



CHARTISM

Celebrating the first mass movement for civil rights and social justice

MICHAEL SHEEN STARS IN CHARTIST FILM FOR BBC



Hollywood based star Michael Sheen is coming home this September to make a film on Chartism.

Newport born Sheen is back in Gwent this month walking the route the Chartists took in 1839, when they marched on Newport. He will be filming on location at Tredegar, Ebbw Vale, Blaina - places where the Chartists started walking 175 years ago.

Back then, people in their thousands Marched to get the right to vote and decide who went to Parliament. This is the way they believed they could get a better life.

Michael Sheen wants to meet people, who will talk with him about what they are doing in their community. He wants to find out what they want to put right today.

Michael Sheen will be asking -

How can this best be done? Do you think voting is any use? What do you think about marching and protesting?

In 1839, the people marched to Newport. Where should the people march today? He will make his way to Blackwood and on to Newport.

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View from the Editor's Chair

'Chartist Spring' comes to its end

In our last edition (no 5), we gave full coverage to Henry Vincent's Spring tour of 1839 – he stormed through the counties on the Welsh borders and stirred the south Wales coalfield.

His reception at Newport was extraordinary. Banned from holding meetings in public houses, crowds defied the Mayor or 'Mr. Gag' as they preferred to call him. They thronged the streets, gathering to hear Vincent. The magistrates meeting at the Kings Head on April 24th declared these mass protests illegal. Mayor Phillips had been given the green light by the Home Office. Through the Lord Lieutenant of the county, Capel Hanbury Leigh, Phillips lobbied the Home Office for troops and increased powers.

Returning on April 25th to Bristol on the steam packet, Vincent wrote – ***"I was cheered all the way down the river by the shipwrights ... the seamen hoisted their flags mast high as I passed them."***

The Radicals of Newport were somewhat giddy with this experience, but all proved delusory. Three years earlier, Newport's radicals had controlled the Borough when Frost was mayor, but his enemies, Thomas Prothero and Thomas Phillips, were engaged in a fight-back. Since January 1839, Mayor Phillips was methodically and quietly building an anti-Chartist alliance. He recruited a significant number of the town's middling people and drew them into alliance with the landed and industrial county set. Phillips was far from 'the fool or ass' Vincent assumed.

Fear of revolution in the North of England caused Lord John Russell to embark on the 'decapitation' of the Chartist leadership. May 2nd saw a company of the 29th Regiment arrive at Newport and others were billeted at Abergavenny and Monmouth. May 6th passed without delivery of the National Petition to Parliament. The following day arrests started.



The 'Chartist Spring' in south Wales ended on May 10th at the King's Head

hotel, Newport when Henry Vincent and three Newport Chartists were brought before the magistrates – and they were removed from the political arena.

However it was far too early to write off Frost. May 10th was his day too. Out of town, on Convention business in London, he got back early evening in time to intervene and save Newport from destructive riot. His home and draper's business was situated almost opposite the King's Head. From an upstairs window he calmed the crowd and showed the magistrates how authority can rest on popular goodwill and trust. His intervention saved those arrested in the riots from trial - they were released,

'Keep the Peace' was still the Chartist watchword, but the action of the magistrates confirmed their fears, they were living under a 'Tyranny'. New watch words gained credence – 'Peacefully if we may, Forcibly if we must'. During the summer two of the militants arrested at the King's Head - Charles Waters and John Lovell became Secretary and Chairman of the Newport Working Men's Association. In the coalfield, under cover of the lodges, the 'Scotch cattle' reincarnated as an underground military organisation.



Newport and the Gwent valleys faced an 'Angry Summer'

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY YEARS AGO

The COUNTER ATTACK BEGINS

Anti-Chartist Rally 29th April 1839

Crawshay Bailey, owner of the Nantyglo works, in alliance with the Browns, who ran the neighbouring Blaina and Coalbrookvale works, organised the biggest anti-Chartist rally held in Wales. The Merlin and the Beacon both reported 5000 attended. Crawshay Bailey claimed “we have lived pleasantly together without the interference of strangers”. This barb was obviously intended for Vincent, but Bailey also had Zephaniah Williams in his sights. Williams and his wife, Joan had very recently moved from Sirhowy to take over the running of the Royal Oak. The rally was held in the grounds of Coalbrookvale House, directly across the valley from the Williams’ beer house, where regularly Chartist meetings spilled out over the hillside at its rear.

It was there only six days previously that young Joseph Bailey, accompanied by a gang of ‘heavies’, had attempted to trap Vincent into admitting he was a republican. Vincent proved slippery, avoiding this obvious attempt to make it possible for the magistrates to bring a charge of sedition and he also recognised the danger of being set up for causing riotous behaviour. When the audience threatened Bailey, Vincent stepped in and protected him from harm.

Consequently, the anti-Chartist rally went off peacefully. Zephaniah Williams suspected that in calling his rally, Crawshay Bailey was hoping for unrest that might make the place “a second Devizes” (his letter in *Silurian* 15 June). Many of the speeches referred to Zephaniah Williams’ blasphemous ideas showing the ironmasters were not only playing the ‘race card’ condemning English agitators, they were also working to get

Welsh nonconformity on side. There were speeches in Welsh, but unfortunately these were not reported by the monoglot Merlin/Beacon press. It is interesting however that Crawshay Bailey did not dare stretch the ‘loyalty’ of his large audience by ever organising a counter petition. The support that the workers of the Ebbw Fach valley gave to the November Rising apparently shocked Crawshay and the Browns and explains their determination to capture and severely punish Zephaniah Williams after 4th November.



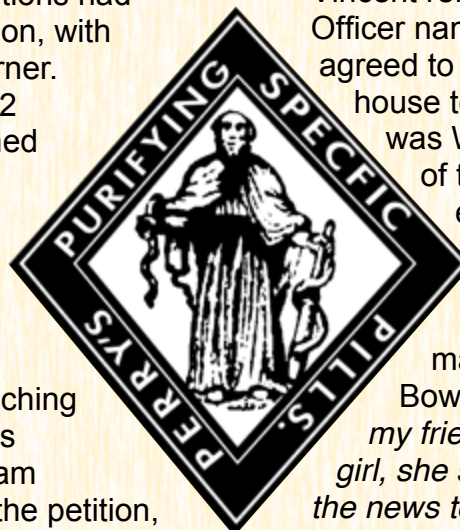
VINCENT'S STORY – his arrest in London

Petition Day May 6th – came and went

The Petition Committee of the National Convention met, but Thomas Attwood MP, who had promised to submit the petition to Parliament, declined. Vincent, a committee member, was there and reported to his readers *“He told us to bring the Petition to the house of Mr. Fielding, the next day at two o'clock, where he (Mr. Attwood) would receive it.”*

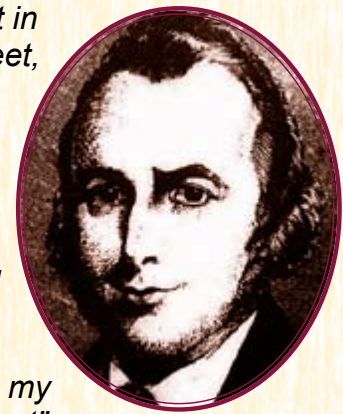
Petition was delivered to Mr. Fieldings

in Fleet Street, at two o'clock the following day. The huge roll of petitions had been placed upon a wagon, with a Union Jack at each corner. Representatives of the 52 Convention delegates lined up behind, two abreast, headed by the chairman of the day, Bailie Craig, and William Lovett, the secretary. They proceeded through the Strand to Haymarket reaching Fielding's house. Thomas Attwood of the Birmingham Political Union received the petition, speaking with Feargus O'Connor from an upstairs window.



Vincent arrest in London May 7th That same evening, a large meeting chaired by Frost and addressed by Vincent was held at the Black Horse Fields. After supper, Frost accompanied Vincent towards his lodgings. Vincent told his readers how he *“shook*

hands with Mr. Frost in Lamb's Conduit Street, and bade him good night. On reaching home, I observed a stranger at the door. He prevented my entrance by shaking hands, saying “Ah, are you Mr. Henry Vincent”. “I am” was my reply. “Late of Newport”, said he. “No”, I answered, “I have been in Newport.” “Within ten days?” was his question. “Yes” was my answer. “Then”, said he, “I have a warrant for you”.



Vincent refused to move. When the Street Officer named Mr. Keys arrived, Vincent agreed to go to the nearby Boot public house to study the papers. This stranger was William Walter Homan, an officer of the 28th Regiment on half pay, employed by Samuel Homfray as police superintendent at Tredegar. He was carrying a warrant issued by the Newport magistrates. He agreed to go to Bow Street – he *“shook hands with my friends, kissed my little sister, poor girl, she seemed sadly terrified and sent the news to Frost”.*

After two days and nights in a cell, spent singing radical songs, due to a failed attempt to catch the Mail coach, he finally left London at 7pm on May 9th and fifty miles out of the city, his handcuffs were removed.



Riot at the King's Head May 10th



Women and men filled Newport's High Street. Three hundred miners had marched from Blackwood to be there. As each prisoner arrived, the crowd surged forward. Three hundred special constables, recently recruited by Mayor Phillips, held the line. John Dickenson, butcher and William Townshend Jnr. (son of a merchant) were arrested in the town, but William Edwards (baker) was brought from Bristol.

Finally at three o'clock, Henry Vincent arrived from London. On hearing the court's decision to send all four men for

trial at the summer assizes, the crowd stormed the building and tried to capture the prison wagon. Using their staves, the special constables cleared the area and made snatch arrests of agitators. They successfully secured the prisoners' wagon, got the prisoners aboard and off to Monmouth gaol.

A company of the 29th Regiment, sent to Newport on 2nd May, waited all day on duty, but was wisely not called into action. John Lovell, Charles Waters and others were released as soon as the crowd went home after hearing John Frost urge them to 'Keep the Peace'. Both Chartists and special constables went home with grudges that surfaced at the next serious encounter on 4th November outside the Westgate hotel.

Assizes at Monmouth August 3rd

The charges of making seditious speeches and organising illegal and seditious meetings resulted in prison sentences - Vincent (12 months), Edwards (9 months) and both Dickenson and Townshend (6 months). They were prisoners at Monmouth gaol, when Frost, Williams and Jones and dozens more were admitted to await trial in November.



Can anyone solve this heinous crime?

INCENDIARISM.

ONE HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD.

WHEREAS, during the night of the 16th instant, a RICK of HAY, standing in a field in my occupation, on the west side of the tramroad leading from Court-y-bella, Machine, to Pillgwenlly, was WILFULLY SET FIRE to and DESTROYED :- I hereby offer a REWARD of ONE HUNDRED POUNDS, on the conviction of the Offender, to any one who will give me the information that will lead to such a conviction.

THOMAS PROTHERO.

January 17th, 1840

For the most plausible solution - the editor offers a copy of 'Voices for the Vote': 64 pages worth at least £100 and normally sells at the ridiculously low price of 4.99 in Monmouth Shire Hall and Newport Museum.

'Physical force' – when is it justified?

What does it mean?

Chartists were wrestling with an ideology of resistance they had inherited from Thomas Paine and the American Revolution. In English history, 1688 was held to be the exemplar 'revolution' – although it was certainly not 'bloodless' in Ireland. The French Revolution had spurred Paine to write 'The Rights of Man'; his time in France saw 'fearful remedy'. By the 1830s, it was the threat of violence that was recommended as a means of extracting civil rights - Catholic Emancipation 1829 and the Reform Act 1832 were granted to avoid bloodshed.



From 'The first essay in physical force'

That Englishmen have a right, in extreme cases, to have recourse to physical force to free themselves from an unendurable tyranny, is a truth so important and so undisputed that it forms the very foundation of our system of government. it is not only admitted, but it is even asserted, reiterated, defended, and justified, by the most zealous of the Tory writers upon the Constitution of this country..

But although this is upon all sides admitted,



it is also upon all sides agreed that this is a fearful remedy, which, like hazardous, extreme, and painful operations in surgery, is only to be brought into action in very extreme cases, when all ordinary courses of treatment have failed. Physical force is a thing not to be lightly had recourse to; it is the last remedy known to the Constitution....

Nothing but a simultaneous rising at the same hour all over the kingdom could give you a chance of success by arms even that would give you but a slender chance, and that you cannot effect. Retain your arms then, for it is possible that you may have to use them in your own defence, with the law and the Constitution upon your side. But use them not until that time comes. Pursue the course of peaceful agitation press forward your great cause under the watchwords of Peace, Law, Order'. It may be delayed, but it must prevail. Continue these acts of buccaneering folly, and you and your children are slaves for ever.

The Chartist, 12 May, 1839.



Local Artist Raises the Banner High

Newport Chartist Banner 'saved' by *Northern Star* reporter!

As part of NIACE's '**Adult Learners Week**' in June, Newport Museum hosted a 'Chartist Banner Making' workshop. Participants were encouraged to try out the techniques demonstrated by **Christabel Gilbert**, artist quilter from Caerleon. What dyes were used? What kinds of fabric? Its size? The lettering? And how was it carried? What were the portrait sources used by banner makers? These issues were all explored in what proved to be an active and exciting day.

Christabel is 're-creating' a 'Newport Chartist Banner'. Richard Frame has produced the design that she is working up. She showed the 'work in progress' including her portraits of John Frost and Feargus O'Connor. The design is based on a banner that was hanging at a Chartist meeting held in Newport (August 1841). Its slogan - *May Frost, Williams and Jones return to their Native Land* - called for the release of the three Gwent men transported to Van Diemens Land.



Nothing is known about what happened to the banner after the 1841 meeting - it has never been found. We only know about it because a reporter for the *Northern Star* Chartist newspaper liked its striking pink, green and white colouring. Today, the replica banner symbolises the spirit of Chartism at Newport - the original was raised only eighteen months after 22 men had died at the Westgate hotel, convincing proof that Chartism did not die in Newport, as often claimed, on November 4th 1839.

In the months ahead the 'Newport Chartist Banner' will be paraded as our 175th Anniversary standard at local '**Celebrate the Chartists**' events - a testimony to the endurance of the Chartist cause in Newport beyond 1839.



Journal Extract

Merthyr's Forgotten Leader

by **Joe England**

published this month in **Merthyr Historian no. 26**

"On Christmas Day 1838, thousands marched in procession to Penheolgerig (Merthyr Tydfil), flying their tricolour banner of green, white and blue symbolising earth, sun and sky. It was the largest Chartist demonstration in Wales up to that time.

So began the most hectic four years of Morgan Williams' life. The year 1839 was one of ceaseless activity in Merthyr and the coalfield towns and villages of south Wales: publicising the Charter, gathering signatures

including most of Crawshay's workmen, and some from Dowlais, attended a rally at Blackwood which adopted proposals agreed at the National Convention. Gatherings of 5000 or more were held in the summer at locations near Merthyr – Rhymney, Hirwaun and Penyrheolgerrig – with John Frost, William Jones, and Morgan Williams as the principal speakers. On 12 July, the House of Commons refused by 235 votes to 46 to consider the first Chartist petition. There was riot and arson in Birmingham on the 15th, armed Chartists repeatedly firing guns in the air at Bury on the 17th, and on the 20th in Newcastle running battles with damage to a bank and the offices of an anti-Chartist newspaper. Arms were openly being manufactured in a number of midland and northern towns and special constables were sworn."

The full article Morgan Williams: Merthyr's Forgotten Leader by Joe England can be read pp137-149 in Merthyr Historian no.26 (Editor: Dr. T.F. Holly) available from: Keith L. Lewis-Jones, 20, Grover's Field, Abercynon, CF45 4PP

Price £12 plus £2 p&p, cheques payable to Merthyr Tydfil Historical Society

For further information, read: Malcolm Chase, Chartism: A New History (Manchester, 2007) pp95-6 and David Jones, The Last Rising (Oxford 1985, new edition UWP 2013)



for the National Petition, nearly three times the number who signed from Newport. Morgan Williams attended the National Convention in London at which the right to bear arms and the right of just resistance to tyranny were enshrined in the Manifesto. 'Peacefully if we may – forcibly if we must' became the slogan of the movement.

In April/May there were disturbances at Llanidloes, arrests of Chartists in London, and the detention of the popular Chartist orator Henry Vincent in Monmouth gaol. There were rumours of arms clubs, of gun traders and of pikes being made in the smithies of the iron-works. Troops were sent into Newport, Abergavenny and Monmouth. On Whit Monday, 20 May, thousands,



BOOK REVIEW

by **Dr. Owen R. Ashton** (Emeritus Professor in Modern British History, Staffordshire University)

David J.V. Jones *THE LAST RISING: The Newport Chartist Insurrection of 1839* with new FOREWORD by Chris Williams, reprinted, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2013, ISBN 978-1-7831-6009-9 (£19.99)

David J.V. Jones' early and tragic death on October 30th 1994 at the age of 53 robbed Wales and the wider U.K. community of one of its finest historians of the study of crime, political protest and policing in modern British society. An outstanding scholar of the Chartist movement, Prof Jones is perhaps best remembered for his monograph of the Newport Rising – the bloodiest moment in the movement's turbulent history - which was first published by Oxford University Press in 1985. It is surely a fitting testimony to the book's enduring appeal both to the history and heritage of modern Britain that the University of Wales Press has chosen to republish the volume in time for the 175th Anniversary.

Deeply researched, lively and stimulating in its arguments and findings, and jargon free, Jones explores the world of the secret people of the South Wales Coalfield for a planned rising on Newport shaped by an environment both geographical, industrial and ideological. It certainly was a frontier society in 1839, at this point in time one step beyond civilization and ominously referred to by contemporaries as the 'Black Domain'.

Jones shows how workers in the expanding Welsh coal and iron industries, who were to descend on mass on Newport, had a history of direct action (for example, the Scotch Cattle) against the bleak industrial conditions, the system of receiving wages in tokens in the

company truck shops, and the foul environmental conditions. In these Klondike communities of the 'Black Domain' built on 'carboniferous capitalism' a new Welsh working class was made.

As Jones so strikingly reveals, this new working class developed a strong sense of solidarity around their chapels and Sunday schools, their families, friendly societies and the public house. Theirs was a very different world to that inhabited by their employers who were Anglican by faith and anglicised by culture and conviction.

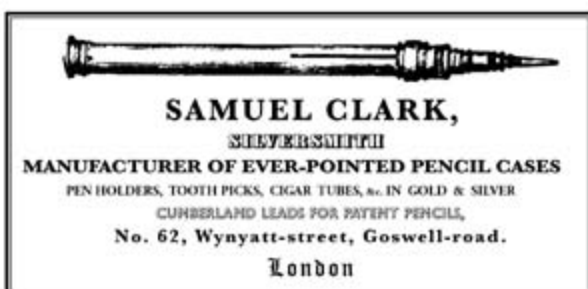
The evidence is carefully pieced together by Jones from a very wide range of sources to reveal how the idea of a simultaneous rising appealed to Chartists not only in South Wales but also, for example, in Bradford, Sheffield and on the Tyne.

Deeply researched, lively and stimulating in its arguments and findings, and jargon free . . .

The Welsh Chartist leaders - Frost, Jones and Williams – steadily mobilised the language of resistance and prepared for direct action throughout the summer months of 1839. The long burning fuse of resentment and mood of expectation finally exploded across South Wales in the violent confrontation between the soldiers of the Crown and the angry Chartists outside the Westgate Hotel on the fateful morning of November 4th 1839.

The armed rebellion lasted barely twenty-five minutes. The unexpected news of defeat caused alarm and plans for a simultaneous rising by Chartist militants elsewhere were all but abandoned.

The Whig government set up a trial by Special Commission sitting at Monmouth in December 1839. Frost, Williams and Jones were condemned to death on January 16th 1840. However, in the face of Chartist mass petitioning and addresses, and in an atmosphere of popular



nation-wide anger, the Whigs had a re-think.

Prompted by advice from the Judiciary, the sentences were commuted to transportation for life to Tasmania on February 1st 1840. The perceived success of the mass petitioning on behalf of the 'Welsh martyrs' was not lost on the Chartists' campaigning strategies in the following decade.

In his succinct yet substantial foreword, Prof Chris Williams' pays tribute to 'elegant and meticulous scholarship' of David Jones and sets out clearly a research agenda for Newport that will take his work forward.

Firstly, more work should be carried out on the authority structure – on, for example, Thomas Phillips and the Newport municipal politics of the 1830s. Secondly, biographical studies 'are desperately needed' of William Jones, the Pontypool Chartist leader, and also of Frost's arch enemy, Thomas Prothero. Thirdly,

the British-wide petitioning and demonstrating that followed the trial verdicts remains under-researched, as do its implications for community consciousness in many other districts of Wales and England, particularly in the adjoining West Country. Lastly, Williams calls for 'a re-examination of the 'language' of the Welsh Chartists in, for example, speech, print and contextual representation. It is imperative too, in my view, that historians explore another aspect: the impact in and continuing links of the Newport Insurrection to Australia. Jones tantalisingly referred to these in his Conclusion (p218). Petitions were mobilised in Australia for the 'Welsh Martyrs' over the years focusing on their good conduct as part of publically organised campaigns to secure them free pardons. To learn more about such petitioning activity in Australia by both men and women would provide a valuable transnational dimension to Williams' call for more research into petitioning political activity in Britain.



Chartist Weapons from
the Chartist Collection at
Newport Museum

175

Anniversary EVENTS 2014

Les James reports:

Pontypridd Museum is where it all 'kicks off' on Saturday 20 September with a Seminar on 'Glamorgan Chartism' at Pontypridd Museum from 10am until 1pm

Pontypridd would have been involved in the 'Rising' if the events had turned out differently at Newport.

In the following week, Michael Sheen will start filming in North Gwent, making his way through what in 1839 were iron making towns, before reaching further south the coal producing communities of Blackwood. He will then follow the route from the Welsh Oak into Newport.

Organised by Rhondda Historical Society in association with our 'Chartism' magazine, we hope the Pontypridd seminar will revive interest in the history of Chartism in Glamorgan. For too long, it's been forgotten that in 1839, from Merthyr to Treforest, the Taff with its offshoot valleys was a 'hotspot' of Chartism.

The first Chartist organisation in Wales was set up in 1837 at Carmarthen and its leader Hugh Williams sent missionaries eastward to encourage lodges in Llanelly, Swansea and throughout Glamorganshire, as far as Pontypool in Gwent.

The colliers working at the only coal mines in the Rhondda, owned by Walter Coffin, gathered on Sunday 3rd 1839 and hundreds of men led by William David marched beyond Newbridge (as Pontypridd was called then) to the canal near Treforest works.

They were answering the call of Dr. William Price, who many had thought would lead the 'Rising' but had decided not to join John Frost's march on Newport and so they returned home. Like the men of Merthyr, they awaited news from Newport. Hearing of the disastrous battle at the Westgate hotel, they did return to work on the Wednesday, but entered a period of sullen resistance against their masters.

Over the next decade, Chartism flourished in the county of Glamorgan, particularly at Merthyr where Chartists survived into the 1860s.

The seminar will be chaired by Dr. Richard Allen from the University of South Wales and a number of leading experts will introduce three important topics for participants to 'chew on' - *John Jones of Aberdare, Chartist and Unitarian minister (Meic Birtwistle)*, *Dr William Price* (Brian Davies, curator of the museum) and *Merthyr Chartism in 1839* (Joe England)

To BOOK your FREE place
Contact Lisa Powell: rhonddahs@yahoo.com



175th ANNIVERSARY - WHAT'S OCCURRING?

FREE at Newport Museum & Art Gallery

Steffan Ellis reports

Visitors can see on the 1st Floor, the outstanding permanent Chartist displays opened 2010 and from 18 October, there's a chance to see original Chartist broadsheets, lithographs, posters and bills form the collection in the Art Gallery's Oriel Porth

It is expected that the pastel drawing of Sir Thomas Phillips (artist: George Richmond) sent away for conservation will be back on show in time for the Anniversary. This project is financially supported by the Friends of Newport Museum & Art Gallery.

Tuesday 28 October 7.00pm Lecture in the Art Gallery

Prof. Chris Williams (Head of History at Cardiff University)

Sir Thomas Phillips - The Great Hero of the Newport Rising

Tuesday 4 November 3.00pm at the Murrenger, High Street

This month's Newport Museum's Down Your Local is going to be a Chartist Rising special. Paul Busby, local historian will be talking about Thomas Prothero, the arch enemy of John Frost, followed by discussion about the 1839 events

Saturday 8 November

Chartist Day at the Museum & Art Gallery
Activities for all ages, discover the story behind what happened at the Westgate 1839

BLAENAU GWENT CHARTIST CELEBRATIONS

24 SEPTEMBER Wednesday 7.00pm

Salem Chapel

The Chartists band (now known as Lauford) performance of the Chartist song cycle and their latest songs.

£5 tickets

Contact Eifion: eifiontycapel@tiscali.co.uk

Saturday 4 October 10 am to 4pm

Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum Day School.

Bedwellty House, Tredegar

£10 includes buffet lunch

Lecturers

Chris Williams: J. M. Staniforth (Western Mail Cartoons)

Les James: After the 'Rising' - There were no Chartists here!

Andrew Taylor: Interesting Welsh Legal Cases

Emily Price: The Morgans of Tredegar House, Newport

Contact Eifion: eifiontycapel@tiscali.co.uk

Monday 3 November 7.00pm

Songs of Praise, Salem Chapel followed with tea, coffee and biscuits

Tuesday 4 November PM

Re-enactment march.

From former Royal Oak, public house of Zephaniah Williams to Salem Chapel

Pupils of Ystruth & Coed y Garn Primary schools

Each child will be awarded a commemorative certificate.

Tuesday 4 November 7pm

Wesley Chapel, Nant y Glo

Annual Concert.

Ebbw Vale Male Choir with Craig James, baritone soloist.



NEWPORT CHARTIST FESTIVAL 31 OCTOBER

Friday October 31 evening

THEE FACTION, ATILA the STOCKBROKER and
GIVE ME MEMPHIS at LE PUB 1, Caxton Place
Tickets: £6.00 advance, £8.00 on door Available
from Le Pub: <http://www.lepub.co.uk/> and Diverse
Records, Charles Street, Newport

Saturday November 1 10.0 -16.00

8th Annual Newport Chartist Convention

Venue: Newport City Campus

AM Session: What was the 1839 south
Wales 'Rising'? Three history professors lead
discussion: Malcolm Chase (Leeds), Owen Ashton
(Staffordshire) and Chris Williams (Cardiff)

PM Session: Women and the Vote, Merthyr Rising
1831 - Val Williams (Chance Encounters Theatre)
Chartism & Women - Joan Allen (Newcastle
University) Newport Suffragettes - Ryland Wallace
The Bird in the Cage - Winding Snake Production
Animation film about Lady Rhondda

Monday 3 November 7.30pm

Night Out at the 'Stute' with Martyn Joseph
(singer-songwriter) and Patrick Jones (poet and
playwright) St. Mary's Institute, Stow Hill
£7 tickets richardframe@hotmail.co.uk

Tuesday 4 November PM

8th Children's Chartist March (Newport Schools)
from Stow Hill to Westgate Square Newport
Schools

Tuesday 4 November 6.00pm

Remember the Chartist Dead at St. Woolos
Churchyard, Stow Hill
Open to all

Chartists Live 2014

IS GOING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Join the 431 people already following daily

Get the reports on what was happening day by
day 175 years ago

TWEETS [https://twitter.com/ ChartistsLive](https://twitter.com/ChartistsLive)



NETWORKING

email the Editor: les.james22@gmail.com

LOTS has been happening over the summer. There was Chartist Banner making at Newport Museum and hopefully there will be more workshops of this kind elsewhere in south Wales. It was great that Dr. Matthew Roberts from Manchester University attended. He has compiled a database of over 500 references, mainly Chartist era newspapers, describing banners in England. We were able to supply him with a few Welsh examples.

Our thanks go to Emyr Morgan, who turned up a report of a rally at Coalbrookvale on 1st July 1839 attended by 10,000 people carrying dozens of banners and tricolours. The Merlin reporter mentions some of the slogans - "People's Charter", "The Queen and Charter - Peace, Law, Order", "Long live the People", "Peace, Law, Order - Union is Strength", "Peace, Truth, Justice" and the points of the Charter - Universal suffrage, Annual parliaments, Vote by Ballot, No Property Qualifications, Payment of Members. There was a green calico banner, about two feet square, "Pontypool Workingman's Association, established 3rd July 1837" We look forward to the day when a workshop is run in the north of Gwent to make some of these - get in touch if you would like to take part.

I led twenty-two Blue Badge guides from all over Wales, who were attending a training course at Newport, along a Chartist trail starting from St. Woolos graveyard. We walked down Stow Hill to the Westgate and then along Commercial Street/ Road to the Transporter Bridge, finding out about the Chartists of Pill. Naturally, we visited the Chartist exhibition at Newport Museum which was opened four years ago by Michael Sheen (cost £30,000) - there's going to be **LOTS** going on there this Autumn (see Events pages) - does anyone know of a better Chartist exhibition in the UK? Some of the things we noted on our walk will appear in next month's edition. Reports from anyone on the walk will be most welcome for inclusion.

Gwent Archives has got the digital Chartist history project, funded by Heritage Lottery Fund,

off the ground. Courses were run at Blaina and Nantyglo, Tredegar, Sirhowy and Dukestown, Pontypool and Newport to recruit volunteers. Each day had the same format - morning spent exploring the 'Chartist era' landscape followed by afternoon at the Gwent Archives (Ebbw Vale) to study a selection of related documents. Thanks go to Rhiannon, Colin, Emyr, Kim for planning very imaginative itineraries that allowed us to discover the people – Chartists and Anti-Chartists – and their 'place' in the story of the Rising.

Early in June at Merthyr, Val Williams of Chance Encounters Theatre took her audience at the old High Street Baptist Church back to 1831 in her solo show *The Merthyr Rising – A Year On*. As I sat there in my pew, it struck me that just as the 'Peterloo massacre' of 1819 was deeply embedded in the folk memory of north west England, so too the people of our valleys in the 1830s were creating their very own legend of oppression from living memory. They too like the people of Manchester were crushed by military might, but at Merthyr that was not before they had experienced the hot flush of resistance – and temporary empowerment. It is impossible to understand the events of 1839 without appreciating the impact of 1831 on the 'mind set' of south Wales. You will have the chance to see Val perform on November 1st at the Newport Convention.

From Trails to Trials Cynefin Project

'Trails to Trials' is an exciting volunteer based on-line transcription and geo-tagging project using the Chartist Trials document collection. It is part of the Cynefin partnership project led by Archives Wales with National Library of Wales and the People's Collection, which aims to digitise more than 1100 Tithe Maps of Wales. It is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, with support from The Welsh Government through CyMAL, the National Library of Wales and Archives Wales.

The Cynefin project will promote the use of tithe maps through local projects and workshops, and will be dependent on a volunteer effort for geographic positioning and transcription. The period when the Tithe maps were being drawn was a period of great change and much unrest,

including the spread of Chartism and the 'Rising' of 1839. The trials of the leaders and protesters produced a large number of documents which have already been digitised.

The aim of the 'Trails to Trials' project is to transcribe all the trial documents and geo-tag them to the contemporary tithe maps. Geotags are geographic links between the documents and the maps. This means it will be possible to recognize the geographic location within the documents, and to use them in modern geographic search interfaces in the future.

For further details about the project and how to get involved, please contact: Rachael Lovering/
Sarah Daly (Cynefin Project Officer - job-share)

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Please send your stories, reports, details of future events by 20th September – deadline for October magazine

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We encourage you to advertise the listed forthcoming Chartist Events.

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