available . One will go to Visit Brecon. The other to Llangors.

G) U3A

On 18<sup>th</sup> January in the Studio at the Theatre, at 1.30 there will be A Welsh Place Names lecture and workshop . Two groups from U3A, Archaeology and Landscape, are joining up for an afternoon session run by Dr James January-McCann from the Royal Commission. There is a fee of £2 to pay for non U3A members. Further details from Elaine Starling.

H) BS&MF

15<sup>th</sup> March is the date for the Sir John Lloyd Lecture by Ben Guy. The title has not yet been confirmed but it will be on early Celtic lineages such as that of Brychan Brycheiniog.

Elaine thanked Alison for all the work she had done over the years for the Forum and told her that there would always be a place for her in the group.

The meeting closed at 12.30. The next meeting will be in February. Arrangements to be confirmed.

\*\*\*\*