

# LLANTRISANT TOWN TRUST

[Registered as a Charity]



Freeman:  
JOHN B. BERRY  
14, GREENMEADOW COURT  
LLANTRISANT  
PONTYCLUN  
MID-GLAMORGAN  
CF72 8JH  
Telephone: (01443) 222683  
Email: john.berry1@yahoo.com

## **FREEMAN'S NEWSLETTER**

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### Valedictions

It was with great sadness and extreme shock that Trustees learned of the unexpected passing away, on 19<sup>th</sup> Feb this year, of the serving Clerk, Howard J. Thomas, Roll No. 4212; Howard was Clerk from January 2000 in addition to which he served as a Trustees from 2004. On receipt of the sad news the Trustees individually made gestures of condolence, support and tribute to Howard's family. The funeral was held on 6<sup>th</sup> March and the family graciously and generously announced that they wished that donations, in lieu of floral tributes, in honour of Howard be made to the Trust for use in the renovation of the Guildhall – Howard having been passionate about this project. Trustee Dean Powell, at the request of the family, read out at the funeral service a humorous poem written by Mr. Mel. Thomas (superlative speaker at previous Court Leet dinners) for and about Howard; he introduced it with some well chosen words as a mark of respect to Howard on behalf of fellow Trustees and Freeman. It was unanimously felt that the best tribute Trustees as a body could pay to Howard's memory is to ensure the Trust faces up to and gets through this upsetting and difficult period and goes from strength to strength into the future.

The Trust was further saddened to learn that Freeman Kenneth Raymond Hill, Roll No. 2591, of Penygawsi, Llantrisant, passed away at his home on 9 July. Freeman Hill was a keen supporter of the Court Leet dinners for a number of years having arranged for his company, of which he was the General Manager of the local manufacturing factory located in Llantrisant Business Park, to sponsor the wine for all tables.

Also it was learned of the passing away of Mr. Garth John, towards the end of August, following a long debilitating period of poor health, Mr. John, a non-freeman, served as Clerk to the Trust in the period January 1989 to February 1992 and, on 9 September, of Freeman Granville John, Roll No. 2891 - Freeman John's wish that his ashes be scattered on the Castle Green was granted.

### Trust's administration – Interim & Clerkship

Following prolonged consideration by Trustees, imposed by the great and sudden loss of the late Clerk, to determine what and who can undertake roles to ensure the interim running of the Trust and to prioritise matters and identify any outstanding issues it was decided principal roles, particularly those that were within the Clerkship's direct sphere, be steered by: -

Finance/Bank Accounts - *Trustee Gareth Griffiths*

Guildhall Renovation HLF Project - *Trustees Martin Hooker and Gareth Griffiths to spearhead with support of Trustee Dean Powell and Freeman John Berry*

Court Leet and Court Leet Dinner - *Trustee Dean Powell*

Specific Projects - *The Trustee/Trustees agreeable to administer such specific projects*

Routine Secretarial Duties - *Freeman Berry (under the authorisation of the Trustees)*

In addition all Trustees pledged their agreement to give assistance in any role as and when required and Freeman Noel Israel, former Clerk and Trustee, kindly volunteered his help and expertise in any way the Trust sees fit. It was realised that fine-tuning of the interim roles may be required as a result of ongoing practice. It is felt that the experience to be gained due to the unfortunate circumstance necessitating this topic must be learned from insofar that all involved in the administration of the Trust presently and in the future should make provision for 'hand-over' when 'the time arrives'!!!!

On a more forward looking note soundings made over some time by the late Clerk have, it is very pleasing to announce, resulted in a fellow Freeman, Derrick Pounder, Roll No. 2753, continuing to be interested in taking up the Clerk's role and, fingers crossed, this could be realised before the end of the year. Freeman Pounder has been invited to sit-in as many Trustees meetings as his present busy schedule will permit.

### General Meeting 2014

The 2014 General Meeting of Freemen of Llantrisant will be held at Llantrisant Guildhall, 7.30 pm, Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October, for Freemen to be acquainted with and debate the works of the Trust over the past year and to offer suggestions to improve its effectiveness. The passing of the late Clerk has left a Trustee's vacancy - coincidentally Howard's five year term of office as Trustee would have expired at the meeting - consequently to fill it an election may be required. Any Freeman may stand for election as a Trustee, it will be necessary for him to be proposed and seconded by Freemen present at the meeting and he will be required to attend personally or provide a signed declaration to the Clerk or a current Trustee of his willingness to act as a Trustee.

### Guildhall

The 'Second-round' bid for further Heritage Lottery Fund [HLF] funding was duly submitted, enabled by the 'First-round' pass grant giving a major contribution to its eligible development costs, and its success was announced by HLF in June this year with the grant award of up to £768,500.00 being 71% of the eligible project cost towards repairing and restoring the Grade II listed Guildhall and creating new visitor displays/interpretation within the building – the Trust's vision "Llantrisant Guildhall: Sharing a Unique Heritage" is therefore another major step forward. However, there's still much effort to be put in the form of match funding, the anticipated sources were not forthcoming primarily due to the continuing dire general economic situation and a great deal of effort is underway, particularly by Trustees Martin Hooker and Gareth Griffiths, pursuing this. Also all Trustees together with the Guildhall Sub-committee are working to face a projected contribution equivalent to £222,200.00 consisting of 'Volunteer' time and the Trust's own funds. Requests for financial support have been made to Freemen, local businesses and organisations; these efforts are to be intensified as much as practicable and a few generous contributions have already been gratefully received.

Regular project group meetings are planned, steered by the appointed conservation architect, and shortly the Second-round 'start-up' meeting will be held with the HLF case grant officer who will introduce HLF's monitor for the project; following this an assessment of the effect/disruption to Freemen's and the Trust's functioning, such things as the Guildhall being temporarily unavailable for Freemen's General Meetings, Court Leet ceremony(ies), Trustees meetings, etc., can be predicted with more certainty.

### Court Leet & Court Leet Dinner 2015

As it is to be hoped the renovation building work to the Guildhall will be underway by next spring it is unlikely it will be available for the Court Leet ceremony (usually held on a Friday evening in mid-May) therefore for 2015 it is intended to couple the Court Leet with celebrations for the Town Trust's 125 years anniversary giving an opportunity for a greater community participation and fund raising towards the Guildhall project; Trustee Dean Powell is to lead the organising of the events. The 2015 Court Leet, where applications for enrolment onto the Freemen's Roll will be fulfilled in the usual manner, is to be held on **Saturday**, 23<sup>rd</sup> May at Llantrisant Rugby Club's hall followed, instead of the usual formal dinner with speakers, by a dinner-dance accommodating 250 guests in a large marquee, with flooring, erected on the rugby pitch adjacent to the club. Entertainment being provided by Jeff Hooper and Seven Piece Band, with bars in the marquee and hall and drinks waiters in attendance. Tickets for the dinner-dance, at about £40.00 a head, will be available from Trustee Dean Powell closer to the event and he anticipates that Freeman enrolment forms/packs will be on hand following the Freemen's Annual General Meeting of the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

### Freemen's Website – [www.llantrisant.net](http://www.llantrisant.net)

Freemen of Llantrisant are being invited to join a database of email addresses. Do you want to be kept up to date with Town Trust and Freemen events? News on the developments of the Guildhall? Then please send your email to [dean@llantrisant.net](mailto:dean@llantrisant.net). – it would be helpful if your full name and Roll No. be given. Future copies of the newsletter will also be sent directly on email.

### 2014 Court Leet & Dinner

Twenty four new Freemen were enrolled at the Court Leet. The processing of applications, in addition to the organising of the dinner, was undertaken by Trustee Dean Powell and the Trust is indebted for the experience of Freeman Noel Israel in undertaking the verification of documentation and checking of the Freemen's Roll. The dinner venue was Llantrisant Rugby Club for the second year since returning after many years absence, and whilst the evening was understandably tempered by the unexpected passing away of the Clerk a few months earlier, the consensus was that in the circumstances it was very successful and enjoyable with Wyn Calvin, veteran Welsh comedian and entertainer, giving an amusing main speech with supporting contributions from Freeman Sir Gareth Rhys Williams and Trustee Martin Hooker. Due to fund-raising efforts and the generosity of Freemen and guests over £1,000.00 was made towards the Guildhall project.

### Graig Common

Trustee Huw Rees administered the project "Y Graig – Objectives" over 2013-14 which saw £5,100 funding via Butterfly Conservation (BC) for a mobile cattle corral/race, rectification/stock-proofing of the A4119 fence and relaying the hedge also some bracken cutting; the Trust directly financed £1,500 upgrading of the cattle grid at the track entrance near Graig House. The aim to encourage longer term grazing on the Graig in support of the continuing aims of BC and biodiversity, etc. and to enhance the enjoyment of the many varied users of the footpaths and facilities of the Graig. It was envisaged to have about five mature 'highland' cows to commence grazing last spring; any calves that may have come along subsequently would be removed until they're at least a month old so greatly minimising any risk from protective mothers – unfortunately unforeseen problems with a neighbour's boundary not being sufficiently robust, which are being tackled, mean that their introduction will be delayed until late this autumn. Throughout the encouragement, assistance and expertise of the Borough Council's Countryside Section and Ecologist has been invaluable. Later in the year an approach was made by Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales enquiring if the Town Trust wished for them to recognise the Graig as a Local Wildlife Site – it was decided this was not in the interests of Freemen and the Town Trust to accept.

### Llantrisant Common – Welfare Issue

The tightened grazing regulations, introduced June 2013 in the interests of animal welfare with the inauguration of micro-chipping of all horses allowed to graze with periodic scanning to readily identify animals, were brought into force in earnest with the 2014 grazing season; started 1<sup>st</sup> April. On 1<sup>st</sup> June a drift was successfully organised by Trustee Huw Rees and the Common's Overseer with the support of the Police, British Horse Society and RCTCBC Animal Welfare. The drift enabled the identification of all the grazing horses, segregation of those which were not entitled to graze, those "fly-grazing", those with health and neglect issues, etc. Following checking the animals were released or impounded as appropriate; a veterinary was present giving the opportunity for all Freemen owners of non-chipped horses to have the electronic micro-chip inserted. Regrettably subsequent disciplinary action was necessary, in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary/Appeals Procedure, in one case of contravention of the grazing regulations.

### Medieval Event

An enactment by members of the Cardiff Garrison supplemented by six Knights Templar, with assistance from the Trust and facilities of the Guildhall, was undertaken on the Castle Green during the Mayday Bank Holiday weekend giving the community an insight into the way of life, pastimes, crafts and trades of medieval times. The event was very successful and widely appreciated and it is envisaged that this could well be an annual event slotting in ideally with the vision for the renovated Guildhall.

### Traffic accidents /Traffic calming

The trend is of continual increases in accidents involving vehicles colliding together, crashing off the road and injuring/killing grazing animals of Llantrisant Common. So as to address the massive animal welfare issue the Trust arranged for four 750mm reflective traffic regulation pattern signs (standard compatible with 50 mph limit roads), two with 'grazing cow' symbol and two with 'cantering horse' symbol and each with a separate "Kill Your Speed" plate underneath – these were erected on both sides of the Common Road for the notice of drivers heading down to and up from the "Mint" industrial estate.

### Castle Baynard's Greeting, 1891

A hard cover book, included inside the front cover a letter dated 5 November 1892 from its author to Thos. Evans, Esq., with title page, "The Greeting of The Ward of Castle Baynard to its Alderman, The Rt. Hon. David Evans, F.R.G.S., Lord Mayor of London, 9<sup>th</sup> November 1891" (*David Evans having been a native of Llantrisant and a Freeman*). The book was donated to the Trust by a Website/Facebook follower; it is hoped to trace the donor's name so an acknowledgement sheet could be included, say as a loose leaf, inside the covers – if any one can shed light on the donor's identity this it would be greatly appreciated.

### Equal Opportunities Policy

In support of match funding applications for the Guildhall renovation project it was necessary for the Trust to have this formal policy, Trustee Martin Hooker drafted the document which was approved by Trustees. It is required that the policy is reviewed/reported on annually and this is to be done as a standing topic for the agenda for each autumn General Meeting of Freemen.

### Crécy

The Community Council is looking to have a friendship agreement with the local authority at Crécy, following on approaches by the Llantrisant Male Choir. It is proposed to invite Crécy representatives here for next St. David's Day [March 2015] – an annual festival is held at Crécy each August and it has been suggested that a coach visit be organised for 2015. For obvious reasons the Trust is very supportive of this initiative.

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