

## FOR YOUR DIARY

### Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 24th April 2013  
Commencing at 7.00pm  
In the Morgan Room at Tredegar House.  
Speaker - Jane Richardson,  
NT Head of Marketing & Supporter  
Development Wales & Programme Director.

### DAY TRIP

Our Summer day trip this year is to Lacock Country House with monastic roots, once home to William Henry Fox Talbot, famous for his contributions to the invention of photography.  
on Thursday 27th June 2013.

### MID DAY TRIP

A visit to Duffryn Gardens and House St. Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan. One of the National Trust latest additions in Wales, these Grade 1 gardens cover 55 acres and feature a stunning collection of intimate garden rooms, formal lawns and an extensive arboretum.  
on Wednesday 17th July 2013.

## TALKS

### Wednesday 10th April 2013

Speaker – Paul Busby  
Subject – Hush, Hush, the peculiar career of Lord Tredegar and it will focus on Evan's adventures in the second world war!!  
Commencing at 7.30pm in the Morgan Room at Tredegar House

### Wednesday 15th May 2013

Speaker - Bob Trett  
Subject - Tour around Historical Caerleon  
Commencing at 7.30pm in the Morgan Room at Tredegar House.

## From the Archives - "Death at Tredegar House of a Crimean Hero"



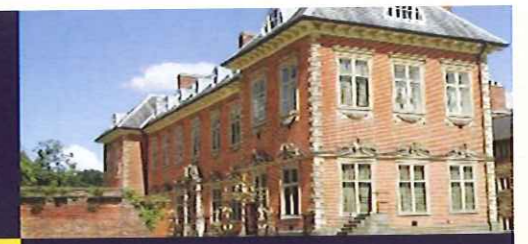
The Western Mail headline paid tribute to "an old war-worn veteran, one who had lingered beyond his allotted span". Sir Briggs, the horse that carried Godfrey Morgan into the Battle of Balaclava, died in 1874 having

lived in "ease and quiet dignity" in one of the paddocks of Tredegar House. The bay horse, standing some 15.3 hands high, had been wounded on the head in battle but, like his rider, was saved. He also went on to serve Frederick Morgan when Godfrey returned home, finally returning to Tredegar Park in 1855. There is a portrait of him in the Military Museum.

Visitors to the Cedar Garden at Tredegar House can see a monument commemorating him. He carried his Master the Hon. Godfrey Morgan, Captain 17th Lancers, boldly and well at the Battle of Alma in the first line of the Light Cavalry Charge at Balaclava and the battle of Inkerman, 1854. He died at Tredegar Park 6th February 1874 aged 28 years.

At the end of 2012 the Executive Committee invited the Property Manager Miss Joanna Cartwright to obtain estimates for the restoration of the Sir Briggs monument in the cedar garden.

At our last Executive meeting in March Miss Joanna Cartwright informed the Committee that the cost of repairing the monument, replacing the missing lettering, providing for routine maintenance and the provision of winter protection will approximately cost between £3500 - £4,000. The Committee unanimously agreed to fund this project during 2013, as this year marks the centenary of Godfrey's death. Hopefully this work will be put in hand shortly and the monument will be returned to the Cedar Garden later in the year, possibly in the summer or early autumn.



## Message from Chairman

### Anne Pegington OBE

On the 11th March we held an Executive Meeting, when we made a presentation to one of our members, who, since the inception of The Friends of Tredegar House, has been the leader of the ladies' sewing group. Sue Powell has done super work making curtains, costumes and numerous other articles over the years. This work is now done by the volunteers of the National Trust. We offer our sincere thanks Sue for her hard work over many years.

This will be my last message as your Chairman. You will remember that I informed you that I will stand down at the Annual General Meeting, having completed two and a half years as your Chairman.



A quote from our constitution: 'The Object of the Organisation is the education of the public by promotion, support and assistance of Tredegar House, through the activities of a group of Friends.'

I will reiterate my comments from our last Newsletter. I wish that the National Trust and The Friends of Tredegar House will continue their endeavours to preserve the House and Gardens for future generations. Over the past twenty years or so, the Friends have made donations to the House of approximately £100,000.

The Friends have informed the National Trust that they would look favourably on any requests to assist with the purchase of Tredegar House artefacts, as and when they come on the market, with the proviso that they are placed in the House



Sue Powell with gift from Friends

## Social Events – Judith Rice

On February the Friends were given an interesting talk and a showing of a very rare film of the House and Gardens in 1963 by some past pupils who attended St. Joseph's School. Again, there was a very poor turnout.

Mr Ralph Diaper was our speaker for March and what a talk you all missed! Ralph showed us slides of different parts of Europe that he had visited, with musical memories played on the accordion. Once again the meeting was poorly attended. Members please try to come to our talk in April, when our speaker will be Paul Busby.

## The School at the House by Michele Lewis

Last Month I was given the opportunity to give a talk to the 'Friends' on a subject very dear to my heart: my beloved school. From 1959-1966 I was a pupil at St. Joseph's Convent High School, which for 15 years of its long life was based at Tredegear House.

The talk followed hard on the heels of our latest school reunion which took place in November 2012. At this very successful reunion I was able to glean some wonderful stories about the life of the school when it first moved to the 'House', as it was always known to us girls. In November, one of our old girls, Giannina Boggiani née Mascherpa, brought along an apron which was made out of the remnants of the bed hangings of Princess Olga's bed. These remnants were found in a cupboard and were used by the Nuns to make aprons, which they sold at the Christmas Bazaar. I showed this to the 'Friends' at the talk and they were all very interested to see a part of the house furnishings which still survived.

While showing a PowerPoint presentation of over 40 photographs of school life in the 50s and 60s, I was able to indulge myself and my audience with some of the better stories of school life such as the one about the Priest's hole; its presence was denied down the ages but some boarders found it hidden under the floor of the Nun's staffroom in the Cedar Room and were nearly expelled in the process!

Inevitably the talk covered the years when I and Paddy McClenchy (retired Deputy Head of the new St. Joseph's School) were pupils. Paddy came to the talk to support my efforts in story telling. The talk was a walk down my memory lane and was naturally subjective and may not have concurred entirely with other people's memories. I tried not to see the school through rose coloured glasses but it was difficult, as you see for me and Sr. Pauline, the last Headmistress of the 'Convent', they were some of the happiest years of our lives.

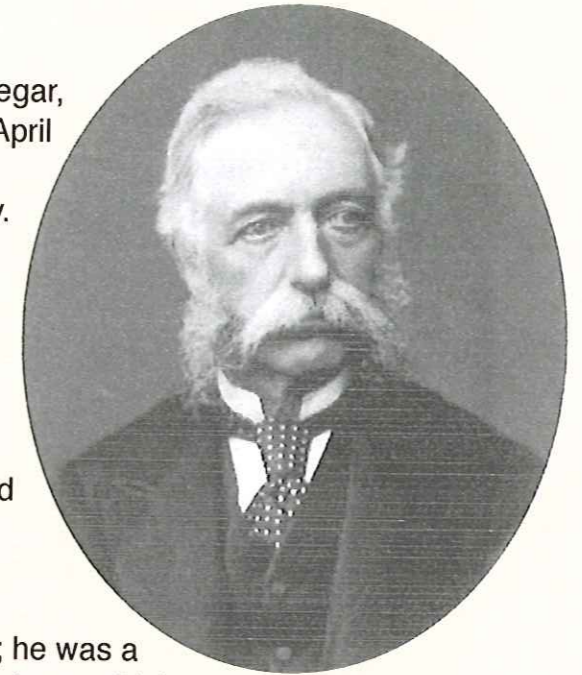
Over the years I have met many people who have some very strange ideas of what life was like in a convent school and particularly 'The School at the House'. Throughout the talk my aim was to dispel the myths and tell the truth, as I perceived it, about those happy days in a happy school surrounded by beauty both natural and architectural. After nearly 50 years it is an achievement to be able to speak still of my school with affection. Some memories will never die, at least not while I and my friends are around to recount them to anyone who will listen!



*The Apron made from remnants of the bed hangings of Princess Olga's bed.*

## Godfrey the Good

It is 100 years since Godfrey Charles Morgan, Viscount Tredegear, died on 11th March 1913 at the age of 81. He was born 28th April 1831 at Ruperra Castle, the 7th child of Charles Morgan Robinson Morgan, 1st Baron Tredegear and Rosamund Mundy. Godfrey had 6 sisters and 4 brothers: Fanny Henrietta, Georgiana Charlotte, Mary Anna, Rosamond Marian, Selina Maria, Charles Rodney, Frederic Courtenay, Ellen Sarah, Arthur John and George Gould. There was great rejoicing in the Morgan family when the first male child, Charles Rodney arrived – after five daughters. At last there was an heir to take on the dynasty of the Morgans. However, Charles Rodney died in 1854 at the age of 25 and so it fell to Godfrey to lead the Morgan family into the next century.



His long and illustrious career included the battle of Balaclava; he was a Captain in the 17th Lancers who 'rode into the jaws of death'. As a politician he was the Member of Parliament for Breconshire 1858-1875. Looking back at his life, I am drawing from contemporaneous books and pamphlets written both during his lifetime and after his death.

'The whole district of South Wales and Monmouthshire, and especially Newport and its immediate neighbourhood, today March 11th 1913, mourns the loss of one who throughout an unusually long and well spent life – for more than half of which he occupied the position of territorial lord and head of one of the most ancient families in the kingdom – was filled with loving kindness and thought for others, and was never known to turn a deaf ear to those who needed and desired assistance.' So wrote C.J. Mills in his book 'Viscount Tredegear – His Life and Work'. The first chapter is entitled 'The Highest Ideal of a Gentleman', which reflects not only the writer's opinion of Godfrey Morgan, but that of the people of Newport, to whom he was known as 'Godfrey the Good'.

'The dictionary might be exhausted without finding a word sufficiently comprehensive to describe the many virtues of Lord Tredegear – his old world grace and charming courtesy, his wise yet unstinted philanthropy, his sparkling humour, his gallantry and his sportsmanship. When people think of Lord Tredegear they like to remember him, as he himself would like to be remembered, as a downright good sort.'

In the next few newsletters I will be telling the story of the Crimea – using Godfrey's own words in letters to his Mother - and of his philanthropic works in Newport and the surrounding districts.

In the meantime do take a look at our website <http://www.friends-of-tredegear-house.co.uk> where you can read 'The Wit and Wisdom' of Godfrey Morgan by following the link to a downloadable book.

Monty (Archivist for FOTH)