



Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Llanelli Llanelli Historical Society

Newsletter

Volume I, Issue 2

March 2003

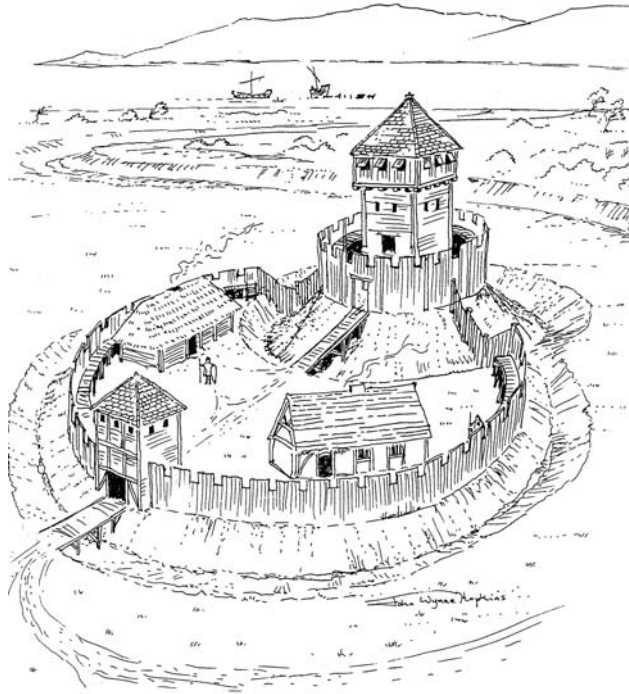
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Old Castle Motte

It is hard to imagine that in the old reservoir called Pontwym - Old Castle Pond lie the remains of the Castle of the Commote of Carnwyllion, attacked and burned down by Rhys Grug in 1215.

Lyn John, John Wynne Hopkins and Ken Jones have taken a special interest in the Old Castle Motte and have prepared a folder detailing all available information and sources. They have applied to Cambria Archaeology and Cadw to have the motte (mound) scheduled as an Ancient Monument.



John Wynne Hopkins' impression of the Motte and Bailey at Old Castle.

John has created a number of sketches that give us insight into Llanelli and surrounding area in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Much of this work, together with documentation of the various field trips undertaken by LHS members will be on display at the Parish Hall during Local History Month in May. Presentations of the ongoing research of LHS local historians will also be on view.

May is Local History Month

May of this year has been designated Local History Month by the British Association for Local History.

Historical Societies throughout the country will be organising events in their local areas to mark the occasion.

The Llanelli Historical Society will be playing its part by bringing Llanelli's rich history to the attention of

the public and to the local schools.

The event we plan is a colourful and original display at the **Parish Hall on Saturday, May 31st.**

We need a member of the Society (or a partnership) to put together a team of volunteers to take charge of the refreshments on that day. We

have arranged to have the kitchen and all the facilities at the Parish Hall available to serve teas and coffees.

We would also welcome help with publicity, with assembling the display and with manning the Hall on the day,

Anyone wishing to get involved would be very welcome - please speak to one of the committee and put your name on the list that is circulating

Volunteers are needed for this event—can you help?

Llanelli Town Council

We are very grateful to the Llanelli Town Council for their financial support for our display in the Parish Hall to mark Local History Month.

We call on all members of the Society to help make this a great success.



Llanelly House

On Tuesday, Feb 4th Caroline DeAbreu and Colin Morgan represented the Llanelli Historical Society at a meeting with William Wilkins at Llanelly House.

There were representatives from various local groups and Mr. Wilkins gave an update on the progress of the renovation project.

Mr. Wilkins also took the opportunity to make a request to all local groups in Llanelli to help track down any information that might shed light on the history of the house, gardens, and families that lived there.

"This information might come from a variety of sources,"

Can you throw any light on the history of Llanelly House?

Share your knowledge and help create a more detailed history of this fine historic building.



Some LHS members on a previous visit to Llanelly House when Lynn Davies, Town Clerk and Colin Morgan (far right) led the tour.

he said and he provided a list of suggestions.

- Paintings on canvass or board that are alleged to come from the house;
- Pieces of furniture or fittings or other objects that were once in the house;
- Recollections of attending

functions, garden parties or family gatherings where photographs might have been taken;

- Diaries of people who might have lived or worked in the house.

Caroline and Colin ask you all to talk to your family and friends to see if anything comes to light, and to feed back any information, however small.

Field Trips

The recent wintry weather has not deterred our intrepid researchers.

The Early History Group has linked with the Llanelli East Group and at weekends can be seen clambering into John Wynne Hopkins' trusty Land Rover and heading off into the wilds of the surrounding countryside.

These field trips have

taken them to Cwrt Farm Pembrey, the Iron Hill Fort at Stradey Woods and Llandeilo Castle Mound at Grovesend, to name but a few.

It was reported that on one occasion they were gone for more than 7 hours and some of the group would have perished had it not been for nourishment provided by Colin Morgan in the form of egg sandwiches!

They have visited the site of 2 Roman practice camps, and the site of a battle where a Welsh army overcame an Anglo-Norman force.

Research Groups

Early History

John Williams, Peter Francis, Lyn John, John Wynne Hopkins and David Jenkins

Llanelli East

Lyn John, John Wynne Hopkins, Peter Francis, Gwyn Daniel, Colin Morgan, Ken Jones, Alec Jones and Vaughan Jones

Social History

Caroline DeAbreu, Joyce Mollet and Marjorie Witty



Updates From The LHS Heritage Watchdogs Registrars, Swansea Road (Bryntirion Site)

Carmarthenshire County Council, in the Community News, Winter 2002, offered Llanelli residents two options with regard to the town's Registrars Office.

Option 1: the refurbishment of the existing Registrars Office and Marriage Room at Swansea Road.

Option 2: moving the facilities to Park Howard Mansion.

The people of Llanelli opted to keep the Registrars service at Swansea Road.

However, in April 2002 Llanelli Star reported, "A

decision has been made to relocate the Registrars service for births, deaths and marriage to Coleshill Terrace with the Llanelli Town Hall as the venue for larger weddings."

This was a third option that had not been canvassed.

Your chairwoman, Caroline, sent a letter to each of the 22 elected councillors on the Llanelli Area Committee asking why, in view

of the democratic vote, had the wishes of the majority been totally disregarded? Only 4 councillors replied.

The option of Coleshill Terrace is not one that the people of Llanelli voted for, and it is fraught with difficulties, parking facilities being one of them.

The people, through their vote, also made clear that they did not want to lose yet another historic building in a town that is already seriously depleted of its heritage.

The Council gave the people the opportunity to voice opinion. Were they listened to? Is the town going to lose yet another historic building?

Grammar School Site, Marble Hall Road

The building that we see in this old photograph has disappeared from the Llanelli skyline. It will soon be replaced by a housing development. Due to the hard work of Ken Jones, and the co-operation of the demolition company, Tillman, and the developer, Lovell, the two foundation stones of the building have been saved and will be incorporated into the new development.



Ken has also been working behind the scenes to have an interpretation board placed on the site to mark its history and heritage.

The Developer, Lovell, keen to use an appropriate name for the site, has accepted a suggestion from the Llanelli Historical Society and named the site Plas Mynor (Marble Hall).

Machynis Golf Course Complex

The Society is keen to ensure that the Golf Course Complex retains the name Machynis and is not named Pentre Nicklaus (or Nicklaus Village).

Town Councillors want Bwlchgywynt or Pentre Machynys.

"The Developers have rejected the Council's suggestion and say they will hold out for using the name of the American golf legend, Jack Nicklaus, in the title." (Evening Post: 18.12.2002)

The final decision will be

made by Carmarthen County Council.

Machynis House

Lyn John is working on the history of Machynis and will be giving a presentation to the Society at the September meeting.

Anyone wanting more information from the Heritage Watchdogs please contact Ken Jones
 Phone: 01554 772479
 Email: kv.jones@talk21.com



Reminder for April

The speaker for April is Dr. David Davies. His talk is entitled, "The Stepneys (A Llanelli Mystery Solved)."

We shall be holding the AGM prior to Dr. Davies' talk.



Since our last meeting we hear that Brian Cripps has not been well. Hurry back, Brian - we miss you.

If you have any news you wish to share pass it on for future newsletters.

Contact the secretary, Joyce Mollet

LHS Committee

Chairwoman:

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Joyce Mollet: 01554 755388

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John Williams: 01554 810677

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Peter Francis: 01554 759920

John Wynne Hopkins: 01554 750761

Lyn John: 01554 774273

Alec Jones: 01554 772479

Ken Jones: 01554 772479

Llanelly Union Workhouse



The workhouse was built in 1838/39.

This wing was added to the original building around 40 years later.

The Llanelli Historical Society's social history research group is continuing research on the history of the Llanelly Union Workhouse.

It has been active in taking a presentation of this research out into the community.

Caroline, Joyce and Madge presented their work to the Glenalla Women's Guild in January and U3A in February. They have other venues arranged for March and April.

Heritage Watchdog Update:

The Carmarthenshire NHS Trust has confirmed that all patients will be transferred in 2004 from Bryntirion to Prince Phillip Hospital.

The Trust will have no further use for the site after that date. Cadw will not list the building because of the alterations made over many years to the original structure.

We have asked the County Council what plans they have to develop the whole site. The timing is more than coincidental. Registrars moving this year and Bryntirion Hospital vacant next year.

The core of this building dates back to 1838 and has some unique features. Is there no way that we can protect and preserve one small section?

We're on the Web!
www.Llanelli-Historical-Society.co.uk

The February Meeting

The February Meeting was extremely well attended with around 100 members and visitors present.

We were delighted to welcome Sir David Mansel Lewis into our midst, and he very graciously made the official presentation of the cheque from Awards From All Wales to our chairwoman, Caroline.

The money has been used to purchase IT equipment that will handle the Society's administrative work and enable them to take part in a Reminiscence Programme.

February's meeting also attracted a large attendance because of our speaker.

John Edwards gave a fascinating insight into the Rebecca Riots in the Llanelli area. His talk was colourful, entertaining and above all very informative.

Thank you John.