

The LLIMEY



www.llanymynech.co.uk

The News Letter of **The LLIMEYS**

Llanymynech Limeworks Initiative – Members, Enthusiasts and Youth – Society

Friends of the
**Llanymynech Limeworks
Heritage Area**

July 2023

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Joan Zorn & Glyn Gaskill - A Tribute

In last year's newsletter, we reported that our Chair Person, Joan Zorn, stood down after 15 years of dedicated service to the Limeworks. Joan took over the post of Chair from Peter Dunhill in 2008, who was one of the leading architects of the renovations that revitalised the Llanymynech Limeworks.



Joan's tenure has seen the Limeworks maintain a steady influence in the local community. The local schools, Bryn Offa and Carreghofa, regularly bring the children to learn about the limeworks. Joan helped to involve the schools in the design of the toposcope, which now sits at the view point near the Welsh quarry, looking out over the valley to Rodney's Pillar and beyond.

Many interest groups also use the facilities here at the Limeworks, with the Stables Education Block making an ideal base to hold talks and explore the area further. Joan has encouraged groups to hold wildlife events, such as bat walks, moth trapping, fungal forays, wildlife walks and many more!

Other events have included a light show in the kiln, an open air production of The Taming of the Shrew and in 2014 a dramatic imagining of the closing of the Heritage area in 1914. This with the help of the Llanymynech Amateur Dramatic Society (LADS).

Joan has also been involved with the Heritage Open Days, being amongst the first to participate with Oswestry and

Beyond in promoting the events, both locally and nationally.

One of the places that children visiting the Limeworks love to go is Gill's Pool. The pond dipping experience helps them to understand the wildlife living there, and Joan was instrumental in obtaining the funding for Gill's Pool, which still thrives today.

Though Joan has stood down as our Chair, she is still actively involved in helping to organise our activities.

Thank You Joan.

Joan's resignation came shortly after we learned that Glyn Gaskill, our Treasurer for many years, was standing down from his position. We later learnt



that Glyn's wife Dilys, was unwell and he wished to spend more time with her. Dilys, who was also an active member of the LLIMEYS, sadly passed away on 14th February 2023 and we pay tribute to her later in this newsletter.

In addition to supporting Dilys in all of her endeavours, Glyn also took part in many of our open days, demonstrating 'lime slaking' to our visitors and explaining the process in a manner that everyone could easily understand. Glyn also setup the llanymynech.org.uk website in 2005, giving a 'one stop shop' for information about and for the community.

Thank You Glyn



In January of this year, Peter Dunhill suggested that we contact a group we then knew as “Shropshire Infrastructure Partnership” (SIP), the idea being to attract more members to the LLIMEYS and hopefully source some funding for our projects.

Community Resource (formerly known as Shropshire RCC) is a charity that is committed to making life better for people and communities facing challenges in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. It delivers this work across three main areas:

Wellbeing & Care

Supporting people to stay active and connected to their communities and to maintain their health and independence so they live life to the full. It does this through a range of community-based projects with the help of a team of local and committed volunteers.

Community & Support

It works with voluntary groups so they can help meet the need in their local area, enable local people to improve their work prospects through access to transport and support rural communities to access competitive heating prices through their Oil Buying Club.

Funding & Advice

It connects people who care with causes that need their help through their community fund, offers guidance to households to help them save energy and keep warm and provide advice to local meeting places and groups through a membership scheme.

Meetings with Community Resource

So on the 28th February we held our first meeting with Duncan Spilsbury and Carole Moreton. Duncan is the Volunteer Engagement Officer (Central & South Shropshire) and Carole is the Funding & Grants Officer (all of Shropshire).

This meeting was an opportunity for both groups to find out about each other, and to see if the services that Community Resource offered were a suitable match for the Limeworks. Our stated aims being to increase our volunteer base, attract funding for our projects and move towards Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status.

Community Resource maintains a database of volunteers and matches those volunteers to opportunities suitable to their skills and capabilities. But before we are able to go down that route we would need to make some changes to our constitution.

Community Resource

This included adding vision and mission statements and defining the roles of:

- **Chair Person**
- **Secretary**
- **Treasurer**
- **Website Admin**
- **Equipment Officer**

Currently, the only two roles filled are that of Treasurer and Website Admin, both by the same person, Bob Cotter. This clearly shows that there is a need for new volunteers to be able to move forward and achieve our aims.

A volunteer role description was also created together with a short presentation, to better understand what we needed from our volunteers and also for the volunteer to understand how their skill-set could best assist us.

A second meeting took place on the 15th May 2023 to discuss the next steps. It was agreed that we would add a "Who We Are" section to each of the documents as well as a general tidy up of the documents.

Our next steps are to agree this new document set at a General Meeting, provide the documents to Community Resource and hopefully start to fill the vacant roles.

Once those roles are filled we will then be able to move on with our aim to become a CIO.

Thank you Duncan and Carole for the support you are providing us.



Duncan Spilsbury and Carole Moreton

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A Limeworks Update



Last year saw a slow pickup in the use of the Stables Education Block as the effects of COVID19 gradually receded.

Now, the number of visitors to the site has increased, which is partly due to the number of people taking their holidays at home instead of abroad. Our google maps site is regularly visited by up to 1,000 people a month and this helps them to find and visit us. The web site, www.llanylime.co.uk, also gives our visitors the information they need to make their visit more enjoyable.

We have regular work parties on a Saturday, from 09:30 onwards, with work being done to maintain the area for our visitors.

The wall along the track beside the Draw Kilns and Hoffmann Kiln and Chimney, has

been completely cleared of the weeds growing in the crevices.

The embankment behind the Tally House has been cleared of many years of growth, to allow visitors to better interpret the embankment and its uses.

An ongoing task has been to unblock the drain under the embankment leading to the lower meadow. This has meant revealing the origin of the pipe to the north of the embankment and then following it through the meadow, digging and unblocking as we followed the pipe. This work is ongoing, but hopefully we will be able to restore the pipe so that the water again flows into the canal.

Many of our visitors will have seen the blue marks which appeared on some of our dead and dying trees, Elm and Ash. Those trees have now been felled, with the idea of leaving some of them where they lie to create habitats for our wildlife and



Revealing the drain under the embankment to the lower meadow

plants. Others have been logged and many of our visitors have taken advantage of the free wood for their burners. This process is still ongoing and will take some time to complete.

After the felling of the trees in the area beside the Draw Kilns, we looked at how best to utilise the remaining logs and smaller branches. Some of the logs are quite large and will weigh in excess of 3 tonnes, which makes it very hard to manoeuvre them safely. These larger logs will probably make for some very rustic benches and seating and we plan to use the area behind the machinery beds for that purpose.

The smaller branches and logs are being built into wildlife habitats. You can see one of those in front of the group winching the larger logs in the picture on the right.

Bob Cotter



Winching the felled trees down the hill for logging

Vacant Committee Positions

Following on from our previous article on Community Resource, we now have a number of Committee positions for which we would like to invite applicants.

In addition to wanting more volunteers to come along and assist us, we have the following committee positions to fill:

- **Chair Person**
- **Secretary**
- **Treasurer**
- **Equipment Officer**

Whilst the position of Treasurer is currently filled, the incumbent, Bob Cotter, also looks after our website and would like to concentrate efforts in that area.

If you have some free time and feel that you are able to assist us, please let us know.

The role descriptions can be obtained by going to our web site www.llyllyme.co.uk and filling in the volunteer form at the bottom of every page.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Open Day 8 May 2023

Our first Open Day for this year started off with a tree planting ceremony to mark the Coronation of King Charles III. This was organised by Duncan Borthwick-Gardiner who runs the village shop and post office.

The tree, an Oak, was planted beside the pathway from the Stables Education Block to the Tally House., Just before the office footings, with a plaque to commemorate the event.

The village Carnival Queen carried out the ceremony, with lots of family and friends looking on.



Carnival Queen and fellow tree planters

Some of our younger volunteers helped to run the refreshments stall for the day. Thanks to the generosity of Martyn Young, who provided the refreshments, all of the takings were donated to our funds.

Thanks to Tony Beardsell, we were able to generate some smoke from the Hoffmann Chimney to entertain our visitors. Sadly, Tony was unable to be with us that day as he had contracted COVID19 on a visit to Cornwall the previous week.



Refreshments by our young volunteers



Smoke from the Hoffmann Chimney

Heritage Open Day 18 September 2022

Our Heritage Open Day for 2022 was held on Sunday 18 September and was very well attended by locals and visitors from afar. Martyn Young and Tony Beardsell provided those who wanted them, guided tours. The Village Pantry kindly provided us with refreshments, Dickon Faux-Nightingale and friends gave us some wonderful entertainment and in the Hoffmann Kiln, Gemma Hughes put on a display of her artworks made from Lime Putty.



Refreshments by the Village Pantry



Some of the lime putty artwork by Gemma Hughes in the Hoffmann Kiln



Dickon Faux-Nightingale and friends entertain us

Coast and Country Visit the Llanymynech Limeworks

On the 23rd March 2023 the film crew from ITV Wales Coast and Country came to the Llanymynech Limeworks to find out about our Heritage Area and film some of the volunteers talking about Limeworks.

The initial shots were taken with the producer, Carwyn Jones, riding in the tram cart in front of the Stables Block. Pushed by Tony Beardsell, Carwyn described it as the shortest railway in the country!

Three of our volunteers talked about the Limeworks, Bob Cotter describing the peaceful and wonderful place our visitors will find; Tony Beardsell discussing the production of lime and it's harmful effects on the people producing it; and Martyn Young talking about how the limestone was burnt and produced in the Hoffmann kiln.

The camera man, Mark Doleman, also had a drone camera which was used to obtain some excellent aerial views of the chimney. The day was a bit windy and the drone had to be landed for a time as it was being blown very close to the trees!

Coast & Country, Series 11: Episode 6 is produced by ITV Wales and can be seen on ITV X online if you missed the original showing.

Producer: Carwyn Jones

Episode aired: Friday 31st March 2023



The Film Crew, Carwyn and Mark Arrive, closely watched by Martyn Young

Celebrating Dilys Ann Gaskill (1946 - 2023)



Dilys was the lynch pin and absolute key to the development of the Llanymynech Limeworks. Before she became actively involved in the

development of the Limeworks there was a very significant decision which should not be forgotten. Shropshire County Council (SCC) had taken ownership of the site and the chimney of the Hoffmann Kiln was being considered, whether to demolish or repair it. By a casting vote it was decided to repair this significant landmark. From joining the parish council in 1991, Dilys worked very closely with the clerk to the council, Vivien Byrne. Then when she was elected to Oswestry Borough Council in 1997, she began working with their Officers and was also involved in the promotion of tourism via the Welsh Border Tourism group. This group was Chaired by Dilys and Ted Clevely, Business Development Officer for the Borough Council, was their secretary. Vivien suggested a Village Appraisal for the area, which was carried out in 1998 with Dilys at the helm and led to a number of initiatives locally. The three energetic personalities, Dilys, Ted and Vivien working together formed the Llanymynech Heritage Partnership which met for the first time on the 9th February 1999. Dilys having been instrumental in setting this group up and directing its work. She was its chairman for the whole of its existence which came to an end when Covid arrived. Through this joint working and sharing of knowledge and projects, steady co-ordinated progress was made over the years. That is not to say that nothing was

done before 1999, but certainly there was an increased pace and holistic sense of purpose to the restoration, interpretation and preservation of the whole area.

By 2004 under Dilys' Chairmanship the Partnership was working successfully, internationally linking with European projects and cross border initiatives. SCC and others had proposed match funding for a large bid to restore the Limeworks, but then the promised funding was withdrawn.



Opening the Limeworks Again! - 2003

Ted Clevely had been replaced by Harriet Devlin and she proposed making a bid for a Your Heritage grant up to the threshold of £50k. This would demonstrate community support and gain for a larger project, this was agreed and Vivien took on the project. The money gained was spent on a large community survey, a website, commission of the interpretive sculpture, restoration of the canal wharf, signage, seating on the pathways, collecting audio memories and publishing the information booklet. Also a large group visit to the Hoffmann Kiln at Langcliffe, near Settle, Yorkshire.

One major outcome of the visit was that people were convinced the Llanymynech



Visiting the Hoffmann Kiln at Langcliffe

to attend various events, some led by the Shropshire Geological Society, such as walks and displays. There was a unique opportunity to see the inside of the Hoffmann kiln as lighting had been

limeworks were in a better position for development – at least we still had the chimney!

The Llanymynech Community Project held its Limestone Launch on Sunday, 23rd October 2005. Over 150 people gathered

rigged up for the day.

To this end, Dilys made the journey to Birmingham to meet the Heritage Lottery 'people' which resulted in a grant of three quarters of a million pounds. This was the



The Entrance Sculpture - 2005

Shown in the above photo are, left to right: Cllr Adam Brown, Chairman of Llanymynech and Pant Parish Council; Lembit Opik MP; Cllr Richard Burman, Oswestry Borough Council mayor; Cllr Tibbott, Powys County Council; Vivien Byrne, clerk to Llanymynech and Pant Parish Council and Cllr Dilys Gaskill, County, Borough and Parish councillor and chairman of the Llanymynech Heritage Partnership.

start of further grants. Money begets money!

Eventually more match funding was sourced and over a million pounds was spent on the restoration. Peter Dunhill was appointed as project officer for the development of the limeworks. Peter was at this post for three years, ending in 2008. He has left a future-proofed development of the limeworks improvements. Peter also set up The LLIMEYS (Friends of Llanymynech Heritage Area). Dilys was a founder member and indefatigable participant in all LLIMEYS' activities.

It has been very demanding to keep to the story of Dilys and the limeworks concise, as so many other involvements intertwine and dominate – such as the

A483! It has also become more than a wrench not to include all the people involved in the many other memories which have been made. Lots of memories of Heritage Open days, national awards (quite a few), visitors (many), development meetings (seemed endless at times), heritage economic regeneration (buildings in Llanymynech) and TV programmes (a fair few).

Suffice it to say that the work of Dilys in community developments has been significant and she has left this little bit of the world in a much improved state. A true community champion who is being missed.

Glyn Gaskill & Vivien Byrne



Dilys by the Hoffmann Kiln in 2008, marking the end of the three year major restoration of the limeworks

Stables Education Block

Available for hire for workshops, school and youth groups, parties etc.. The room has toilets, facilities for making hot drinks, microwave, digital projector and screen. We have lots of information about lime and limeworking as well as a model of the site as it would have looked in 1914 when it closed.

Check availability on www.llanymynech.org.uk (stable block bookings) or our own web site www.llanylime.co.uk

Book at llanymynech@hotmail.co.uk or with Dawn Williams on 01691 839147



Volunteers Needed

Throughout the year, volunteers meet to carry out general maintenance around the heritage area. We meet on a Saturday at the Stables Education Block at about 09:30AM. Everyone is welcome, so if you can spare some time, please come along and assist.

Contact us at: www.llanylime.co.uk/about/volunteer-form/



**CREATIVITY
UNWRAPPED**

Heritage Open Days

We plan to have an open day again this year. Volunteers will be on hand for guided walks and to answer any questions you may have

Put 17th September 2023 in your diary now!

Weather permitting we will put as much information about the area as we can outside the Stables Block

Look out for our leaflets advertising the days events!

The Theme This Year is CREATIVITY UNWRAPPED!