

Open Saturday and Sunday afternoons



[www.ClydachHeritageCentre.com](http://www.ClydachHeritageCentre.com)

Newsletter No. 3 October 2015

## Letter from the Chairman

This has been another busy year at the Heritage Centre with visitor numbers steadily increasing.

We have been successful in grant applications. The Mond Community Club provided funds for two A frame advertising stands and the production of business cards and Clydach Community Council is paying for the production of this Newsletter. In March we were successful in obtaining a grant from the Monmouthshire Building Society Charitable Foundation to help us renovate the coal dram. Many people have helped us with materials and practical assistance and we fully expect the completed project to be well received.



Julie Davies, Chairman of Clydach Community Council presents Sue and Gwyn Evans with their Community Award.

Clydach Community Council honoured Sue and Gwyn Evans with a Community Award. This has been placed in the Heritage Centre in recognition of the work done by all the volunteers.

Outside our role as a heritage and information centre the Cwmtawe Cycle Group again started their 43-2-C cycle ride from the centre in June. This annual ride raises funds for Ty Hafan Children's Hospice. In addition local branches of the WI have used the building for joint meetings.

*Susan Evans*

## History on our Doorstep

Rhian Evans is a History graduate from Swansea University. She has recently joined us as a volunteer and presented us with a copy of her Finals dissertation entitled 'The Mond Nickel Company and the First World War'. This is what she had to say about her work and the interest which it gave her:

"Since the beginning, I knew that I wanted to write about an aspect of local history. Whilst conducting my research, I was amazed at the importance Clydach Mond played during WWI, especially as The Mond has been sitting on my doorstep my entire life and I was completely unaware of its role in the First World War.



Rhian Evans and Sue Evans discuss Rhian's contribution.

Not only do I find it fascinating discovering more about my surroundings, but I believe it's important to educate the public on the history of Swansea and encourage people to take an interest in our heritage. In presenting Clydach Heritage Centre with a copy of my dissertation, and volunteering at the Centre, I hope this will enable others to share my enthusiasm for the history of the area and ensure that our past is remembered by future generations."

# Alltwen Heels WI

This year witnesses the 100th anniversary of the founding of the WI movement in the UK. The original idea was born in Canada by one Adelaide Hoodless with the aim of educating rural women to help increase the food supply. The concept was introduced into the UK by the formidable Madge Watts under the direction of John Nugent Harris, secretary of the Agricultural Organisation Society. The very first WI opened in September 1915 at Llanfair P G. By 1916 the national federation had been formed with Lady Denman at the helm.

At the end of 1918 there were 199 WIs and 7 county federations. Today there are 6,600 with over 212,000 members. Over the years the WI have fought relentlessly on campaigns to help improve life in general. In 1947 the resolution at the AGM was equal pay for women. It was 1970 before this became law.



2015 has seen many celebrations to mark the Centenary. In May HRH The Duchess of Cambridge hosted a garden party at Buckingham Palace with 8,500 WI members in attendance including the current president of Alltwen Heels WI. Two days later the AGM took place at the Royal Albert Hall, opened by HRH the Queen with Princess Anne and the Countess of Wessex also attending.

In May 2015 an exhibition opened in Swansea Museum with 15 local WIs showing exhibits from over the years. This exhibition closed in August and the display from Alltwen Heels WI was re-sited to Clydach Heritage Centre. We have strong support from the Glamorgan Federation and attend many of their events.

We welcome new members with open arms and have a reputation of being a friendly and vibrant group.

Jean Round - President of Alltwen Heels WI.



## Open Doors in Clydach

Last year Carl Nicholas (Vice Chairman) ran the first Culture and Heritage Walk around Clydach under the auspices of Swansea Council's Open House scheme. In September this year he repeated the walk this time under Cadw's Open Doors banner.

Sunday 6th September was a glorious day for the walk. Ten people set off, led by Carl (centre back row), and returned three hours later  
*(cont'd bottom page 3)*



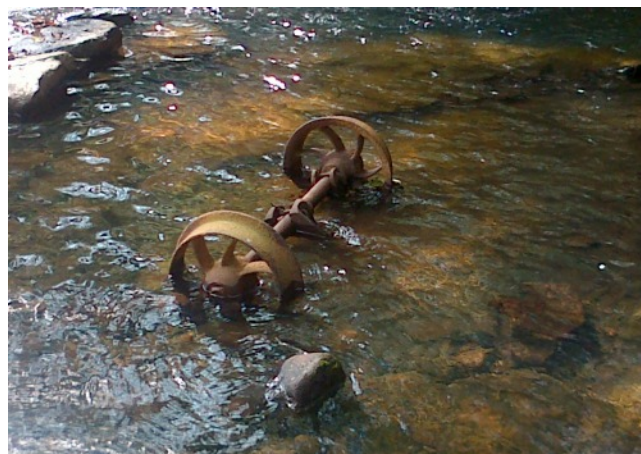
The walkers about to set off

# The Wheels on the dram ...

The coal dram has been sitting in the cage at the end of the Heritage Centre, full of locally sourced coal, since we opened four years ago and we had often talked of putting it back on wheels. A friend of Gwyn (the Secretary) said he knew of some wheels and axles, sitting in a stream above Resolven and thus the project was born.

A rainy visit to Resolven with wellingtons and a tape measure showed that the wheels would indeed fit. We now had a key element of the project, the next was sourcing some funding. Meryl (the Treasurer) suggested a bid to the Monmouthshire Building Society's Community Fund. We were successful and obtained a grant for 50% of the project cost.

The farmer on whose land the wheels were to be found pulled them out of the river and delivered them to Clydach. A contact at a local engineering works had a set of dram rails which he was prepared to donate and we sourced some sleepers from another local contact. Suddenly the project was go.



One of the axles and wheels in the Crythan Brook, Resolven.

But we had to hold off for a while as the funders asked for a photograph of the project to be used in their annual Members' newsletter.

**B3 Youth**

provided funding to purchase a table football which will be used regularly by the club's Bridgend-based members.

**Clydach Heritage Centre** promotes the heritage and tourist attractions of Coed Gwilym Park and the Swansea Canal. They received funds to restore a dram used locally throughout the early 1800s which is on display in the Centre's grounds.

**Friends of Clydach Heritage**

The Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman with the wheels, as they appeared in the Monmouthshire Building Society Newsletter.

© Huw John



Mike Diment welding an angle grinder



Once this had been done various members set to, first emptying the coal so that the dram could be turned over and then wielding angle grinders and wire brushes to cut off the bearings and bolts so that the axles and wheels could be fitted and painted. The project should be completed by the end of the year.

(cont'd from page 2) having seen kingfishers, dragonflies and toads on the canal. They also found the old man in the woods, at Cae Pant y Dugoed. The time spent in St Mary's Church was well worth the visit and thanks are due to Mike

Diment for the explanations of the imagery in the various windows. Everybody returned to the Heritage Centre for ice cream and to see the 'Memories of Old Clydach' DVD and in particular 'Clydach Shops in the 1950s'.

## Subscriptions



Each year we have to pay for insurance and licences to allow us to run the Centre. These basic running costs are met from subscriptions and the sale of goods at the Heritage Centre.

The membership year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> September.

If you haven't renewed this year please help us by doing so. You can fill in the form below and return it, with your membership fee, to:

The Secretary, 69 Vardre Road, Clydach, SA6 5LU or drop it off at the Centre one weekend.

Alternatively, visit the website and use the Paypal facility. **Thank you.**

### I would like to become a Friend of Clydach Heritage Centre.

I enclose my subscription for the year

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Post Code: .....

Tel: .....

Email: .....

Age (if under 18): .....

#### Membership Fee: £3/year

I would like to make a donation of £..... making a total of £.....

*giftaid it*

If you pay income tax or capital gains tax we can claim 25p for every pound you give to us - at no extra cost to you.

If you are happy for us to claim Gift Aid on your contribution from 6th April this year please tick here.

Signed: .....

Date: ...../...../.....

## Paying Subscriptions

As we say across the page we use subscription income to help pay the running costs of the Centre. We have now set up a facility to pay subscriptions electronically using PayPal. This is much easier for both you and us.

To pay using Paypal go to the website [www.ClydachHeritageCentre.com](http://www.ClydachHeritageCentre.com)

and click on the Home page tab this will open up the subscription payment facility.

If you pay tax on any income you receive then please consider ticking the Gift Aid box on the form or on Paypal. Gift Aid increases the value of subscriptions and donations by 25%. This year we have received over £90 from Her Majesty Revenue and Customs (the old Inland Revenue) by reclaiming Gift Aid.

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## Visitors

Since opening in 2011 we have received almost 10,000 visitors. One unexpected visitor this year was Julie James AM, The Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology. She had arrived in Clydach to meet Swansea Canal Society and was impressed by our presentations and the welcome she received.



One regular visitor is Star. Whenever the door of the Centre is open she pops in for her biscuit treat. If the door is still open on the way back home she calls in for another one! How's that for regularity?

Star, our most regular visitor,



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