



Abergavenny Local History Society



KAK

NEWSLETTER No 26

AUGUST 2010

www.abergavennyhistory.co.uk
Charity registration number 1098582

PROGRAMME**2010**

Thurs. **Dr Ray Howells**
 9th. Sept SILURES; IRON AGE SOCIETY
 (Earlier than last year) IN SE WALES.

Thurs. **Nick Baker**
 21st. Oct. THE MAPPA MUNDI AND
 CHAINED LIBRARY OF
 HEREFORD CATHEDRAL.

Thurs. **Greg Neale**
 25th. Nov. BRINGING HISTORY TO THE
 MARKET.

Dec. NO LECTURE

If you have not yet renewed your membership, (payable by 1st May), please send your subscription (£10 per person) to the Membership Secretary as soon as you can so that your new card can be sent to you

2011

Thurs. **Joseph Payne**
 20th. Jan. THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL MINT
 AND BRITISH COINAGE

Thurs. **Alex Gibbon**
 24th. Feb. JACK OF KENT AND THE FATE OF
 OWAIN GLYNDŴYR

Thurs **Gethin Matthews**
 17th. March. GOLD FEVER; THE WELSH IN THE
 GOLD RUSH TO BRITISH COLUMBIA

Thurs. **Brian Davies**
 21st. April. 18th. & 19th. CENTURY INDUSTRIAL
 ART IN SOUTH WALES

Thurs. 34th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
 19th. May. Followed by : **Frank Olding**
 DARK AGE GWENT

THE SOCIETY MEETS AT THE BOROUGH THEATRE AT 7.30 pm.

Please bring your card to all meetings.
 Social events will be publicised separately.

Thank you to Irena and Steve Morgan

On behalf of all the members and the committee, I would like to record our great thanks to both. The much praised children's plaques project has (almost) reached its completion, largely due to the constant efforts and leadership of our chairman, with help from Steve, and from Jane White and me on the subcommittee. The completion of the DVD after such a long time since its inception was a major triumph for them both, and has gone on to make good profits for the Society. The publication of Frank Olding's book, *Gobannium: The Romans in Abergavenny*, together with the acquisition of ISBN numbers to get it into libraries and commercial outlets, has been another nice little earner for the Society.

Irena has been Secretary and then Chairman on the committee, working hard on behalf of the Society. Steve has put our accounts in good order and ensured that good accounting procedures are followed.

The Society owes them a great debt.

Gill Wakley



KAK



KAK

SUMMER VISIT SUGGESTIONS

Each autumn, when the next summer visits' programme is sent to Society members, they are invited not only to book forthcoming visits, but also to suggest future visits.

Some members query why their suggestions are not taken up. The reason in virtually all cases is that Society members have relatively recently visited the places suggested.

But keep your suggestions rolling in. With this in mind, it might be useful to summarise the summer visits staged since I've been organising and leading them.

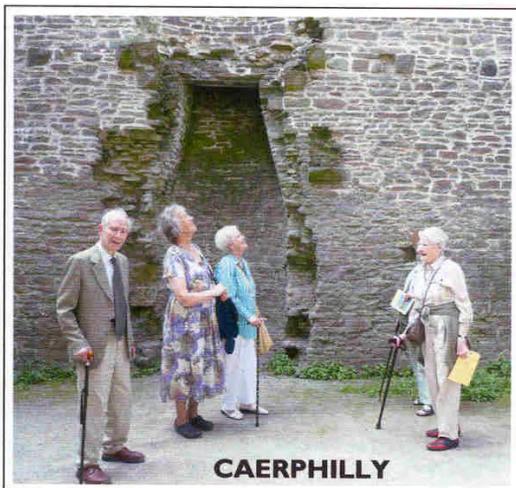
Weekend Trips

- Knole House, Leeds Castle, Sissinghurst Gardens, Canterbury Cathedral & City, Penshurst Place.
- Chirk Castle, Liverpool's Anglican & Catholic Cathedrals, Speke House, Thelwall Lock on the Manchester Ship Canal, Erddig House, Stables & Gardens.
- Warwick Castle, Peterborough Cathedral, Elton Hall, Wisbech, Ely Cathedral, Burghley House.
- Winchester Cathedral, Portchester Castle, Gosport's Submarine Museum, Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard, Salisbury Cathedral.
- York Minster, Durham Cathedral & City, Hadrian's Wall, Fountains Abbey.
- Bosworth Battlefield, Lincoln Cathedral & Bishop's Palace, Doddington Hall, Calke Abbey (at the end of this July)

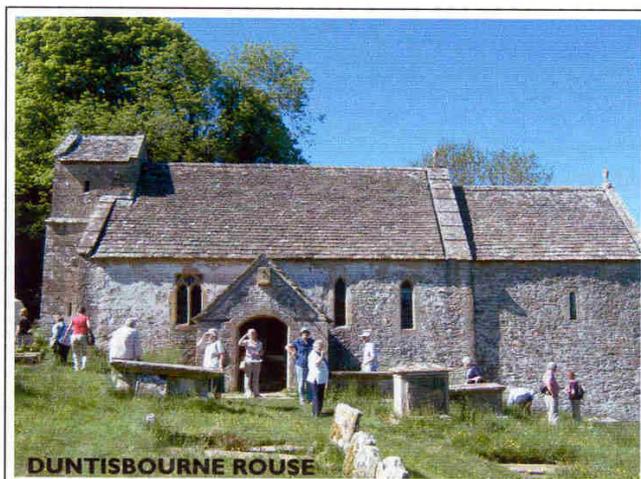
All-Day Trips Oxford University, Cathedral & City (3 separate visits)-- Aberglasney, Cyfartha Castle Museum--Birtsmorton Court, Great Whitley--Malmesbury Abbey, Cirencester Roman Town, Northleach Mediaeval Wool Town, Deerhurst Monastery, Odda's Chapel, Tewkesbury Abbey--Broughton Castle, Chipping Campden--Llanerchaeron, Cilgerran Castle--Dunster Castle, Cleeve Abbey, Wells Cathedral--Llancaiach Manor, St Fagans--Wigmore Abbey, Ludlow--Carmarthen, Pembroke Castle, St. David's Cathedral--Berkeley Castle, Chavenage House--Cotswold Churches--Dyrham Park, Bradford on Avon, Laycock Abbey & Village--St. Mary's Redcliffe, Bristol Cathedral, City Museum--Highnam Church, Gloucester Cathedral, Hailes & Pershore Abbeys--Bowood House, Duntisbourne Rouse Saxon Church--Hellens, Elgar Museum, Worcester Cathedral--Sudeley Castle, Snowhill Manor.

Afternoon Trips Herefordshire Villages' Black & White Architecture--Tyntesfield (2 separate visits)--Leominster, Shobdon's Churches, Presteigne's Judge's Lodgings--Garway, Much Marcle, Kempsey, Hoarwithy, Brockhampton, Fownhope, Eaton Bishop, Madley & Golden Valley Churches--Newport's Mediaeval ship, Cardiff Castle--Caerphilly Castle.

Evening Trips & Pub Suppers Roman & Mediaeval Usk--Abergavenny Town Walk--Abbeydore--Industrial Archaeology Tours (2 separate visits both repeated)

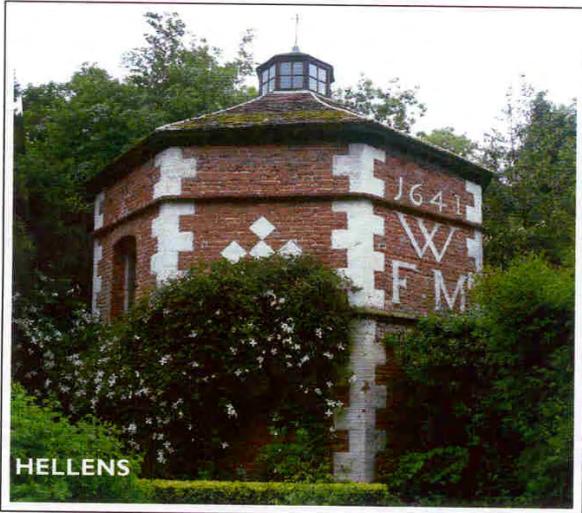


Margot Seabourne

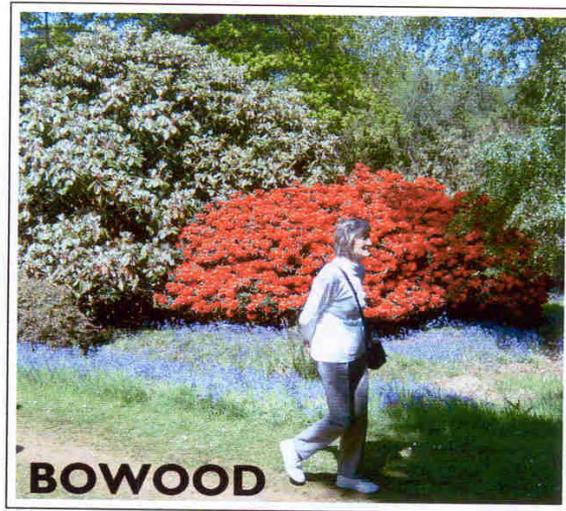


KAK

This Year's Summer Visits 2010 From feedback received from members, the highlights of this year's programme so far have been: Hellens, especially the Hall with its 800 year old stone table top and Battle of Crécy royal crest; Duntisbourne Rouse Saxon Church; and Bowood's magnificently scented rhododendron/azalea walks.



Margot Seabourne



KAK

The 2011 Programme -- Tentative until confirmed by letter in November.
(NT -National Trust; EH - English Heritage)

- ***All Day, Saturday, 21 May:*** Somerset town of Langport (Coffee), Huish Episcopi Church, Muchelney Abbey EH, Yeovil (Lunch), Montacute House NT (notable Elizabethan Mansion), Market town of Castle Carey (Tea).
- ***All Day, Tuesday, 7 June:*** Bill Rutter's guided tour of churches in mid-Wales.
- ***Afternoon, Thursday, 23 June:*** Cardiff's National Museum & Gallery of Wales
- ***Evening, Tuesday 5 July:*** Frank Olding's third in a series of fairly local industrial archaeology tours followed by a pub supper.
- ***Weekend, Friday 29 July to Monday, 1 August:*** Chartwell NT (Churchill's home) on Friday afternoon; Canterbury Cathedral & City on Saturday; Dover Castle EH (great new renovations here) and Richborough Roman Fort EH on Sunday; Hever Castle (Anne Boleyn's home) on Monday morning.
- ***All Day, Thursday, 11 August:*** Highclere Castle, South of Newbury (home of the earl of Carnarvon who discovered Tutankhamun's tomb, etc.), Wantage (Lunch), travel via White Horse on hill above Uffington to Malmesbury Abbey & Gardens (Tea).

On behalf of our Society's members and committee, I thank Margot Seabourne for all she has so willingly and efficiently done to make your summer visits run smoothly and my job easier.

John Skinner.

P.S. I have a lady's white cardigan, left on the coach in late May / early June.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2009-2010

This is my final report as Chairman and I'm pleased to say we have had another very successful year. Our membership stands at 379, compared with 389 the previous year. I am sure you will agree that the £10 subscription is still exceptionally good value for all the activities we offer.

We are very fortunate to have such an excellent committee. Their commitment, hard work and efficiency are very much appreciated. Our thanks go to the secretary, Gill Wakley, who also does the PowerPoint projection. She is the Minutes Secretary and job-share press officer with me. Our grateful thanks also go to our Membership Secretary, Sue Smith, efficient as ever.

We have had many highlights in the lecture programme again this year for which we thank the retired lecture secretaries, David and Barbara Powell, who are now the new Social Organisers. Their replacements are David Morgan and Marian Senior whose programme starts in September.

There was another excellent visits programme organised by Brigadier John Skinner and our thanks go to him and Margot Seabourne, the Visits Treasurer, who deals with the bookings and payments for the trips. There is a lot of hard work involved in that especially with the cancellations and the replacements and I'm sure that everyone appreciates that.

Our thanks go to our longest serving committee member, Ken Key. Ken is our sound engineer and projectionist, and the 'Churchwatch' co-ordinator - the society provides the stewards at St Mary's Priory Church for one day a week. Ken is the editor of our Newsletter and is now helped by Sue. This year, we are hoping that the newsletter will be sent out electronically to all those on e-mail, which should cut down on costs - and achieve Ken's ambition of distributing it in colour, at least to those on e-mail. Thank you to Helen for managing the e-mail database and keeping our members updated.

Another highlight this year has been the expansion of our series of guided walks. This summer we are holding a series of walks on the western side of Abergavenny in conjunction with the Brecon Beacons National Parks Authority, so thank you to Marian, Dai, Helen, Gill, Paddy and everyone in our guides' team. Our Farmers Market Tours have been very popular as have our annual Town Tours.

This week, Gill and I took a party of young teachers from Spain, Romania, Turkey, Finland and Germany for a guided walk around the Children's Plaques.

They were in Abergavenny as part of the Comenius European Partnership project

Our society organises the floodlighting scheme at Abergavenny Castle but the number of sponsors this year has dropped. We are looking to add another lantern and I'm sure that Paddy Beynon, the floodlighting secretary, would be delighted if more members were to contribute £5 to pay for a week's floodlighting of your choice to help keep the scheme going.

Paddy is head gardener at the Victorian garden in the castle, which continues to bloom, and there are special thanks to a new volunteer gardener, Caroline Watkins, for helping out. If anyone else is interested in joining them, please contact Paddy.

Our newer members may like to know that we serve Fairtrade tea and coffee after each lecture, thanks to Jane White and Jeanette Butt.

Each year we make number of grant awards to pupils of King Henry VIII School. We are also sponsoring prizes totalling £200 for the fourth year at the Abergavenny Eisteddfod to be held in June.

As you know Coleg Gwent closed down The Hill college. The society, supported by many others, including the engineering firm of GKN and the president of the engineering society IMechE, asked CADW to consider listing the house, if not on architectural merit then through its association with the eminent industrialist E P Martin. Unfortunately this does not appear to have been successful but we have been informed that most of the grounds will be included in the register of historic parks and gardens, partly through the association with John Wedgwood, founder of what became the Royal Horticultural Society. We understand that process has almost been completed.

One of our biggest projects this year has been the Children's Plaques / Standing Stone project, and our thanks go to everyone who helped to fund it. The concept was to engage children to learn about local history in a fun and exciting way, and also to provide a self-guided town walk to interest children during school visits to Abergavenny Museum and the Tithe Barn heritage centre. A leaflet will be published soon. On this sub-committee were Jane, Gill, Stephen and myself. Pupils from nine local schools took part in research from which the ceramic artist Ned Heywood and sculptor Jane Turner drew their inspiration to design the plaques in a mix of styles and materials. The standing stones near the Gorsedd circle in Swan Meadow highlight the importance of Abergavenny in

the development of the Eisteddfod tradition, and celebrating the work of Lord and Lady Llanover in promoting Welsh language and culture.

In partnership with King Henry VIII School and Llanover Primary School, the society helped to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Big Ben's first chime, that's the 'Great Bell' at the Clock Tower installed while Lord Llanover was First Commissioner of Works. This plaque is a companion piece to the Standing Stones and was funded by the RAE Herbert Charitable Trust.

The Llanover children from the village primary school and King Henry VIII School helped artist Ned Heywood to design the artwork on the plaque which was presented to the Keeper of the Clock Tower at the House of Commons last July. It is now on display in Room One at the museum about half way up the Clock Tower, so the name of Abergavenny Local History Society is on display at the heart of the Houses of Parliament

In summer 2009 the society published a new book Gobannium by Frank Olding. Last year was the 50th anniversary of Abergavenny Museum and in August we helped to organise a Portable Antiquities Roadshow, part of the series of birthday celebrations.

The society has donated £800 for a Listening Post for oral history projects at the museum. This will be used for the first time in the new exhibition of 1950s / 60s Abergavenny so visitors will be able to hear at first hand the voices of townsfolk recalling their memories.

We have also agreed to give the museum £2,000 towards a 'Schools review' project to attract more school visitors to the museum.

I am standing down as Chairman after four years. I would like in particular to thank the retiring treasurer for agreeing to take on the job and for sorting out the society's financial affairs after the previous treasurer became ill.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Borough Theatre staff for being so helpful throughout the season. We are always made to feel comfortable and welcome here.

Finally it has been a privilege and an honour to lead the society. Thank you for all your support in my time as Chairman. It has been a busy and exciting time, and I am sure that coming year will be another one with much to celebrate and I wish the new team every success.

Irena Morgan

THE NEWSLETTER

This is the 26th annual newsletter which Freda started and which I have continued.

I am grateful to **Sue Smith** for scanning all 26 newsletters and converting them to portable document format (pdf) and putting them on CD.

We hope this valuable archive will eventually be available for all members to see on our website and will find a place in the museum.

I have compiled newsletters in colour for the last few years but it is too expensive to produce copies in colour for distribution to members. However, the newsletter will be available in colour to all members who provide their email address. Just send an email to

kenkey@btinternet.com with the subject "LH NEWSLETTER"

This will save the considerable work printing, stuffing in envelopes and sticking on expensive stamps. If you are not on the internet we can still send you a black and white version of the newsletter

Ken Key

CASTLE FLOODLIGHTING

There are four floodlights illuminating the castle and a fifth floodlight is under consideration as also is a sensor that will switch on the lights automatically when it gets sufficiently dark. Another effort to save energy will be to replace the lights with modern ones as they come to the end of their useful life. These actions will require funding as will the running costs for electricity.

You can celebrate an event by sponsoring the floodlights for a week for £5. You can arrange this with Paddy Beynon who will give you a named certificate to send, perhaps, to someone for their birthday.

Ken Key

THE HAROLD ROAD QUILT

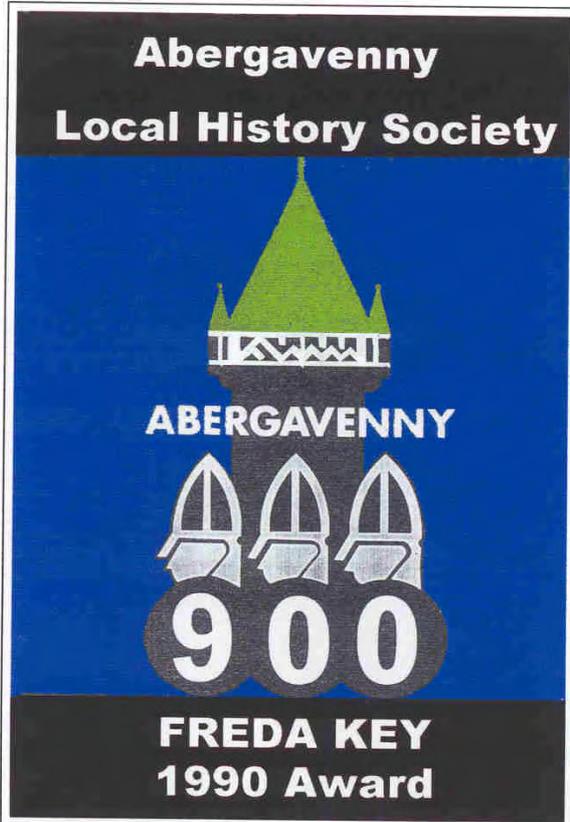
The Harold Road Quilt is now in the museum. It is rather too big to put on permanent display and is presently in store.

It was made by all 270 children of Harold Road school under the guidance of the artist in residence Bettina Rivers during the 1990 Spring Term. Then quilt formed the centrepiece of the children's topics in the celebration of 900 years since the foundation of Abergavenny.



The Local History Society decided to award the school a plaque for its excellent work in a competition. The plaque was made by disabled workers under the direction of Peter Campbell.

During the refurbishment of the school it travelled to Park Street School with the quilt and although we are lucky enough to have the quilt, the plaque was lost.

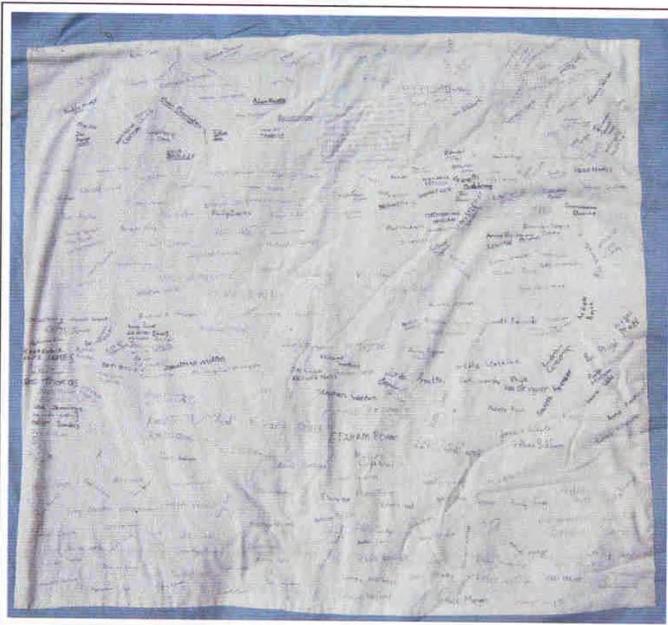


FREDA KEY

KAK

KAK

When the Local Authority took over the museum it was Freda Key and Gwyn Jones who converted the Museum Society Committee into the Local History Society.



Freda, who was currently treasurer of the Society was a magistrate and had recently retired from the post of Regional Librarian for the rural part of Gwent. Sadly, she died in April 1989 and the Society donated the plaque in her memory.

I shall never forget the tremendous support which I received from members of the Society which has continued throughout its existence to be a close caring community of good friends.

The reverse of the quilt contains the signatures of many of the schoolchildren who made it.

Ken Key

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

When we joined the Society as newcomers to Abergavenny almost ten years ago, we were very glad of its lectures, visits and social events. We soon got to know something about the town, meeting many of its inhabitants in no time at all. We enjoyed social events - Christmas dinners and, of course, the quizzes!

We are a little sad that the social side of the Society's activities has declined in the last few years. When we handed over our job as Lecture Secretaries we thought we should do something about it, and so we have volunteered ourselves as Social Secretaries.

This year, in March, we started off by organising a quiz and supper held in St. Michael's Centre. We would have preferred greater support, but we had six keen and competitive teams. All the rounds (carefully compiled and not terrifying) went well and generated a lot of fun and laughter. The food, provided by Sugarloaf Catering was, as always, excellent.



THE WINNING TEAM

Margot Seabourne

There were rounds on Twentieth Century Prime Ministers, and the previous decade, "The Noughties", a picture round of famous people when they were young but most rounds were a mixture. We don't confine ourselves to history. That may be a relief!

We've included here one of the rounds we used, to give an idea of the way the programme was arranged.

HAVE A GO You will probably do well, and we hope to see more people ready to be involved next time we have a quiz. You have to be in it to win it. We hope that we will be able to organise quizzes as a regular activity, if that is what members would like to do.

- 1) Who lived in "a small building close to 'the house'"?
- 2) What was Wallace Hartley's last musical engagement?
- 3) Which is the only Semitic language that is written in the Latin alphabet?
- 4) Which was the last European country to give the vote to women?
- 5) Who was the Greek goddess of vengeance and retribution?
- 6) Which French singer was known as 'The little sparrow'?
- 7) Which actress was made famous by the film 'The Blue Angel'?
- 8) What was the WITAN?
- 9) What is the local name for the River Thames at Oxford?
- 10) What is produced by the larvae of BOMBYX MORI?

Answers can be found on Page 13

We have also suggested meals (perhaps lunches, rather than evening meals) and of course we'll always look for the best venues and prices. Members seem not to want a pre Christmas dinner, but we would like to know what kind of event you would like, at any time of the year. We'll be delighted to hear suggestions.

We have followed up on one suggestion by arranging a visit to Llanfihangel Court, which takes place just before this newsletter goes to print. About thirty members are taking part, making their own way to the manor house, there to enjoy a tour of the house followed by afternoon tea.

We are also considering a visit to the Dean Heritage Museum, which is not too far afield, but we would need transport. Our friend John Belcher is a leading light at the Dean Heritage, and is an authority on all things to do with the Forest. Some members may remember him as a guest speaker at one of the Society's Christmas dinners. We thought of going there on an organised visit during the autumn, when the Forest and Wye Valley will be in their autumn colour. It will take some careful planning on our part and we would need to have sufficient support to warrant hiring a coach.

You will hear more about this at the first meeting of the Society, in September, by which time we will need to gauge the level of support we can expect from members.

The big question that we need to ask is: *Do we have enough interested members to support such events?*

Barbara and David Powell

VISIT TO LLANFIHANGEL COURT



More than 30 ALHS members turned out for a tour of Llanvihangel Court, one of the oldest surviving Tudor manor houses in Monmouthshire and its 17th-century landscaped garden. After Julia and David Johnson, who own the property had finished answering dozens of questions, it was time for tea in the cool of the courtyard -- under the beady eyes of the curious peacocks. "It was a great day out -- we were really lucky with the weather -- and we are looking forward to more short visits and social events through the year," said Barbara and David Powell who organised this social event.

Helen Morgan

Gill Wakley

CHURCH STEWARDING

This is another thing that Freda started and I have continued. We are sorry to lose the loyal services of **Harry Gilbert** who died recently and we offer our condolences to Betty on her sad loss. Some people have been stewarding for many years and one by one we lose them but new people come along to fill their places. I am always happy to enrol new people. It is an interesting job involving two or three 2 hour sessions each year. You don't have to be an expert but you will quickly learn and you will meet all sorts of interesting people

Ken Key

ABERGAVENTNY AND THE BIG BEN LINK AT THE HEART OF PARLIAMENT



Our last newsletter had a report of the 'Big Ben' plaque presentation to commemorate its 150th anniversary. Since then, Gemma Webb, the manager of the Clock Tower Anniversary Project, has sent in a photograph of the plaque in situ which we thought you might like to see – and save you climbing the 150 or so steps once you've reached the top of the long waiting list for a guided tour.

The plaque is displayed at the heart of the Houses of Parliament in Room One at the museum about half way up the famous Clock Tower. It is a companion piece to the standing stones at Swan Meadow, Abergavenny, and features the same image of Sir Benjamin Hall, in an associated project funded by the RAE Herbert Charitable Trust in partnership with the society and two schools, King Henry VIII School and Llanover Primary.

The schools have received a big 'Thank you' from Gemma Webb, for adding "another dimension to the Big Ben story" and the guided tour of the Clock Tower. Sadly, Llanover school is due to close its doors for the last time this summer.

London's Big Ben at the Houses of Parliament, is said to be named after Lord Llanover (Sir Benjamin Hall) who was the First Commissioner of Works when the bell was installed. The name Big Ben is often used to describe the bell, the Clock Tower, and the Great Clock but was first given to the bell, known as the Great Bell.

Last summer, the Llanover pupils from KHS and the children of Llanover Primary School presented the Keeper of the Clock at the House of Commons with the plaque which they had helped to design to mark the 150th anniversary of the Great Bell's first chime.

The artist was Ned Heywood, from Chepstow. He and Abergavenny sculptor Jane Turner, were the artists for the standing stone project.

Clock Tower Museum staff have also added details about the presentation which you can see in the photograph underneath the main plaque. This says:

Sir Benjamin Hall MP (1802-67)

Plaque to commemorate the life and work of Sir Benjamin Hall MP

MP for Monmouth 1831-37 and for Marylebone 1837-59, First Commissioner for Works 1855-1858 and created Baron Llanover of Llanover and Abercarn on 29 June 1859
Ned Heywood, 2009

Stoneware with coloured glaze, enamel and gold

The image in the centre of the plaque is a portrait of Sir Benjamin Hall MP, later Baron Llanover, after whom the Great Bell, 'Big Ben', is said to be nicknamed. Sir Benjamin was First Commissioner for Works when the bell was cast. The gold border features images designed by pupils from King Henry VIII Comprehensive School and Llanover Primary School and represent aspects of the career and contribution to Welsh life made by Baron and Lady Llanover.

Working clockwise from the top left, the gold border features: a Welsh harp, Rhyder-Meirch Methodist Church, a Welsh hat, Llanarth Court, secret ballot, Celtic motif, Augusta Hall's cookery book, Llanover House, King Henry VIII school motif, Welsh books, the Houses of Parliament, a sewer cover, Hanover Chapel, Lord Llanover's coat of arms, sheep, fresh water in London, iron and steel, a daffodil, the Irish Question, a clock face, Augusta Hall – the 'Busy Bee of Gwent', St Bartholomew's Church, the temperance movement, Llanover School/Ysgol Tre Elidyr, Royal Parks, Big Ben, Welsh literature.

Presented to the House of Commons by pupils from King Henry VIII Comprehensive School and Llanover Primary School, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, 2009

IRENA MORGAN

THE CASTLE GARDEN



Jeanette Butt

Children from Deri View School, accompanied by ALHS stalwart Jeanette Butt, went to Abergavenny Castle earlier this summer to plant petunias, gypsophila and assorted marigolds in the flower beds either side of the path leading up to the side of the museum.

Paddy Beynon, who manages the Victorian garden as well as the Castle Floodlighting programme, grew the flowers from seed.

ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ

POT LUCK 1) Uncle Tom. 2) Playing 'Nearer my God to Thee' on the deck of the Titanic with his orchestra.
3) Maltese. 4) Switzerland. 5) Nemesis. 6) Edith Piaf. 7) Marlene Dietrich. 8) Anglo - Saxon Parliament.
9) Isis. 10) Silk.

BAKER STREET

Some of the streets in Abergavenny are named for the business that occurred there – like Flannel Street or Mill Street - but Baker Street is named after a person.

Shirley Shirley has done some research on the Baker family and has summarised her findings.

Sometime during the second half of the fifteenth century, Thomas ap Roger Sitslyt (or Cecil) took the name of Baker as his surname. No explanation for this has been found, although it was common for people to agree take someone else's name if a bequest was involved and the donor had no male children. Thomas himself died in 1520. He was the son of Roger Sitsylt (Cecil) and his wife Anne, who was a daughter of Sir John Scudamore and granddaughter of Owain Glyndŵr.

Thomas fathered three sons, Richard, John and Robert. Nothing is known of John or Robert, but Richard Baker (who died in 1551) married and became the father of William, Anne and "other children". William became the Receiver General of the Barony of Abergavenny and died in 1606.

William fathered three children, Richard, David and Joan. Richard, the eldest, died in 1598 but left two sons (together with "other children"), William and Henry, who became Stewards of the Barony of Abergavenny. Henry went on to have twelve children (one short of a Baker's dozen).

At this point, the Baker family is joined to another family of note when Elizabeth, one of the twelve, married John Gabb of Grosmont, the High Sherriff of Monmouthshire from 1682-3. They had two sons, Henry and John who both died in 1708.

Henry had seven children, one of whom, Thomas Gabb (died 1760), fathered ten children, the youngest of whom was called Baker Gabb (b 1756, d 1821).

Baker Gabb married twice. By his first wife he had two sons and it is through this line that the name continues. The first, born in 1782, he named John Baker Gabb, the second, born 1785, he called Baker Gabb.

John Baker Gabb (died 1823) named his only son Baker Gabb, while his brother gave the name Baker as either the first or the second name to each of his own five sons.

Baker Street was not built until the nineteenth century - Grofields *meant* fields until the industrial revolution and the population increased. The first building was the Grofield Inn and the adjoining house was built in 1839. The Royal Victoria Brewery, now converted into apartments (and called The Livery!), was built by William Ellis in 1839.

Carnegie donated £2,000 towards the cost of the Library. The inscription of the dedication stone has 3 "n" in Abergavenny, and the statues are of Carnegie and the Marquis of Abergavenny with Minerva above as a symbol of wisdom.

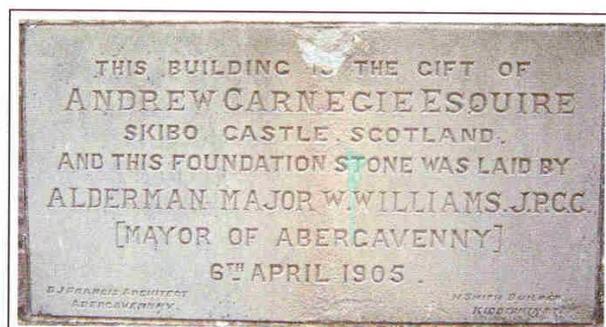


KAK

The old police station, which incorporated the magistrates' courts, has been re-used as a furniture shop and picture gallery & framer around the corner. The drill hall has been converted into a cinema (at last!).

By **Shirley Shirley**,

with additional material (and any mistakes) by **Gill Wakley**



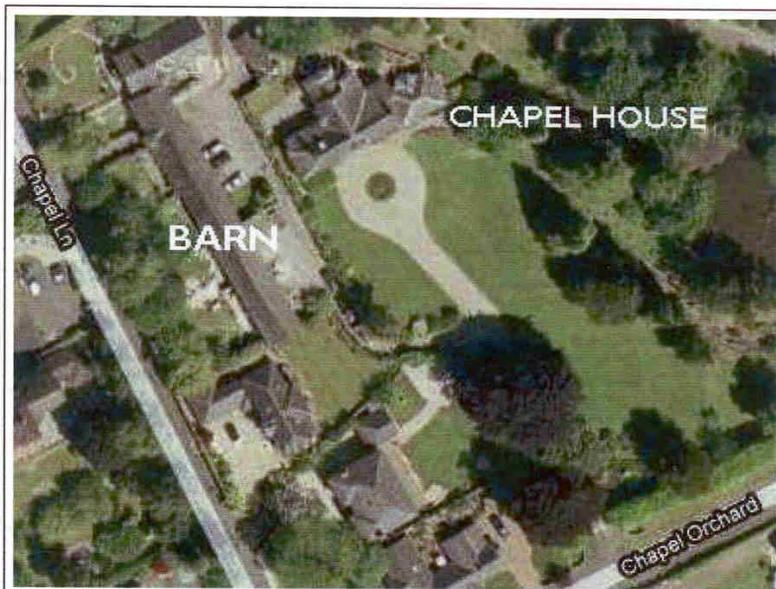
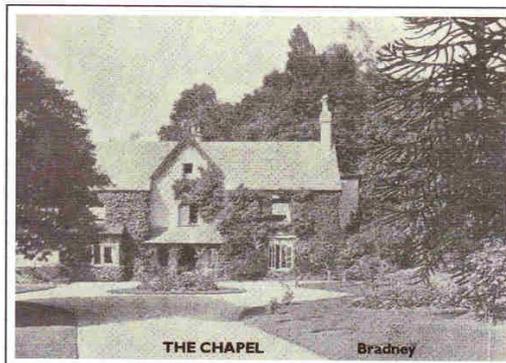
KAK

MORE STREET NAMES (and more of the Baker Gabbs)

Chapel House, between Chapel Lane and Chapel Orchard, stood on part of the land belonging to the Priory in Mediaeval times.

I have looked at some old and completely unaffordable map engravings in Hay on Wye. The 1610 (Christopher Saxton & William Hole) engraving shows "The Chapel" - about where Chapel House is now - by the stream marked as "Kebby Lly" to the south east of "Pennaieb Hill" with another Chapel marked at Bettws to the north East. On the 1693 engraving (Saxton & Phillip Lee)

the same features are shown except that Pen-y-fal is named "Penteniell Hill" with the "Blorench" opposite. In Robert Morden's engraving of 1695, the chapel is again by the "Kebby River", with "Penuaiell Hill" marked. John Rocque shows it in the same location in 1762, but John Sellar's engraving made between 1773-87 does *not* show it, although the chapel at Bettws is shown. Of course, before the Ordnance Survey it was common for maps to be copied one from another (the so-called cartographers did not visit the area), so a multiplicity of sources may not confirm the location.



The Priory was founded by Hamelin de Ballon. This was customary behaviour by Norman Knights who endowed religious establishments to say prayers for the forgiveness and for the souls of the departed knights, as they had behaved so badly when they were alive. William de Braose, who was responsible for the Christmas Day Massacre at the Castle, was another benefactor.

At the dissolution of the monasteries, the Priory consisted of a prior and four monks. Most of the land belonging to the Priory was given (1546) to James Gunter, gent,

and Henry Westcott his brother-in-law, with some being given to other established gentlemen in the area!

The estate later belonged to the 5th Duke of Beaufort, a great purchaser of land, and was sold by the 8th Duke in around 1850 to **Baker Gabb**. According to Bradney in 1906, Mr James Berry Walford had purchased it and lived there.

Bradney describes the house as very ancient with its thick walls containing the remains of the residence of David ap Gwilym Jenkin (Herbert) in C15, who must have had it on lease from the Priory. Bradney considers it must have taken its name from a chapel dedicated to St. David which stood "somewhere there and may have been part of the present barn" because of the thickness of the walls. This seems to me a little speculative! The barn is now converted into houses and much of the original grounds of the house have been sold off for housing. The Cibi Brook runs through the grounds, forming attractive water features.

Chain Road (commonly known as The Chain). The house at the corner of Chain Road and Chapel Road/Lane is called Chain House. It formed part of the manor of Llwyndu, and belonged to the



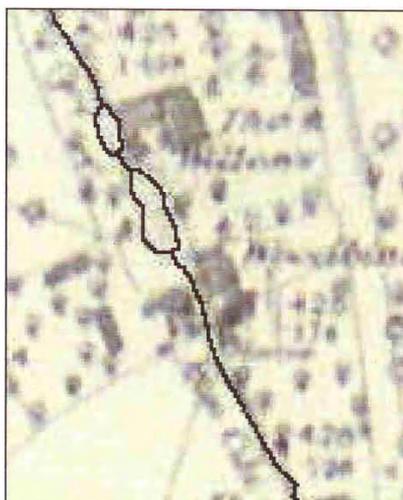
KAK

Baker-Gabb family. It is said to have its name from the toll chain that went across the road here to prevent people using it to avoid paying the toll at the junction of Pen-y-Pound and Old Hereford Road-which was then the main road to Hereford¹. An alternative explanation recorded is that a recess in the outer wall was supplied with meat and bread for travellers, with a knife to cut the food attached by a chain. Considering the lack of well-ordered affairs at the Priory in the thirteenth century (The Lord of Abergavenny is on record as issuing a complaint which had to be investigated) and the fact that only four monks were at the

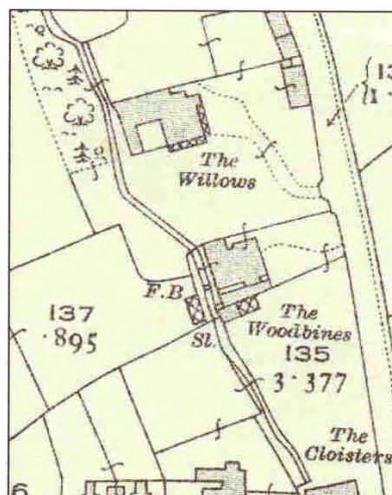
Priory in the sixteenth century, this seems rather unlikely.

Pen-y-Pound The Cibi Brook runs from Chapel House at the back of the cricket ground on Avenue Road to The Willows. Bradney states that Pen-y-Pound means "pound head" taking its name from the two small reservoirs fed by the Cibi Brook from which the water was taken in pipes to supply the town for many years.

The site of these reservoirs is stated by Bradney to be in the kitchen garden of the house built around 1820 by Mr Thomas Davies, a solicitor. In 1906 it belonged to **Richard Frederick Baker-Gabb**, who lived there. The water features south of the house are clearly shown on the 1886 map hanging on the wall of Smiles Better the dentist but has disappeared on the 1920 edition.



Reproduced from the 1886 OS map



Reproduced from the 1920 OS map

In the eighteenth century, Mulberry House was known as Pen-y-Pound house and belonged to Thomas Williams. His will left this and several other parcels of land in Pen-y-Pound to his son, including the reservoirs of water at the Willows, for which he was paid 11s per annum to allow the water to supply Abergavenny. In the early 1800's, the town commissioners (forerunners of the Town Council) constructed an entirely new water supply system from the reservoirs already in use in Pen-y-Pound, using firstly pipes made of elm, but replacing them with iron pipes in 1813. In 1860 a new reservoir was constructed at Llwyndu.

More information about any of these streets - or any others - would be gratefully received.

Gill Wakley.

¹ Bradney. 1906. Volume 1 Part 2a: The Hundred of Abergavenny