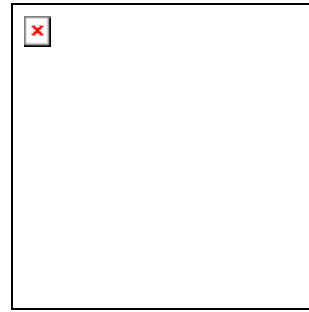


THE LLIMEY - June 2013

The Newsletter of the Llimeys –
Friends of Llanymynech Limeworks Heritage Area



We have had a variety of interesting activities over the last year:

12 July 2012 saw us out late in the evening trying some **moth trapping** with Tony Jacques, the County Butterfly and Moth Recorder, Gareth Parry, Community Biodiversity Project Officer for Shropshire Council, and Paul Watts. It did not seem likely to be an auspicious evening as it was typical of last summer ... drizzly and chilly. However the moths didn't seem to mind. 259 specimens from 62 species were found.



Muslin Footman

See Paul's website for more details of the moths
<http://themagicofmoths.wordpress.com>

On **14 August** we were again out late ... this time to watch the **bats**. Mike Worsthorne first introduced us to the species of bat we were likely to spot and to the equipment we'd use. We then went off to the Hoffmann and looked for bat droppings on the floor of the kiln. The bats have made their homes in the stoke holes in the roof of the kiln and Mike had the right apparatus for us to be able to see them in situ. As it began to get dark the bats started to leave the kiln and we were able to track them using Mike's bat detectors which also let us know which species we were tracking.



In **September** we again we took part in **Heritage Open Days- Oswestry and Beyond**. Glyn lit the demonstration kiln using coal rather than smokeless fuel. The smell of the coal smoke was certainly evocative of earlier times! It gave a flavour of what Llanymynech must have smelt like when the kilns were in full production.

Martyn Young conducted guided walks and Harriet Devlin gave talks about the uses of lime. Kinokulture, based at the Attfield Theatre in the Guildhall in Oswestry provided the entertainment in the Hoffmann. They screened *Decasia: The State of Decay*. This was a strangely beautiful and mysterious film montage by internationally acclaimed artist Bill Morrison, with live improvised soundtrack by local jazz musician Barry Edwards.



Scrub Clearance and Coppicing

Led by Glenn Young from the Canal & River Trust we had four work parties over the winter to clear the area around the two wharves on the canal. We started by bramble bashing then went on to take down the tree growth adjacent to the canal that had grown up since the work done about 7/8 years ago. We'll continue later in the year when the birds have finished nesting. We've also done some coppicing in Llwyn Goch woods with Gareth Egarr Shropshire Council's Countryside Sites Manager. The bluebells seem to have appreciated our work. The display has been fantastic this spring. Again, this will be an ongoing task with just a small area coppiced each winter.



Tony's and Martyn's adventures

Stone blocks & cast iron inverted T rail from 1790s.

Parts of Wales and Shropshire used the above materials on tramway systems, and on parts of the hillside and Hoffmann site, clips, chairs, keys and stone blocks have been found. Last summer was very wet, so Martyn and I took advantage of this to look at the tramway in fields 380 & 370, which are not in the protected area.

Using an 1863 & 1888 map plus air photos from 1990, and permission of the land owners we made a start. With ground sighting lines and probing when there was no leaf cover on the trees we locked on to the tramway and established a datum point to measure from. We quickly found a piece of cast iron inverted T rail. The soft ground was very easy to probe and dig and pieces of rail, clips, chairs, and keys began to appear at regular intervals. Wire nails, paint pots, a horse shoe, mole traps, plus bits of tin. In the swampy bit four genuine stone blocks with plate fittings were found, similar to the ones on display in the stable block, plus a cast iron plate section (see photo)

This has been to Plas Tan y Bwlch and Ironbridge to assist in identification. Its nearest match is of a Bloreng plate with ear as used on the Clydach-Blaenavon tramway. This has been written up into an interim report.

Tony Beardsell



Coal Transfer Wharf

We obtained permission from English Heritage to excavate the site of the coal transfer wharf on the embankment behind the Hoffmann. This took place in April under the supervision of Ian Grant from Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. Two trenches were opened. The first revealed a brick retaining wall and sleepers from the main line siding. The second answered the question about the mysterious iron rod with a looped end which protruded about 2 foot above ground. It turned out to be a stoker's bar or rod (aka a railwayman's poker!)



See the full report on our website www.llanmynech.org.uk

Discovery Day 20 2013

In the middle of the cold spring, on April 20th, we held a nature-centred Discovery Day aimed mainly at local Guides, Brownies, Scouts and Cubs.

Miraculously, the day was warm and sunny though the winged insects did not venture out and the scouts who camped overnight abandoned canvas for the comfort of the kiln's sturdy walls. They still complained of the cold!

We attracted about 75 children including a few families from the local area. There was a choice of about ten activities ranging from bug hunting and pond-dipping to arts-based ones like making collages. Each child could chose three activities and they were only charged £1 per activity or all three for £2.

Four Crosses Scout Troop provided very welcome hot dogs at lunchtime at a modest price.

The children seemed to enjoy the day and we got positive feed-back from their leaders. We were very grateful to Shropshire Wildlife Trust, David Hardwick, the Faux-Nightingale family and John Sudd without whose support we would not have been able to provide many of the interesting activities.

Paddy Martin



For more information about the Llimes, or if you would like to join us, go to www.llanymynech.org.uk or ring Joan on 01691 839130