



Llanelli Community Heritage

Newsletter No: 002

Autumn 2011

www.llanellich.org.uk

Dear Subscriber,

Welcome to our second Newsletter which will bring you up to date with current developments, and tell you something about our plans for the future.

Llanelli Riots

They happened as a result of a railway strike in August, 1911 - an unfortunate business all round which led to the deaths of two young men who were mere spectators at the proceedings. We, Llanelli Community Heritage, did our bit by holding an official unveiling of a blue plaque on Union Bridge in Llanelli one hundred years to the day after the actual event.

We did not publicise the unveiling in advance because given the narrowness of the pavement on the bridge we felt it would be unsafe for many people to attend.

In the event, about fifty people turned up but fortunately safety was not compromised. We were delighted that Jane Hutt, A.M., Minister of Finance and Leader of the Welsh Assembly was able to attend, along with our local M.P., Nia Griffith, our local A.M., Keith Davies, together with our town Mayor, Cllr. Linda Stedman. Local historian, John Edwards, also spoke about his view of the 1911 events.

We were lucky enough to have a very special guest - Carol Slade, the great-niece of John John, one of the young men killed. She, along with John Edwards, did the official unveiling of the plaque on the bridge from where you can see, on the left, the house gardens where the men were standing and where they were shot by soldiers after the reading of the Riot Act.



Unveiling of the Blue Plaque by John Edwards and Carol Slade with LCH Chairman John Hopkins looking on.

We also had the Riot Act read, one hundred years later, by the Reverend Howard Jones, an imposing figure with a stentorian voice which echoed across the bridge and told people in no uncertain terms that it was time to go home. These are the words of the 1714 Riot Act read in Llanelli on 19th August, 1911:

"Our Sovereign Lord the King chargeth and commandeth all persons being assembled, immediately to disperse themselves, and peaceably to depart to their habitations or to their lawful business, upon the pains contained in the Act made in the first year of King George I for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies. God Save the King."

We did depart peaceably, but not to our habitations - Mayor Cllr. Linda Stedman invited us back to her Mayor's Parlour to partake of light refreshments which made a very pleasant end to a sunny but windy afternoon.

A footnote: The letter we wrote to the local press referred to in our Summer Newsletter suggesting that rather than building a statue, a more fitting tribute to the two dead would be the repair of their headstones, did bear fruit. The headstones have been magnificently repaired by the **Llanelli Joint Burial Authority**. What we thought was dismal granite has been revealed as shining white marble.

Llanelly House

Work on the restoration of this eighteenth century mini-stately home is continuing. Lots of activity is taking place behind towering scaffolding. The building has been in a derelict condition for many years, but we are looking forward to seeing its opening at the end of next year.

We are actively supporting this venture, and hope to be able to put up close to the building one of our interpretive panels which will give visitors information about the Parish Church and other points of interest in the vicinity of Llanelly House.

The Box Cemetery

We have now completed the research for two interpretive panels at the cemetery which dates back to 1850. The manager of the cemetery has been extremely supportive of the enterprise from its inception and looks forward to having the two panels installed, probably at the main vehicle entrance gateway.

He is proud of his cemetery - justifiably - a visitor from London said that she was so impressed by the beauty of the place that in spite of having been initially reluctant to visit



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the graveyard, she would now like to be buried there!

The next step is to present our proposals to the Llanelli Joint Burial Authority which we are going to do in October. We hope they will be impressed with our efforts and will allow us to apply for planning permission.

September Lecture by Phil Cullen

This inspiring and entertaining lecture was "Coal Mining in Llanelli".

Phil Cullen, the last chairman of the National Union of Mineworkers at Cynheidre was the man who led the fight against that colliery's closure. After leaving the coal industry, he successfully studied for a degree in law and is now a legal researcher. His two authoritative and as you might expect well-researched publications 'Gwendraeth Valley Coal Mines' and 'Outburst: Curse below the Gwendraeth Valley' are well worth a read.

Spread out on a table were enormous old maps lent by Llanelli Library, carefully hand-drawn, recording some long-forgotten structures. Much of present day Llanelli stands on top of old mine workings, long out of use and now flooded.

He told us that despite the talk of re-opening Cynheidre, it was unlikely to happen. We hope to have Phil back at some time as his historical researches continue.

Bus Tour

Our annual bus tour took place on a blustery day at the end of September. About 45 people turned up, and many of them braved the weather to take their seats on the top of the open-topped double decker. Showers gave way to sun as we set off, but returned sporadically during the hour-long tour.

Lyn John, our vice-chairman, gave a running commentary on points of historical interest as we left the centre of town and drove to Seaside with its new developments and view of the mist-shrouded Gower. Then it was over the back of Llanelli through Dafen, down and around, and back to the centre of town.

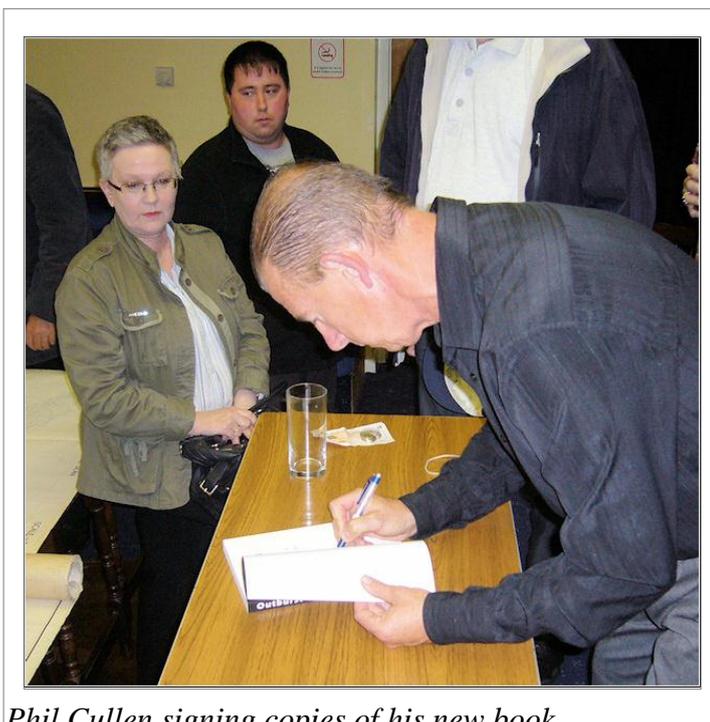


A little windy but fun!

It is always surprising to see how rural Llanelli is. The countryside is never far away - you can see it from most places in town, and now that all the factories are gone, there are large areas of green space

Stop Press!

Saturday 8th October 2011 12:00 hrs.



Phil Cullen signing copies of his new book



age of 107 years.

Unveiling of a Blue Plaque in memory of Eleanor Daniels, one of Llanelli's most successful actors. The plaque has been financed by Eleanor's family, some of whom still live in the town, and will be unveiled at her former home, 40 Thomas Street, where she lived until 1901. Eleanor died on the 19th March 1994 at the