

Open Saturday and Sunday afternoons

Closed for the duration of the Covid restrictions

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



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Newsletter No. 8 October 2020

## Letter from the Chairman

*“The best laid plans of mice and men”*

Who would have thought at the beginning of the year that the Centre would have to close in March and would still be closed six months on?

Having said that the Committee have been busy behind the scenes. As the stock at the Centre was not going to be used it was decided to donate it. The drinks were given to the Ty Croeso food bank and the Joe’s Ice Cream to Awelon Care Home in Pontardawe Road. Both were very grateful for the items.

With the help of a grant from Mynydd y Gwair Community Fund a project has been able to go ahead. Swansea Canal Society has made a long term loan of their model of Clydach lock and the grant enabled us to fund a display cabinet for the model. The Community Council has also made a long term loan of the plaques from Clydach Hospital. Designing a display for these will keep the committee occupied for a while yet!

The Community Council also supplied us with the School Certificates of a Marion Griffiths which had been lying forgotten in a drawer in the Community Hall. With the help of social media she was tracked down, now living in North Wales, and the certificates returned to her.

As the Centre has been closed since March there has not been any income from sales. Annual membership fees make up about 5% of the Centre’s income and it’s that time of year again!

There are plans to open the Centre when all the appropriate safety measures are in place.

In the meantime keep safe and we hope to see you in the not too distant future with new things to show you in the Heritage Centre.

*Susan Evans*

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## We may have been closed but nature hasn’t stopped



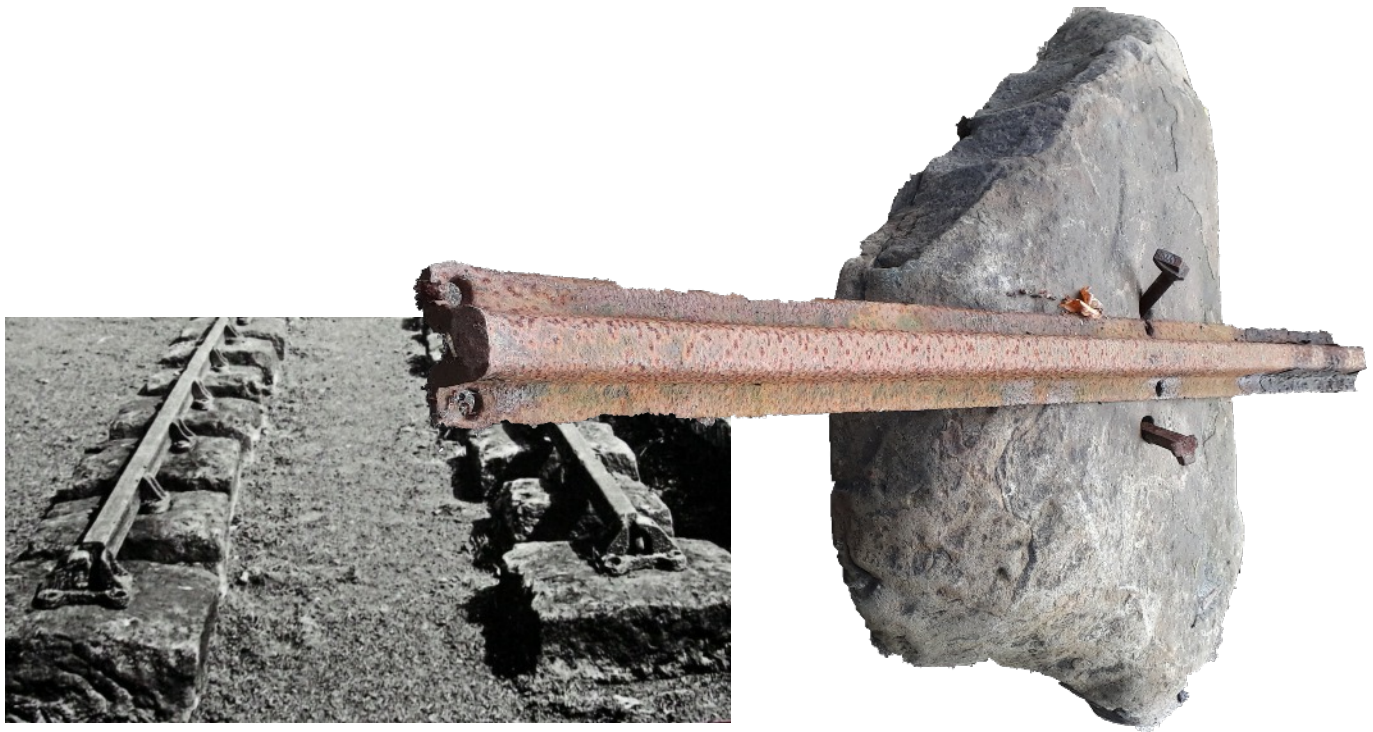
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# New Finds

Despite having to close in March we have continued to receive donations and develop our displays.



James King donated this sparkless rail drill. This device would have been used in coal mines to drill rails. It is hand-driven and so no sparks are generated which could ignite gas. The drill was turned using a spanner on the square shaft while the handwheel applied pressure to the drill.

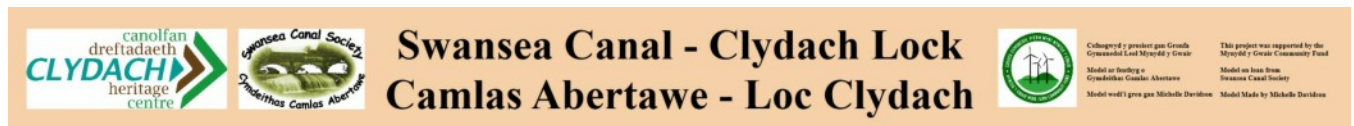
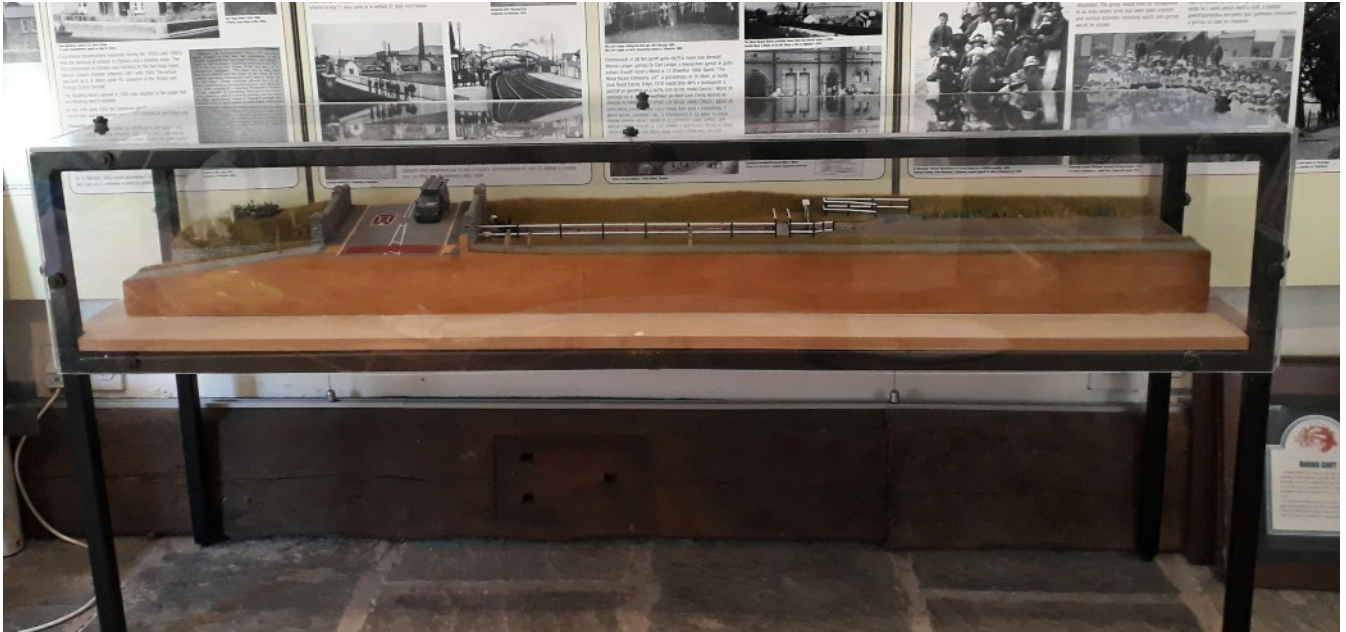


Another find was a stone railway sleeper. Thanks are due to Ioan Richard of Craigeffnparc for pointing it out to us. Also Matt Woodfield who single handedly hauled it out of the river and John O Jones of Pontardawe who provided the transport to deliver it to the Heritage Centre.

In the early days of the railways heavy stones were laid in lines and the rails were fastened to these. It was later found that these stone 'sleepers' were too rigid, created too much vibration and couldn't carry the load of heavy steam locomotives and they were replaced with wooden sleepers .

These had a number of advantages, they were more flexible and could accommodate the vibrations of the trucks and, because they were a single length, they could maintain the 'gauge' (the distance between rails) much better than separate sleepers under each line of rail. This sleeper was found in the Lower Clydach River in Cwm Clydach and was presumably used for the first railway line carrying coal from the local mines (Nixon's, Hendy and Moody's) down to the canal wharf in what is now Player's Industrial Estate.





Late in 2019 we were successful in obtaining a grant from the Mynydd y Gwair Wind Farm Community Fund. This grant paid for the construction of a display case for a model of the Clydach lock. Swansea Canal Society has loaned us the model on a long term basis as it will allow many more people to see the model and

gain an appreciation of how the canal worked and how barges moved from one level to another. The Ladybird book of Canals provided us with a simple explanation of how a canal lock works and is on display alongside the model!

Clydach Community Council redecorated the Community Hall whilst it was closed during the pandemic. They decided that the Clydach Hospital plaques would be seen by more people if they were displayed in the Heritage Centre and we now hold the 19 plaques which show the history of Clydach's War Memorial. Over the next few months we will be working to have them on show. When we reopen we will also have some explanatory panels describing their significance.



# Paying Subscriptions



Each year we have to pay for insurance and licences to allow us to run the centre. These basic running costs are met by subscription and the sale of goods at the Heritage Centre. Membership runs from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> September and the membership fee is £5.00 per Year.

If you pay tax on any income you receive then please consider stating 'Yes' in the GiftAid box. GiftAid increases the value of subscriptions and donations by 25%. So for every £1 that you give GiftAided the Heritage Centre will actually receive £1.25 and at no cost to yourself.

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

I enclose my subscription for the year

\* Name: .....

\* Address: .....

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\* Post Code: .....

\* Tel: .....

\* Email: .....

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

**Membership Fee: £5/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: ...../...../.....

\* The Friends will only use the information provided on this form for the purposes of contacting you about FCHC business.

This year has been particularly difficult for us as we have been closed since March as a result of the Covid pandemic restrictions with no income but still the outgoings.

We have set up a facility to pay subscriptions annually 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 Support Us tab.

Alternatively you can make a BACS payment of your subscription direct to our bank account:

Account: Friends of Clydach Heritage Centre

Sort Code 20-84-41

Account Number 33440575

Add your name so we know who has paid us, and GA if you are willing to Gift Aid your subscription.

Thank you for helping us through this difficult time.



**Our friendly Robin has been keeping an eye on the Centre while we've been closed.**



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