

GWENT COUNTY HISTORY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2019

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Many thanks to those members who attended the GCHA AGM at St Michael's Centre, Abergavenny on 8th June.

Tony Hopkins began proceedings with an excellent talk on the Llanerch Colliery disaster of 1890. Tony has retired as County Archivist, although he will still be working part time at the Archives, and to mark the occasion he was presented with a small gift.

In her report, our Chair, Gill Wakley, reported as follows:

'The committee have been discussing the purpose of the organisation now that all the volumes of the Gwent County History have been published. Our main aim will continue to be publication, including the Gwent Local History Journal and other publications as considered appropriate. This would include encouraging people to research and publish the results. The role of the Monmouthshire Antiquary was recognised and our association would continue to liaise with them in order to avoid duplication of roles. Applications for publication of monographs on subjects of local interest are considered by the committee.

Another important role is providing a forum, the Gwent Local History Council, for local history societies to meet and exchange information. We would like to encourage any other history societies within Gwent who do not currently send a representative to join this forum, which the present members find very helpful. Knowledge is exchanged about good speakers (and the not so good!) and is vital to the continuance of societies. Information about organisational matters is also helpful. A useful role for this organisation was demonstrated by the co-operation of many groups in making the Newport Commemoration of the Armistice in

November so successful.

Peter Strong has compiled a contents list for the journal for the years subsequent to those now on line (which are, of course, searchable) and this is available on the website. Any offers to make a searchable index would be welcome! The Journal has a circulation list of around 186 and we usually aim to print around 220, with larger numbers for commemorative editions which sell extra copies. Although our website receives quite a large number of visitors – e.g. 2,100 in February – it does need improvement and we are looking into the best way forward for this.'

Officers and committee members were re-elected, with the addition of Byron Grubb, who joins the committee.

RICHARD HUTCHINGS

We were shocked and dismayed to hear of the sudden death of Richard Hutchings in June. Richard was for many years Treasurer of the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association, one of our affiliate organisations. As such he played an indispensable role in helping to organise and run the joint MAA/GCHA day schools over the last few years. From using his financial expertise to dishing out food and drink, Richard was always happy to 'muck in' and help out, bringing humour and cheerfulness with him. We will miss him greatly.

GET INTO PRINT

We are always on the lookout for articles for our journal, *Gwent County History*. There is no minimum length for articles and help will be given on matters such as style and editing. So don't hide that research under the bed, share it with the world! As well as being distributed to GCHA members, copies of our journal go to all four UK national libraries and to Harvard University Library in the USA.

A CHANGE OF ATTITUDE

News that Rogerstone Community Council is erecting a copy of the famous Chartist Mosaic that once graced an entrance to John Frost Square in Newport has been widely welcomed by local historians. Such a positive attitude to local history did not always prevail. According to the *South Wales Weekly Argus* (19th March 1955) when Rogerstone Parish Council received a request to send a representative to Monmouthshire Local History Council, the request was rejected, with one councillor declaring that 'Our job is to make history, not write it,' while another 'doubted whether Monmouthshire had any history.' Thankfully, wiser counsels now prevail.



2019 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2019

***Saturday 21st September:** GCHA/ Redwick History Group/Monmouthshire Antiquarians Day School, Redwick Village Hall.

***Saturday 28th September:** Living Levels History Day, Tredegar House.

***Saturday 19th October:** Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum Day School, Ty Ebbw Fach, Six Bells. Theme: Landscapes.

***Saturday 2nd November:** Chartist Convention, St Woolos Cathedral, Newport

(Contact us for more details.)

RECOMMEND A FRIEND

To keep on an even keel financially we need to increase our membership. Do you have a friend or colleague who might be interested in joining the Gwent County History Association and receiving the *Gwent Local History* journal? If so please send us their name and address and we will send them a complimentary back issue of the journal with an invitation to join.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Our bank has informed us that in future cheques must include our full name: **Gwent County History Association. GCHA etc will not be accepted.**

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