

FOR YOUR DIARY TALKS

WEDNESDAY 8TH OCTOBER

Speaker - Paul Busby
Subject - "The Victorian Morgans"
Tredegar House in the Reign of Queen Victoria
Morgan Room at Tredegar House
Commencing at 7.30pm

THURSDAY 6TH NOVEMBER

Speaker - Dennis Tippins
Subject - A photographic journey along
the Monmouthshire and Brecon canal
35 miles from five locks
Pontnewydd to Brecon.
Morgan Room at Tredegar House
Commencing at 7.30pm

ENTERTAINMENT

SATURDAY 25TH OCTOBER

Balacava Supper Commencing at 7.00pm in
the Morgan Room at Tredegar House
See insert for further information
Tickets £18.00pp

TUESDAY 9TH DECEMBER

Christmas Party for Infants of Duffryn School
Servants Hall at Tredegar House
Commencing at 1.45pm

WEDNESDAY 10TH DECEMBER

Christmas Celebrations and
Christmas Fayre
In the New Hall at Tredegar House
Commencing at 7.30pm

FRIENDS OF TREDEGAR HOUSE SUMMER TRIP Paddy Landers

The sun was already shining brightly as the intrepid travellers set out on their voyage of discovery in June. And what a delightful voyage of discovery it was.

The drive took us through beautiful Cotswold scenery and picturesque villages to Fairford, our first stop. Here, we had plenty of time to have a coffee in the nearby hotel and to visit St Mary's Church. There has been a church on this site for over 1000 years but the present one was built in 1497. It is a very impressive building, and well worth a visit, but the church is best known for having the only complete set of Mediaeval stained glass windows in the country and they are truly magnificent. We were warmly welcomed into the church by the stewards who were very happy to show us around and share the delights of their church with us.

The second stop was in the delightful village of Letchford where we could walk by the river, enjoy a light lunch and indulge in a little retail therapy. In fact, some of us even did some Christmas shopping in the quaint Christmas shop. Well, as the lady behind the counter told me, it is only six months to the big day.

At 2pm we arrived in the ancient village of Langford for the high spot of the day. We were greeted by art expert and former curator of Tredegar House, David Freeman and taken into the restful walled garden of his house. He explained that the house had been owned by the late Sir Hardy Amies, the dress designer who had dressed Her Majesty the Queen for fifty five years. The beautiful house, left to David on the death of Sir Hardy in 2003, has been preserved as a living monument to its former owner. It is a converted school and is full of memorabilia; photographs of famous people, including members of royal families, beautiful paintings and amazing artefacts collected by the dress designer during his trips to foreign parts. There are also many examples of his own work in the house and it was a bit surreal to be told that the chairs upon which we were sitting, and the rug under our feet had been hand stitched by the great man himself.

And then, just when we thought it could not get any better, David produced a wonderful afternoon tea for us all, savouries, scones, cakes and a refreshing cup of tea.



David Freeman only opens his house to the public two or three times a year, and we were very lucky to have had the opportunity to visit it. It was a most enjoyable experience and we thank him for his hospitality. Congratulations and thanks are also due to the organisers of this wonderful trip.

REUNION OLD GIRLS AND INDIA -

Michele Lewis

In November 2012 The "Old Girls" of St. Joseph's Convent High School held a reunion at Llantarnam Abbey. One member who attended, Linda Reynolds Tippe had come all the way from Lilienthal in Germany in the hopes that she would meet some of her old friends. Only a few were able to come so we arranged another reunion for her particular friends the following summer at Tredegar House, which was a great success.



It was a beautiful day, hot and sunny. The house and park were at their best, ablaze with colour and the lawns in front of the house were manicured to snooker table levels. We met, very excitedly and introduced ourselves most of this group of 'old girls' were from the very first batch

who were taught at the house. You would never have known that some of them hadn't met for 56 years, they greeted each other as old friends and the cries of 'do you remember' started immediately. I (Michele) was the youngest there and only knew most of them from previous reunions as many of them left the school in 1959 the year when I started my high school years. Mary Potts (Montgomery) was one of the ones who returned to teach and she told us all that her baby used to sleep in a cradle under Sr. Pauline's desk! She might have meant Sr. St. Brendan who was headmistress at the time but it didn't matter the story was listened to and enjoyed.

Our entrance to the house (after having some photographs taken on the steps) was almost a relief as the sun was beating down and we all sighed as we walked in and the usual comments were made "Isn't it small" and "That's where I used to stand" and we toured the house reminiscing all the way. Unfortunately for us there were very few hosts available that day although those that were there made us very welcome and were full of snippets of knowledge. It was fascinating to learn that there was a bed in the silver vault and on 'dinner party' nights when the silver would be brought out for display on the tables, a footman would sleep on that tiny bed to guard the silver from potential thieves.

Some of the girls who had been boarders at the school were very disappointed not to be able to see the boarders refectory as it was closed that day but we made up for it by chatting about those times while we stood in the corridor and visited the housekeeper's room. There we looked at the books on display and discovered who had painted the various pictures and who they depicted. The Dining room (music room to us) was a particular delight although in our minds' eye we imagined it with chairs and a grand piano in the corner. We remembered Sr. St. Patrick that diminutive amazing musician who scared the life out of most of us, and we looked back on Mrs. Richardson's rendition of 'The Indian Love Call' and 'Only a Rose' which celebrated the end of every summer term. Happy days!

We set off to tour the remainder of the house each seeking their favourite room and memory and we met later at 3pm for a Devon tea of scones jam cream and tea in the Brew House where we had reserved tables. The chatter continued and we spent another happy hour. It was difficult to say goodbye as we felt we had made and renewed friendships. Our parting words were 'keep in touch' which is so much easier now than all those years ago.

THE TREDEGAR ESTATE AND FIRST WORLD WAR - CONTINUED**Steffan Ellis - 2014**

War had been brewing for years. It had been thought by many that it was only a matter of time before the two blocks of allies would force each other into conflict. When Gravilo Princip fired his fatal shots at Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo, he could not have imagined the chain of events he would set off and the four years of horror that would follow.

Britain declared war on Germany on the 4th of August. Courtenay offered his 1600 tonnes yacht for use as a hospital ship and it was accepted on the 10th of August. Courtenay was made a Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve and was allowed to command her to begin with. He paid for the Liberty to be fitted for its new role and initially provided the crew. Within four weeks, he was granted two months sick leave and made his way to Scotland. On the 14th of December he was given the rank of Commander.

Back in Newport, others were looking to do their bit. James Hillier, the manager of the Stud Farm had established the Monmouthshire Troop of the Royal Gloucester Hussars, which was the Yeomanry. The sons of many farmers on the Estate were encouraged to join – families such as the Bahams, Cullimores, Emersons – and the Hilliers. Joe Basham and J. O. Cullimore would be wounded in action, but return home. Wilfred Emerson was killed though.

Another who had joined the Gloucester Yeomanry (Hussars) was Jack Evans the Chauffeur. Lord Tredegar had assured those of his employees who joined up that their jobs would be kept for them. He kept his word. There was also a promise of a bonus on their return.

Not everyone was familiar with horses and horsemanship, of course, and young Oliver Seyama (still known as "the lad" by some of the senior staff) joined the South Wales Borderers on the first of September. Three days later he joined his new battalion – the 5th (Pioneers). He served with them all through the war until May 1919, by which time he had become an NCO and had been decorated for bravery when acting as a runner / messenger.

The Welsh Guards regiment was raised on 26 February 1915 by order of King George V, in order to complete the national complement of regiments of Foot Guards identified with the countries of the United Kingdom. Evan Morgan joined the newly formed Welsh Guards as a Second Lieutenant in June. Whether he joined willingly is rather doubtful.

In February 1915, Lord Tredegar had been transferred from his RNVR post and command of the Liberty and was attached to the Royal Naval Division, where he was put in charge of recruitment for Wales. Under his command and supervision new recruits were trained at the Crystal Palace, and then served in France and Gallipoli and on the seas.

Being back on dry land was useful for Lord Tredegar as at this time his Breconshire Estates were being sold. Already, Y Dderw had been sold – the estate that had been in the family since the Seventeenth Century. At the outbreak of war, Lord Tredegar had offered the Mansion House in Brecon to the Red Cross in Breconshire. However, now it was up for sale.



isaac Seyama, Gardener

In August the last Rent Audit Dinner was held in the town. Mr Harries, the Tredegar Estate agent for the county said that his lordship was pleased that so many tenants had been able to purchase their farms and expressed sympathy to those who had lost sons in the action overseas. In 1916, The Liberty was sent to the Mediterranean with a full naval and medical crew. Also on the move was the Monmouthshire troop of the Gloucester Yeomanry. Jack Evans was by now a corporal and was involved in the Dardenelles campaigns and then moved to Egypt near the Suez Canal where he was captured by the Turks on the 23rd of April. He was to be a POW for the rest of the war and his treatment was mainly one of cruelty.

In London, 37 Bryanston Square had become Lady Katharine Tredegar's town house for some time. She loaned the property to The Royal Flying Corps who opened a Hospital opened in May 1916. In June 1916 the King sent a gift of wine for the use of the wounded officers there. The Hospital was the second to open in London specifically for members of the Corps.

After a visit by the King and Queen in 1917, Lady Tredegar, who already had had a ward named after her for her generosity in allowing the use of her house, contributed £375 to cover maintenance of the Hospital for six months and one additional bed. Before this Lady Tredegar had been a fundraiser for a wide range of causes and often attended galas, concerts and exhibitions in the company of her daughter Gwyneth.

**MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN****Mr Alan Henshall**

Firstly, I am delighted to report once again to members on recent events. I hope that you all enjoyed what has been an unusually pleasant summer and are feeling refreshed for the long winter months. The Friends membership continues to grow and since our last Newsletter we have gained a further 13 members. Mr Roger James was our replacement speaker for July and what an interesting talk so many of you missed! Roger gave us an insight into the lives of Charles Rolls and Henry Royce showing a very rare film of an early 1910 air display featuring Charles Rolls. A lot of time and effort goes into arranging our talks so please support us.

Finally, The National Trust has opened up the Master's Bed Chamber showing some of the original Tredegar Collection. The two items being shown are the Flemish late 17th century cabinet on 19th replacement stand. The Cabinet contains 12 drawers and a cupboard which conceals a further 8 drawers and another cupboard, with Ivory decoration and red tortoiseshell drawer and cupboard fronts. The Friends helped to fund the purchase of this cabinet back in the 1990's so it could return to its rightful place. Back in 2007 the House was able to bring back a "Miniature Cabinet which appears to have been created c1720 during the reign of George 1. It is thought to have been commissioned especially for Sir William Morgan (1700 – 1731). Yet again the Friends were called upon to help with the funding of the magnificent cabinet.

CHILDREN'S PARTY -

We like to send the children home with a little bag containing fruit, and some sweets, as a gift from the Friends, given by Santa of course. Your help is needed could you please donate a small bar of chocolate or a packet of sweets. Please bring your sweets along to our next talk in November; your donations will be much appreciated.