



**D**ear Subscriber,  
Welcome to our third Newsletter which will bring you up to date with current developments, and tell you something about our plans for the future.

## **Bryntirion Panel**

We are still in hopes of getting the panel for the old Bryntirion workhouse actually put in place. First conceived almost three years ago, the project has been beset by delays mostly due to difficulties with gaining planning consent. Yes, we do have to apply to the local authority for consent for these panels, and we have to go through as many processes as we would have to for building a home extension. With luck and a fair wind, the panel will be in situ and available for the edification of passersby within weeks.

## **Box Cemetery Panels**

We have finished research work and drawings for two other panels which have been in the pipeline since last year – the panels at the Box Cemetery. The artwork is with the Llanelli Burial Authority for their approval, since it is they who are paying for the project, and we hope the panels will be in place by the summer. Visitors in search of family history or perhaps following in the footsteps of Dr. Who (an episode of the programme was recently filmed here in the Gothic part of the cemetery), will be able to read about the origins of the cemetery and about some of the people buried here in the last one hundred-and-fifty years.



All of our panels, starting with Bryntirion, will now carry a QR Code (Quick Response Code). These are two dimensional code blocks, similar to the single dimension barcodes, but with greater capacity. Mobile devices, e.g. phones and tablets, will be able to read these codes and be directed to further information such as our website. Try the one on the left!

## **Machynys Panels**

We have been asked by the Lost Communities Group to help with two panels to be sited in the 'park' shortly to be begun at Machynys on the coastal road at the Delta Lakes roundabout. Once upon a time, a long time ago, as shown on various contemporary maps, Machynys was an island – there is ongoing controversy about whether there was ever a monastery there, but there was certainly an old farmhouse which had once been a fine mansion, and this will be commemorated on one of the panels. The area now covered by the Machynys golf course and the Pentre Nicklaus and Machynys Bay developments, was in recent memory home to the close-knit communities of Bwlch-y-Gwynt and Machynys. The landlord, Carmarthenshire County Council, The then landlord, Llanelli Borough Council

moved them out with or without their consent and settled them elsewhere in Llanelli. The former neighbours still meet regularly and talk of their happy childhoods, but tears come to their eyes when they speak of the homes that were taken away from them.

### **Historical Myths**

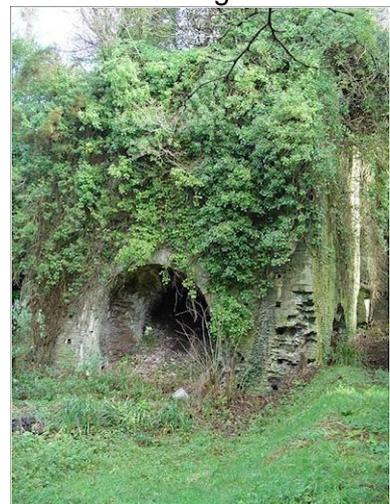
Following our AGM in March, one of our principal historical advisers, Dr. David Davies, gave a talk on the dangers of falling for the myths of history, like the gruesome death of Edward II at Berkeley Castle which apparently was not quite so gruesome and actually took place elsewhere! And the tradition that Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson lost an eye at the Battle of the Nile – he did not lose an eye and never did wear an eye patch (despite contemporary illustrations) although he did lose the sight in one eye, so presumably the difference between myth and reality made no odds to Nelson.

People are often upset when their favourite tales from history are described as 'myths', but it is worth noting that a myth is not a lie manufactured on no basis but the wish to deceive, it is a story, often passed on by word of mouth, founded on actual events which may not have been recorded at the time (e.g. King Arthur and Camelot) or which may have been deliberately given a bias because of contemporary exigencies (e.g. the Dunkirk evacuation). Myths are sometimes no more than wishful thinking but they always have a basis in fact.

### **What's in a Name?**

There have been a number of complaints from locals about the odd naming of the new theatre which is to form part of the new development. Here are a couple of extracts from the letter we wrote to the Llanelli Star:

*"We understand that the new theatre which is to be built as part of the Eastgate development is to be named Y Ffwrnes (The Furnace), the name having been chosen as the result of a survey carried out by the Llanelli Star ..... we are concerned that this name has no historic or geographical connection with the site."*



The Grade II listed Furnace.

Another problem with the name of Y Ffwrnes (The Furnace) is that Furnace is an area in the north west of Llanelli where there is an actual old furnace a couple of miles from the new theatre. It's worth noting too that there never was a furnace anywhere near the site of the theatre!

*"Numerous historical groups, organisations and individuals among the Llanelli public have spoken to us to express their perplexity at the proposed name. Everyone concerned believes that the name "Stepney" should be perpetuated on the site of what was once the Stepney Hotel in Stepney Street ..... (it) has a strong connection with the town of Llanelli, and achieved world-wide fame as the name of the first patented motor car spare wheel which was invented and manufactured in Llanelli in 1906. In some parts of the world, (India, Australia) a spare wheel is still referred to as a "Stepney".*

The name of the theatre is not the only cause for concern:

*"We further understand that the former Sunday School of Zion is to become a studio called Stiwdio Stepni. The use of Welsh is laudable, but Stepney should not be spelled Stepni since it is a proper name and should not be "welshified."*

---

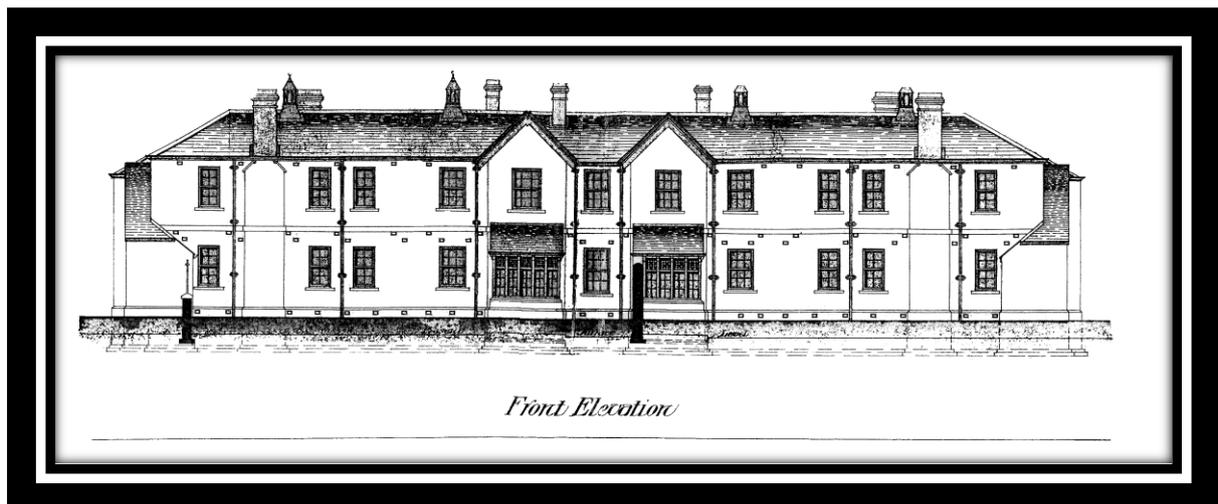
## **Forthcoming Blue Plaques**

We have prepared a blue plaque commemorating John Chambers, and hope to have it up in time for the Olympics. Chambers, who was born at Llanelly House, codified the regulations for the modern Olympic games in athletics, rowing and boxing. Not only that, but he was responsible too for the world-famous Queensberry Rules – he drew up the rules, and the Marquess of Queensberry donated the prizes.

Another nineteenth century Victorian from Llanelli whom we will commemorate this year is Francis Dunn, R.N., caulker's mate who joined Sir John Franklin on his ill-fated expedition to the north of Canada in search of the North-West Passage in 1845. All the members of the expedition died presumably from starvation and extreme cold, but possibly from lead poisoning inside the tin cans that formed part of their provisions.

Our blue plaque will sit on a plinth in Heol Fawr where Dunn had lived (in a house no longer there) with his father and mother.

We have asked Henry Davidson Developments who are building at the east end of Llanelli to include a plinth in the car park for a plaque commemorating the Elim Chapel which used to be on the site. This chapel is recorded in 1852 as being a Mormon church which makes it one of the first successful missions, possibly by returning Llanelleyites, in this country.



**Work House Infirmary**