

BORTH-Y-GEST UPDATE
February 2011

Annwyl Cyfaill/Dear Friend

There are quite a few things to update you on for the next month or so. The weather in Borth-y-Gest turned definitely Spring-like today - all those 'put off' gardening jobs suddenly look urgent!

In no particular order...

Events coming up:

1. Working Party to clear the Old Well - 2pm Saturday 26th February

Did you know that there is an old well/spring set into the wall near St Cyngar's - below the road leading to the Lookout? I didn't, but Ieuan Roberts pointed it out when we had our recent litter pick. It's on the old path below the wall and could be easily and safely accessed from the Lookout end of the wall - however, the old path is quite overgrown, and the well doesn't look too appetising at the moment. However, a couple of hours effort should make a dramatic difference and restore one of the features of Borth-y-Gest. If you are able to help, please turn up with at the Lookout with gloves, secateurs etc. and lend a hand. But do see next item. By the way, if anybody knows the history of the well, please let me know.

2. The Memorial Service for the Rev. Pearce Jones - also at 2pm on Saturday 26th February
Tom Brooks writes:

The Memorial Service to celebrate the life of the Rev Pearce Jones is now scheduled to take place in Capel Bethel on Saturday 26th February at 2pm. A special service was held in Bethel two years ago to celebrate Pearce's 60 years as an ordained Minister when many, many people living in Borth-y-Gest attended. I feel sure that many will wish to attend on 26th February to celebrate his 24 years living with us.

3. Another Memorial Service - this one for W.A. Madocks. 3pm Sunday March 6th - St John's Church, Porthmadog

None of us were around 200 years ago to actually meet William Madocks, but we all have cause to be grateful to him and his quite colourful life which included the building of The Cob, and from that, the creation of Porthmadog and most of the built environment in this amazing area. I expect it will be a very well attended service.

4. A History Walk on the Portmeirion Peninsula: 2pm Saturday 19th March

Richard Walwyn is leading another History Walk for the Friends, this time around and in Portmeirion. Full details are on the Notice Board, but I should point out a couple of things: Richard plans to take the walk down on the shoreline, so wellingtons would be a good idea [or old shoes that you don't mind getting wet & muddy!]. Also, it's worth noting that you can get free entry to Portmeirion until the end of March - application forms can be downloaded from their website or, I think, picked up from the gatehouse. There is no restriction regarding age or being a local resident, so it's an opportunity to visit free before the summer crowds. For the History Walk, meet at Portmeirion Car park at 2pm - Saturday 19th March.

5. Open Meeting in April

This has been on the Agenda for a while, but I have a bit of difficulty sorting a date out. It is likely to be on Saturday 9th April and should be a coastal walk, with a marine environment expert, along our estuary, followed by an open meeting in either Bethel or St Cyngar's Hall. However, I'll need to confirm full details later in March.

6. Historic Photograph Exhibition 23rd - 28th April [Easter Week]

This will be a repeat of the very successful Exhibition held in St Cyngar's Hall last August, as part of the Cob 200 Celebrations. More details will be sent out nearer the time.

Recent happenings:

1. Coastal Path Litter Pick

The work last year to open up the views by cutting back vegetation, and, of course, the winter loss of leaves, exposed a lot of ancient and more recent litter. We had a Litter Pick on 8th February which was extremely successful, with nine volunteers removing about 15 black bin bags full of rubbish and leaving the path looking pretty good, with just a few items beyond the reach of our arms and litter pickers. Hopefully these will soon be covered by spring growth. However.....a feature of the litter was the presence of scores, probably over a hundred, of 'dog waste' bags which had been thrown into the bushes. Quite revolting and most unpleasant to remove. If you walk along the path in the next week or so, you will see that the Committee has put up a few notices asking dog owners to do the decent thing and take their waste away, or put it in the bin provided. These notices are only temporary, but we may put them up again when the summer holidays start. We hope to keep the path looking as it should do as one of the nicest gentle walks in Wales.

2. Committee Meeting - 26th January

There was a Committee meeting in January and the minutes are posted on the Notice Board. A few items are appropriate to mention here, as not everybody will see the board. See next items.

3. The Recycled Paper Skip on the Car Park.

The Committee asked the Council to move it to a less obtrusive position - over the last year the position has been creeping towards the centre of the Car Park, as the collection drivers swap skips each month. This has now been remedied and it is back against the grass bank. However, it is possible that the Council will remove the skip altogether, as every household now has blue recycling boxes and the box collection process, after some early teething problems, is working well. If you are potentially affected by the removal, be aware that Gwynedd Council will provide Blue Boxes [with lids] if you need more, and they will accept all paper and cardboard in the boxes, as well as tins, plastic and glass bottles. To request more boxes, call the Recycling Dept - the phone number is in the phone book.

4. The Street Lights

I am pleased to tell you that the street lights in the village are being progressively changed, from the yellow sodium lights which send their light in all directions, to halogen lights which are brighter, more efficient and much less obtrusive as they just shine their light downwards, where it is needed. Well done, Cyngor Gwynedd!

5. Community Grant application

The Committee applied to Watkin-Jones Ltd for a Community Grant to put a rustic bench on the high point of the land in Pen-y-Banc Local Nature Reserve [up Mersey Street, beyond the School] that we cleared of bracken last year. Sadly, we were unsuccessful, but we are keeping our eyes open for other opportunities to fund improvements to the village. Note: more bracken bashing will be needed in Pen-y-Banc this year - it's a tough plant and will take some getting rid of!

6. A St David's Day Celebration in the village.

A great idea, but sadly we didn't get any volunteers to help to make this happen, so we've had to cancel it for this year.

Other matters:

1. Tide Tables

These are now being displayed again on the Notice Board and will give High and Low tide times for Borth-y-Gest from 1st March until 30th October. Thanks to Madog Yacht Club for providing an electronic version that is easy to print off and display.

2. The Borth-y-Gest mail list

We now have 106 people on the list for receiving these updates! If you know anybody who would like to be added, please let me know - they don't have to live or have a house here. We don't currently send out paper updates, but this may be a possibility as long as costs are covered. Let me know of anybody who may like to receive a paper copy. You'll be aware that there is no subscription to belong to the Friends - things happen on a voluntary basis.

3. Future Events:

There are quite a lot of things in the pipeline...hopefully most of them will happen! They include: A Beach Party for the Village, in early June; A History Walk through the mining area near Penrhyndeudraeth; A 'bat identification' walk in Parc-y-Borth in early summer; a repeat of the History Walk from Ynys Cynhaearn; A repeat of the Nature Walk in Parc-y-Borth and, of course, more bracken bashing, litter picking and path clearing. I'll be sending out updates and there will be notices on the Notice Board through the year.

Finally....

If there is anything that you would like the Committee to discuss, or have ideas for events, or would like to volunteer to help, please let me know.

Cofion gorau/Best regards

David Medcalf

Ysgrifennydd/Secretary

Cyfeillion Borth y Gest - yn gofalu ac yn gwella ein pentref
The Friends of Borth y Gest – looking after and improving our village