

HERITAGE NEWS

BLAENAVON WORLD HERITAGE SITE NEWSLETTER ISSUE 4 - WINTER 2006

Prepare To Be Dazzled!!

As the headline suggests, prepare to be dazzled by an amazing winter spectacular as the town centre and the Ironworks play host to a fantastic Lantern Parade and Fire Finale!

On Thursday 14 December the streets will be lit by a parade of over a hundred lanterns including a giant lantern of an industrial angel. But that's not all! The parade, which will start at 6:00pm from Market Street Car Park, will proceed up Broad Street and into the Ironworks where a spectacular Fire Finale will take place. High energy pyrotechnics and huge fire sculptures depicting the Ironworks of old will ignite the winter skies above Blaenavon.

The event, which is being jointly organised by Torfaen County Borough and South Wales Inter-Cultural Community Arts (SWICA) looks set to be a great success and organisers predict a huge turnout. Steve Fletcher of SWICA said "Come and join us for some winter fun! Our aim is to make hundreds of candle-lit lanterns with the good people of Blaenavon and then parade them through the town and into the Ironworks where a spectacular Fire extravaganza will round off the event". Marketing and Events Officer, Amy Taylor said "We hope this event will encourage locals and those from further afield to come along and enjoy the fantastic surroundings of the town and Ironworks. Anyone can join in and the more the merrier!"

So why not come along and take part in the lantern parade? Much loved SWICA artists Jude Wood and Ben Davis return to Blaenavon along with a team of expert lantern makers. Jude Wood said "You don't need any previous experience as Ben and myself will provide all the materials and expertise you could need, but don't wear your best clothes as we will be doing lots of gluing together!" Lantern making workshops are open to people of all ages and will take place in Blaenavon Workmen's Hall on 19,25 and 26 10am - 5pm and at Hillside School on 2 and 3 December 10am - 5pm.

So come along and enjoy what promises to be a truly spectacular event. Just remember to wrap up warm! Check out the leaflet inside for details.



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Keeping Our Eyes Peeled!

On the 11 September 'Car Park Watch' became active in Torfaen. The scheme, operated and manned by volunteers, aims to improve the safety and security of car parks within the Borough through volunteers observing car parks in a highly visible marked van. This is a national scheme which has been run with great success in other areas of Gwent where crime statistics have been significantly reduced.

The car parks to be targeted are Riflegreen, Garn Lakes, Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway, Big Pit, Blaenavon Ironworks, Prince Street and Blaenavon Mountain Air. It is hoped that the presence of the Car Park Watch van in these car parks will deter anti-social behaviour and add value to the work done by the Police by providing intelligence and information as well as acting as a deterrent to crime.



Cadw Ilygad ar agor!

Ar 11eg Medi daeth cynllun 'Gwyllo Meysydd Parcio' yn weithredol yn Nhorfaen. Nod y cynllun, a weithredir a'i gynnal gan wirfoddolwyr, yw gwella diogelwch meysydd parcio yn y Fwrdeistref drwy gael gwirfoddolwyr yn gwyllo meysydd parcio mewn fan amlwg iawn. Mae hwn yn gynllun cenedlaethol sydd wedi eu cynnal yn llwyddiannus iawn mewn ardaloedd eraill yng Gwent lle gwelwyd gostyngiad sylweddol yn yr ystadegau o ran trosedd.

Y meysydd parcio sydd i'w targedu yw Riflegreen, Llynnoedd Garn, Rheilffordd Pont-y-pwl a Blaenafon, Y Pwll Mawr, Gwaith Haearn Blaenafon, Prince Street a maes parcio Mountain Air ym Mlaenafon. Y gobaith yw y bydd presenoldeb y fan Gwyllo Meysydd Parcio yn y manau hyn yn atal ymddygiad gwrthgymdeithasol ac yn ychwanegu gwerth at y gwaith a wneir gan yr Heddlu drwy ddarparu cuddymchwil a gwybodaeth yn ogystal â gweithredu fel arf i atal trosedd.

Welsh Building Wonders!



32-39 Broad Street

Congratulations to local builders P & P Building and Roofing Contractors on being awarded winners in the Welsh Regional Final of the Federation of Master Builders Awards. The Blaenavon based company has won the Commercial Category for its work in restoring 32-39 and 73-86 Broad Street which is being funded by Torfaen County Borough through its Neighbourhood Renewal Area Scheme.

Mr David O' Brian of P&P said "This award is very prestigious and has been achieved despite high competition from all over the Welsh area. This award is by no means attributable solely to our

company. Without the dedication of Torfaen County Borough Council, its huge efforts in obtaining funding and the consistent efforts of its Officers, this could not have been achieved". Executive Member for Regeneration, Councillor Neil Lewis said "Congratulations to P&P on this outstanding achievement. I am very proud that a local building company is being recognised at a national level for their skill and hard work in restoring these buildings".

P & P Builders now go forward to the national finals to be held at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London in November.

Boot Lane Kicks Off!

Improvement works to one of the town centres worst trouble spots will soon commence. Boot Lane will benefit from a huge face lift thanks to the £1.7 million Blaenavon Town Centre Regeneration Scheme which is being funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and the Department of Enterprise, Innovation and Networks.

The improvement works will create a high quality public space that feels part of the town centre rather than an intimidating back lane. Boot Lane will be resurfaced and additional street lighting introduced. The surrounding area will also be improved and an informal car park created. The scheme has been designed in partnership with Gwent Police to deter the reoccurrence of problems associated with anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

Executive Member for Regeneration, Councillor Neil Lewis said "I welcome these improvements and can't wait to see the final results. The works to the buildings along Boot Lane have already made a tremendous difference to the area".

Prince Street Car Park has already been transformed and works to the lane to the rear of 32-39 Broad Street are nearing completion. Local building contractor, Galboola has undertaken the works. The town centre scheme, which will be implemented over the next three years (2006-2009), will also include Broad Street Car Park, Bethlehem Court, Lower Broad Street and the area adjacent to 57 and 60 Broad Street.



Boot Lane

Heads Of The Valleys Cycleway



Clydach South Station

The first phase of surfacing works on the scenic eastern section of the National Cycle Network Route 46 'Heads of the Valleys Cycleway' has recently been completed by Sustrans, the National Cycling Charity, between Llanfoist, near Abergavenny, and Clydach. The mostly off-road route follows the gentle gradient of the former Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway line and provides a safe environment for young families, while the smooth running surface is ideal for users with pushchairs or wheeled mobility aids.

The cycleway offers spectacular views of the surrounding landscape and passes many places of interest to naturalists and historians, including impressive viaducts and tunnels, craggy limestone quarries and attractive beech hangers. Officers from the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and Monmouthshire County Council are currently working with Sustrans to improve and promote the connections between the cycleway, local villages and the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape.

The next phase of works will extend the surfaced route to join the existing cycleway at Cwm Nant Gam, near Llanelly Hill, leading to Brynmawr. From Llanelly Hill cyclists will be able to connect via the local by-roads to the NCN Route 42 at Garn Lakes and many of the destinations within the World Heritage Site.

Blaenavon Wins Top Design Award!



Pictured receiving the Award left to right are Matthew Talfan of 6721, John Rodger, Blaenavon Project Director and Cath Thomas Co-ordinator Heads of the Valleys Capital Programme.



The distinctive Blaenavon World Heritage Site logo has won this year's Welsh

Language Board's Bilingual Design Award for the Best Welsh Brand. "BIL" as he is affectionately referred to (after the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape) was designed by designers 6721 from Cardiff on behalf on the Blaenavon Partnership.

Chris Lee, Creative Director for 6721 explains "The image of the man on the mountain was created as a testimony to the human endeavour that formed the Blaenavon

Industrial Landscape. It represents the unique bond between the land and its people."

The awards were open to entries from the public, private and voluntary sectors across Wales and over one thousand entries were received. The winners were announced at the awards ceremony held at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff in June. "We're very proud of the work we've done on this project" said Matthew Talfan, 6721 Managing Director. "We hope the Blaenavon identity continues to go from strength to strength and helps to establish the World Heritage Site as an international visitor attraction".

Army Tackles Eyesores

The Territorial Army's Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers have helped Wardens remove burnt out cars from a historic mountain side above Blaenavon. The ridge between Blaenavon and Brynmawr has long been blighted by illegally abandoned vehicles. The Army successfully removed thirteen abandoned and burnt out cars. Brecon Beacons National Park Warden Clive Williams and World Heritage Site Warden Alvin Nicholas suggested the site as an excellent army training opportunity that would also make a huge contribution towards improving the visual and environmental quality of the site. Alvin Nicholas said, "On behalf of Torfaen County Borough Council and our partners in the Brecon Beacons National Park I would like to thank the Army for their tremendous efforts."



Caption - The army picked up thirteen cars which were a major eyesore

Y fyddin yn mynd i'r afael â manau sy'n ddolur llygad

Mae Peirianwyr Brenhinol Sir Fynwy o'r Fyddin Dirioagaethol wedi helpu Wardeiniaid i symud ceir a losgwyd o safle ar ochr mynydd hanesyddol uwchben Blaenafon. Mae'r grib rhwng Blaenafon a Brynmawr wedi ei difwyno ers tro byd gan geir yn cael eu gadael yno'n anghyfreithlon. Llwyddodd y Fyddin i symud tri char ar ddeg oedd wedi eu gadael a'u llosgi. Awgrymwyd y safle fel cyfle hyfforddiant ardderchog ar gyfer y fyddin gan Warden Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog, Clive Williams, a Warden Safle Treftadaeth Byd, Alvin Nicholas. Byddai hefyd yn gwneud cyfraniad enfawr i wella safon weledol ac amgylcheddol y safle. Dywedodd Alvin Nicholas, "Ar ran Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen a'n partneriaid ym Mharc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog hoffwn ddiolch i'r Fyddin am ei hymdrechion ardderchog."

World Heritage Centre – First of its Kind in the UK

Excitement is building as the countdown to the opening of the World Heritage Centre approaches! This flagship project is the first of its kind in the UK and will provide a focal point for the interpretation of the World Heritage Site to residents and visitors.



As well as works to the historic buildings, a new steel-framed glass link building is being constructed to provide a physical connection between the two older buildings. This stunning new link building will house a visitor reception area and café which will provide a fantastic view out into the industrial landscape.

Some of you might be wondering about the whereabouts of the inscribed stone plaque that has been removed when the porch was demolished on the lower building. Fear not! The stone has been kept and will be redisplayed inside the new link building.

So get ready for the grand opening in spring of next year!

A Chunk of Wales in the Centre of Blaenavon

Local husband and wife team Gerald David Woodhouse and Susan Fiander-Woodhouse are to set up a new family business in the heart of Broad Street. The Blaenafon Cheddar Company & Mountain Tours will trade from 80 Broad Street and will specialise in producing and selling hand made cheddar cheeses. Residents and visitors are encouraged to drop in and see for themselves the production process and sample some of the delicious cheeses on offer.

Gerald and Susan are both World Heritage Site Volunteer Rangers and are putting their expert skills to good use by also offering visitors pre-booked cycle hire and guided mountain walks. Susan said "With the knowledge gained from our Rangers experience we aim to capture visitors with the magic and splendour of our area. There are tales of hardship, success, love, history and religion right on our doorstep. We hope that the journey we take them on will be a step back in time and a vision into the future. We aim to cater for coach parties, school groups, families or youth groups, pensioners and disabled."

Both the guided walks and cycle hire can be booked by telephone on 01495 792436, on line at www.achunkofcheese.com and www.chunkofmountain.com or by e-mail via achunkofwales@btinternet.com.

Promoting Blaenavon in Nepal!

Congratulations to Volunteer Ranger Rob Gillard who recently trekked for nine days to reach Annapurna Base Camp (altitude 13,000 feet) for the sight charity Orbis. The unclimbed Machhapuchhare (22,943 feet) can be seen in the background.



Ogof Draenen: Exploring a Last Frontier

World Heritage Site Ranger, Alvin Nicholas, gives an amazing insight into one of Blaenavon's hidden treasures...

Did you know that one of the last true wildernesses on planet earth lies beneath Blaenavon? At around 70km long and growing, Ogof Draenen (Hawthorn Cave), is the longest cave in Wales and is one of the thirty longest cave systems in the world. It is currently the second longest cave system in Britain after the Easegill System in the Yorkshire Dales.

Management and conservation of the cave is co-ordinated by the Pwll Du Cave Management Group, formed in 1996 and comprising of representatives of clubs involved with Ogof Draenen together with the Cambrian Caving Council.

The cave was known only as a small entrance in the hillside below Pwll Du until several years of digging broke through into major passage development in October 1994. The cave systems are highly complex and only accessible to experienced cavers, but deep within the cave can be found spectacular decorations of global importance and huge cathedral-like chambers. The War of the Worlds section of the cave is probably the second longest cave passage in Britain. Other sections of the cave have equally imaginative names: Strawberry Passage, Indigo Rift and The Realm of Baron Von Carno to name but a few!



Photograph courtesy of Tom (Ferret) Thomson

The limestone geology of the area was an important factor in the development of industry during the Industrial Revolution, and it is also the reason that the mountains to the immediate north and to the west of Blaenavon are rich in cave systems. In the immediate area there are eight caves over 1km long – 150km of cave systems of which Ogof Draenen reigns supreme.

Caves occur anywhere there is limestone, but the fact that Blaenavon was at the South edge of the ice field at the end of the last ice age has made the area of particular importance. Over many thousands of years groundwater and rainwater has dissolved the soluble limestone, ultimately creating the caves.



Limestone landscapes: There are 150 km of cave systems in the area



The spectacular 'Straw Grotto' Chamber
Photograph courtesy of Ian Wilton-Jones

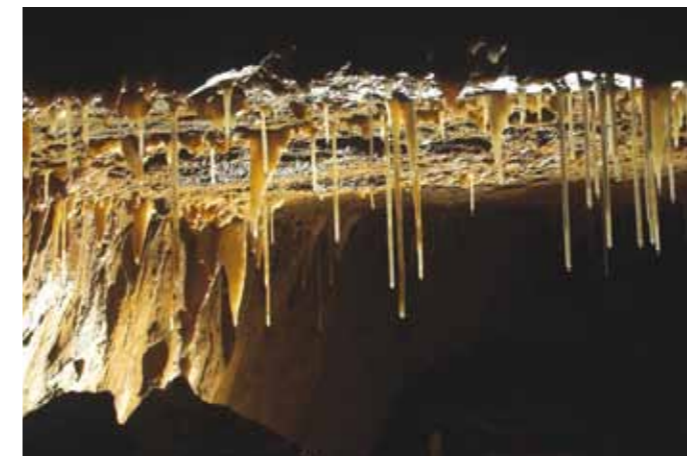
Ogof Draenen has been an important place for lesser horseshoe bats for thousands of years, and the droppings of long dead bats (known as guano) have provided scientists with a glimpse of what the vegetation and landscapes of the Blaenavon area were like 2000 years ago. Samples of guano were taken from various locations in the cave and analysed by Suzanne Leroy, Professor of Geography and Earth Sciences at Brunel University. The samples revealed that a landscape now dominated by grassland and heathers was once dense oak forest with an abundance of holly and ivy.



The Indiana Highway
Photograph courtesy of Ian Wilton-Jones

As active exploration continues, Ogof Draenen may reveal more of its ancient secrets. It just goes to show that above ground and below, Blaenavon World Heritage Site is indeed a very special place.

If you would like the opportunity to experience the thrills of caving, look out for the taster sessions in the 2007 Torfaen Countryside Events Programme, available by telephoning 01633 648066.



Photograph courtesy of Tom (Ferret) Thomson

Blaenavon Company Takes on Ford and Wins!

Super Rod, based on the Gilchrist Thomas Industrial Estate has won a unique industry award against fierce competition from companies such as Ford Transit and MK Electric. This prestigious award was for the "Best Product of the Last 50 Years" and was presented at an event hosted by the electrical industry regulator the NICEIC as part of their 50th anniversary year celebrations. Managing Director Bob Harrison said "The status of winning this award has particular meaning, the people that use our products believed in us enough to vote, as a Company we are very proud and incredibly grateful". Super Rod employ eighteen staff and has rapidly grown in its five year lifetime to become the UK and European market leader in cable routing installation tools.



Pictured from left to right Bob Harrison (Managing Director) Gina Dunn (Marketing and Communications Manager) and Malcolm Duncan (Sales and Marketing Director)



World Heritage Site Information Panels

Newly erected information panels are making it easier for visitors to enjoy and explore Blaenavon's outstanding World Heritage Site.

An innovative European project called Boundless Parks, Naturally! has enabled new signs to be installed at important access points or 'Gateways' to the World Heritage landscape. These give clear orientation for visitors as well as information on the history, ecology and geology of the area. They are important focal points which will help visitors to understand and appreciate this unique area as well as to encourage the public to explore the landscape.

Fourteen upgraded 'Gateway' sites are now spread throughout the World Heritage Site and provide excellent parking and meeting places for a short stroll or a more energetic walk through the landscape. The new Gateways sites are located at Varteg Road, Blaenavon Ironworks, Whistle Road, Keepers Pond, Foxhunters, Llanfoist Crossing, Riflegreen, Govilon Wharf, Carn y Gorfydd, Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway, Forge sidings, Forge, Lion Street and Goytre Wharf.

To get a copy of the free Blaenavon landscape walks pack telephone Katie Gates on 01633 648066. Visit www.world-heritage-blaenavon.org.uk to find out more.

Paneli gwybodaeth Safle Treftadaeth Byd

Mae paneli gwybodaeth newydd yn ei gwneud hi'n haws i ymwelwyr fwynhau ac archwilio Safle Treftadaeth Byd Blaenafon.

Mae prosiect Ewropeaidd arloesol a elwir yn Boundless Parks, Naturally! wedi galluogi i arwyddion newydd gael eu gosod mewn manau mynediad, neu 'Pyrth', pwysig i'r tirwedd Treftadaeth Byd. Mae'r rhain yn rhoi cyfeiriadedd clir ar gyfer ymwelwyr yn ogystal â gwybodaeth am hanes, ecoleg a daeareg yr ardal. Maent yn nodweddion amlwg fydd yn cynorthwyo ymwelwyr i ddeall a gwerthfawrogi'r ardal unigryw hon yn ogystal ag annog y cyhoedd i archwilio'r tirwedd.

Erbyn hyn mae pedwar ar ddeg o 'Byrth' wedi eu gwasgaru drwy'r Safle Treftadaeth Byd ac yn rhoi manau parcio a manau cyfarfod ardderchog ar gyfer taith hamddenol neu egniol ar droed drwy'r tirwedd.

Mae'r Pyrth newydd wedi eu lleoli yn Heol Farteg, Gwaith Haearn Blaenafon, Whistle Road, Pwll y Cipar, Foxhunters, Croesfan Llan-ffwyst, Riflegreen, Glanfa Gofilon, Carn y Gorfydd, Rheilffordd Pont-y-pwll a Blaenafon, seidins Forge, Forge, Lion Street a Glanfa Goetre.

I gael copi o becyn teithiau tirwedd Blaenafon am ddim ffoniwch Katie Gates ar 01633 648066. Ewch i www.world-heritage-blaenavon.org.uk i gael rhagor o wybodaeth.



Volunteer Rangers Update

The World Heritage Site Volunteer Rangers have been very active throughout the summer. Activities have included a trip to the Western Brecon Beacons to learn about the impact of peat erosion on cave systems, trails monitoring, mountain navigation practice and participation in guided walks.

Upcoming activities will include dry stone walling, guided walks planning and a number of World Heritage Site 'clean up' days. Volunteers will soon be getting their very own high quality training handbook which will include information on topics ranging from the archaeology of the World Heritage Site to planning to lead a guided walk. If you would like to find out more about the volunteer rangers call Alvin Nicholas on 01633 648045 or e-mail alvin.nicholas@torfaen.gov.uk



Y Diweddaraf am y Ceidwaid Gwirfoddol

Mae Ceidwaid Gwirfoddol y Safle Treftadaeth Byd wedi bod yn brysur iawn drwy gydol yr haf. Mae'r gweithgareddau wedi cynnwys taith i Orllewin Bannau Brycheiniog i ddysgu am effaith erydiad mawn ar y systemau ogofau, monitro llwybrau, ymarfer cyfeiriadu ar y mynydd a chymryd rhan mewn teithiau cerdded tywys.

Bydd y gweithgareddau yn y dyfodol yn cynnwys adeiladu waliau pridd, cynllunio teithiau cerdded tywys a nifer o ddyddiau clirio Safle Treftadaeth Byd. Yn fuan bydd gan y gwirfoddolwr eu llawlyfr hyfforddiant o safon uchel eu hunain a fydd yn cynnwys gwybodaeth am bynciau yn amrywio o archeoleg y Safle Treftadaeth Byd i gynllunio i arwain taith dywys. Os hoffech wybod mwy am y ceidwaid gwirfoddol ffoniwch Alvin Nicholas ar 01633 648045 neu e-bostiwch Alvin. nicholas@torfaen.gov.uk

Ironbridge Enjoys a Successful World Heritage Festival



Jonathan Lloyd, Co-ordinator of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, reports on this years successful World Heritage Festival...

On a sunny Saturday in September, crowds flocked to the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Festival to celebrate the area's 20th anniversary as a World Heritage Site. The Festival was opened by Michael Darby, a descendant of Abraham Darby III, the builder of the famous Iron Bridge. The festivities got off to a rousing start with music from the Abraham Darby School Brass Band, followed by a wide variety of music and dance acts, including Batatan, the wonderful salsa drummers from Newport in South Wales.

The Festival programme also included a street

parade with local groups and organisations in a variety of colourful costumes and also a group of school children from St. Peters and Hillside Schools in Blaenavon. On the Sunday, once early morning thunderstorms had cleared, local residents enjoyed a number of guided walks. The Festival ended with a Songs of Praise in the Thomas Telford-designed Madeley Parish Church.

The Festival organisers were particularly pleased to welcome the delegation from Blaenavon. We value our links with Blaenavon and the annual World Heritage Day festivities in Blaenavon have been the inspiration for the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Festival. We look forward to these links continuing to develop over the coming years.



Another Amazing Year for Big Pit

Big Pit has enjoyed another exceptional season, with record breaking figures through the summer and an exciting event and activities programme which were well attended by local residents. Big Pit are now looking forward to staying open throughout the winter season again, and building on the successes of last winter.

Mother Christmas, who proved such a hit in 2005, is taking time out of her busy schedule to come back and spend time with visitors to Big Pit. With her usual sharp wit and good humour, Mother Christmas guarantees to entertain visitors of all ages with her stories and tales of Christmas past and life in the 'Christmas' household. Mother Christmas will be at Big Pit on 9 & 10, 16 & 17 December at 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2pm & 3pm. Admission is free.

Big Pit will also be hosting another 'Carols Round the Christmas Tree' on Sunday 17 December at 6.30pm. It's the perfect way to start your Christmas!

The Markham & District Colliery Band will be there with special Guest Compere Nigel Seaman. This year the carols will be indoors, so places are limited and must be booked in advance. To get your tickets, please contact the Box Office on 02920 573466. Tickets are free.



Big Pit is also open throughout January, and for the first time in many years visitors can go underground over weekends during the month. So, if you're looking for the perfect way to escape the winter chill for an hour or so, join one of the tours 300ft underground, and learn more about the world of the miner. Underground tours run between 10am and 3pm on 13 & 14, 20 & 21, 27 & 28 January. Big Pit is open 9.30am - 4.30pm every day throughout the winter except 24 - 26 December, 1, 29 - 31 January. And don't forget admission to Big Pit is still free for all!

January 1, 2007 is the 60th anniversary of the nationalisation of the coal industry. Big Pit is marking this significant anniversary by launching a new magazine telling the story of nationalisation in Wales. The anniversary will be marked on January 2, when a replica NCB flag will be raised at Big Pit and the magazine will be launched. The magazine is available from Big Pit in January, phone or pop in and receive your free copy.

For more information on what's on at Big Pit, please visit www.museumwales.ac.uk or telephone 01495 790311.

World Heritage Walks - Huge Success

The popular guided walks programme has again attracted record numbers of walkers to our World Heritage Site landscape. Highlights of the summer programme included 'Birds of Hill and Moor' led by Steve Smith, Warden with the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, 'Minescapes of the World Heritage Site' led by Alvin Nicholas with an introduction by Peter Walker, Director of Big Pit and the ever popular 'Fossil Hunt'.

On Sunday 27 August an Ask the Wardens and Junior Ranger Activity Day was held at Keepers Pond. This was a joint event arranged by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and the World Heritage Site Ranger, Alvin Nicholas. This was a great success where the Wardens were on hand to answer questions and provide information about the landscape, its people and how to enjoy the countryside responsibly. The pond dipping proved to be very popular!



World Heritage Networking

It is often said that there is strength in numbers, and that is certainly the case for World Heritage Sites. Many of the issues faced within the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site are similar to those experienced by other World Heritage Sites both within the UK and in other countries. Mindful of that, Torfaen County Borough and its partners works closely with other World Heritage Sites through a number of networks. For example, the Council is an active member of the Local Authority World Heritage Forum which lobbies on behalf of local authorities and the particular issues they face as a result of having World Heritage Sites within their areas. The Council also works closely with the All Party Parliamentary World Heritage Group. The Group brings together Members of Parliament and Members of the House of Lords with a particular interest in World Heritage matters with the intention of influencing policy, legislation and funding in relation to World Heritage Sites.



European Route of Industrial Heritage



Last September, Ironbridge World Heritage Site was the venue for the launch of the European Union funded European Route of Industrial Heritage (ERIH) which, in time, will jointly promote important industrial heritage visitor attractions across Europe. Big Pit, National Coal Museum is one of the "Anchor Points" along the ERIH Route. The aim of the ERIH project is to stimulate increased visitor numbers to existing industrial heritage attractions thereby contributing to the local economies of those areas.

For more information visit www.erih.net



Coming Events

Blaenavon Lantern Parade Workshops

19, 25, 26 November 10am – 5pm

Blaenavon Workmen's Hall

The workshops are free of charge and all materials and artists' support provided

Further details from SWICA on telephone 02920 382094

Blessing of the Crib Service

Monday 27 November

Blaenavon Town Centre, 7pm

Mountain Archaeology

Sunday 26 November 10.30am – 2.30pm

An excursion into the hills to learn how to identify and interpret archaeology in the Welsh upland environment

Meet at the Whistle Road Car Park (SO 230 103)

Booking essential, telephone 01633 648045

Blaenavon Lantern Parade Workshops

2 & 3 December 10am – 5pm

Hillside School

The workshops are free of charge and all materials and artists' support provided

Further details from SWICA on telephone 02920 382094

Santa Specials

2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17 & 23 December

Pontypool and Blaenavon Railway

Trains run from 11.00 am every half hour until 4.00pm

For further details or to book please telephone 01495 792263

Blaenavon Male Voice Choir Annual Concert

3 December

Blaenavon Workmen's Hall

For further details on telephone 01495 792661

Pantomime featuring Stan Stennet

5 – 8 December

Blaenavon Workmen's Hall

For further details telephone 01495 792661

Mother Christmas

9, 10, 16 & 17 December, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2pm & 3pm

Big Pit

Admission is free

Songs of Praise

Sunday 10 December, 6pm

Horeb Baptist Church

For further details telephone 01495 790704

Carol Service

Sunday 10 December

St. Peters Church

Carol Service led by Blaenavon Ladies Choir supported by the choirs of St. Peter's School and Hillside School

Blaenavon Lantern Parade and Fire Finale

Thursday 14 December 6.00pm – 7.15pm

Come and join us and see the spirit of the Ironworks be re-awakened by giant fire sculptures and fireworks finale

For details telephone 01633 648812

Carols round the Christmas Tree

Sunday 17 December, 6.30pm

Big Pit

Bring the family along to enjoy the best of Christmas Carols round the Christmas tree, with Markham & District Colliery Band and special guest compere Nigel Seaman.

Carols will be held indoors, so places are limited and must be booked in advance. To get your tickets, please contact the Box Office on 02920 573466. Tickets are free.

Horeb Chapel Candlelight Service

Sunday 24 December, 6pm

Horeb Baptist Church

For further details telephone 01495 790704

Horeb Chapel Family Service

Monday 25 December, 10am

All welcome. For further details telephone 01495 790704

Easter Bunny Specials

8 & 9 April

Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway

For further details telephone 01495 792263

Blaenavon Spring Festival

5, 6 & 7 May

Blaenavon Town Centre

For further details telephone 01633 648812

Teddy Bears Picnic

5 & 7 May

Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway

For further details telephone 01495 792263

Lucky Dip Specials

27 & 28 May

Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway

For further details telephone 01495 792263

