

MACHYNYS HOUSE, LLANELLI, CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 2016: INTERIM REPORT



Excavating Test Pits October 2016

Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For Cadw



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MACHYNYS HOUSE, LLANELLI, CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION 2016: INTERIM REPORT

By

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SUMMARY

The late 16th or early 17th century Machynys House lies on what is locally called 'Machynys Mound'; an area of raised ground that historically once formed an island of higher ground surrounded by coastal wetlands on the northern edge of the Loughor Estuary. The house may have much earlier medieval origins. By the 19th century it was operating as a farmhouse with associated outbuildings, farm buildings and gardens on an island of higher ground surrounded by a vast industrial landscape of houses, brickworks, ironworks and other factories. These industries had been constructed on reclaimed marshland in the 19th century. Following demolition in the 1960s and 70s nothing now survives of this landscape including Machynys House itself.

The area today is a brown field site with areas of dense scrub and grassland. The only surviving remains of Machynys House are the west and south garden walls. The land is owned by Carmarthenshire County Council who has long term plans to regenerate the area. To investigate the possible early origins of the house Cadw funded Dyfed Archaeological Trust to undertake an archaeological evaluation in the footprint of the house with the help of members of the local community. It was intended that this work would enhance the understanding of the history of Machynys and in the process provide opportunities for the local community to become engaged in their heritage.

However, during machine removal of the topsoil above the footprint of Machynys House in September 2016, it became clear that distributed across the site of the demolished building were large deposits of asbestos. This material was inspected by a licensed laboratory and found to be Amosite Asbestos that is regarded as an environmentally hazardous substance. Unfortunately it was decided that no further work could be carried out in the area of the demolished house.

This unforeseen change in circumstances necessitated a new plan and after discussion with Cadw it was decided to undertake investigative work in the undeveloped area to the west of the house; looking for evidence of earlier, perhaps prehistoric, settlement at Machynys. Prior to the large scale reclamation of coastal marsh in the 19th & 20th centuries the raised area of Machynys would have formed an island surrounded by wetlands, an island highly likely to have been utilised during prehistoric times as a place of settlement.

In October 2016 a number of trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator in this western area. In addition, three small trenches were excavated by hand against the west face of the garden wall and ten 1m square test pits were excavated by hand. All the soil from the test pits was sieved to try and retrieve small artefacts.

Unfortunately the area west of the house proved far more disturbed in the past than we had hoped. The machine excavated trenches and the test pitting revealed that the western end of this area had almost certainly been used as a dump for industrial waste in the recent past. Elsewhere the investigations proved how well ploughed and cultivated the whole area had been and that there was little evidence for any earlier prehistoric activity. The excavation did record the changes in the construction of the substantial garden wall and west gateway, and retrieval of the material dumped by the garden wall over many years, including quantities of 18th, 19th and 20th century pottery, window and bottle glass, slate, iron objects including quantity of nails, animal bone, many showing butchery marks, clay pipe fragments and mussel and cockle shells, gave us an insight into the lives of the people who lived here.

Despite the logistical problems of the excavation and its poor results the project was a great success with the local community. The excavation attracted new volunteers from the local area who had never worked on an excavation before and attracted many

visitors over the 2 weeks from surrounding communities who were very pleased, despite the problems of asbestos, that the story of Machynys House was not being forgotten. Many related their memories of living in the surrounding houses or working within the local industries and knew the tenants of Machynys House. Many of these memories have been recorded by the Llanelli Community Heritage group as part of their research into the history of Machynys. Appended to this report are two recent studies by members of the group into Machynys House.

Whether Machynys House had origins in the medieval period remains a mystery but evidence may still lie in the ground and, asbestos aside, perhaps one day it will be possible to investigate the area again.

INTRODUCTION

Machynys House lies on what is locally called 'Machynys Mound'; an area of raised ground that historically once formed an island of higher ground surrounded by coastal wetlands on the northern edge of the Loughor Estuary.

The house is believed to date from the late 16th or early 17th century when it may have been a mansion house, but it may have even earlier, medieval origins. By the 19th century it was operating as a farmhouse with associated outbuildings, farm buildings and gardens. Examination of 20th century photographs of the farmhouse suggests that the building could well have incorporated elements of earlier phases of building within it, including the remains of a lateral chimney. The building was demolished in the 1970s.

The site is of great interest to the local community, as evidenced by previous work undertaken with the Llanelli Community Heritage Group during the Arfordir project at the Machynys site in 2012. With the potential for cellars beneath the farm and the overall floor plan of the building, the site is of considerable archaeological and historical interest.

The site lies on open ground currently owned by Carmarthenshire County Council. There are plans to develop the area into an EcoPark, surrounded by new housing, under the auspices of Llanelli Waterside Joint Venture. This Joint Venture (JV) is a flagship partnership between the Welsh Government and Carmarthenshire County Council originally formed back in the 1990s by Llanelli Borough Council and the Welsh Development Agency. This development may potentially contain a managed amenity area, the plans for which have included a heritage element relating to Machynys House.

In 2016 Cadw grant aided a project to evaluate the remains of Machynys House to ascertain whether there was evidence that the building had origins within the medieval period, as well as inform future management plans.

Machynys House lies within the Glanymor Community First Area. The proposed investigations would provide the local community with opportunities to engage directly with their local heritage, with supervision and guidance from Dyfed Archaeological Trust.

The archaeological evaluation was designed to obtain sufficient information about the date, character, condition, extent, depth and significance of any archaeological features on the site. Any information gained would assist and inform any archaeological mitigation that may be required at the site in the future.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site itself is now located on the south side of the B4304 Coastal Link Road, adjacent to the roundabout serving the Delta Lakes and Pentre Nicklaus Village (Figure 1). The B4304 bounds the northern edge of the site and Pentre Nicklaus Village is located to the south. Pentre Nicklaus is a relatively new development, as is the Machynys golf course that now occupies much of the former reclaimed marshland to the southeast.

Until the middle of the 19th century Machynys House and its associated farm buildings were all that existed in the area but then came an explosion in industrial production in the Llanelli area. Amidst the factories, brickworks, and chemical plants of the Machynys peninsula two small communities grew up (Figure 2). They remained in existence until their demolition in the 1960s and 70s.

The development of industry on the Machynys peninsula and elsewhere in the Llanelli area was made possible by an act of enclosure passed by Parliament in 1807. Rights of common were extinguished by the act, and the land was divided and sold to private owners. An embankment, or bulwark, was built around the peninsula to protect it from flooding by the sea.

The area today is a brown field site with areas of dense scrub and grassland and a few standing remains associated with Machynys House. The majority of the site lies approximately 12m above sea level to a maximum height of 16m (Photos 1 & 2).

The underlying geology of the area consists of Pennant Shales, with coal and sandstones of the Upper Carboniferous Period. Machynys was formed as a moraine of glacial till deposited by the retreating ice sheets at the end of the last glaciation, 10000 – 12000 years ago.

A house is thought to have stood on Machynys mound since at least the late 16th or early 17th century (PRN 6995). The Royal Commission on the Ancient Historic Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) record that Machynys House was built in 1627, although an earlier date of 1578 is suggested by Francis Jones (1987). Photographs of the building from immediately prior to its demolition in around 1970 (Photos 4 & 5) show it was a double piled house (a style that was becoming popular in Wales in the late 16th and early 17th centuries).

The western façade of the building as shown in Photo 4 shows a stone built front with only ground floor windows visible. This is considerably different to the building to the rear (Photo 5) and is most likely an earlier building that was incorporated into the later double piled house. The building is said to have had a vaulted cellar with a cobbled floor.

On the southern side of the eastern wing of the house was a large lateral chimney stack. This is shown as being ivy clad in a photograph from the 1960s (Photo 3) but had been demolished by along with the barn by the time of the photographs taken in 1970 (Photo 5). This chimney stack is too large and of the wrong form to be associated with the east wing and may have been a relic of an earlier part of the structure. A possible arch is visible in the ivy which could indicate a former overgrown opening. This is on the south facade of the chimney stack and would indicate that its associated building lay to the south of the east wing but had been demolished by this time. A big lateral chimney generally relates to a high-status hall which may be of medieval origin and thus it is possible this wing of the building is the remnant of an earlier and modified medieval hall (Richard Suggett pers. comm.). The size of the chimney would suggest a substantial building.

Based on the available photographic and documented information the following broad phases have been inferred (Poucher & Meek 2013):

Phase 1: Rear wing with lateral chimney of possible 16th century date

Phase 2: Re-fronted in 1627 (RCAHMW information)

Phase 3: Second pile added in 18th or early 19th century and house modernised

Phase 4: Further modifications and alterations occur to the structure throughout the 19th and 20th centuries

Phase 5: Farm demolished in c.1970.

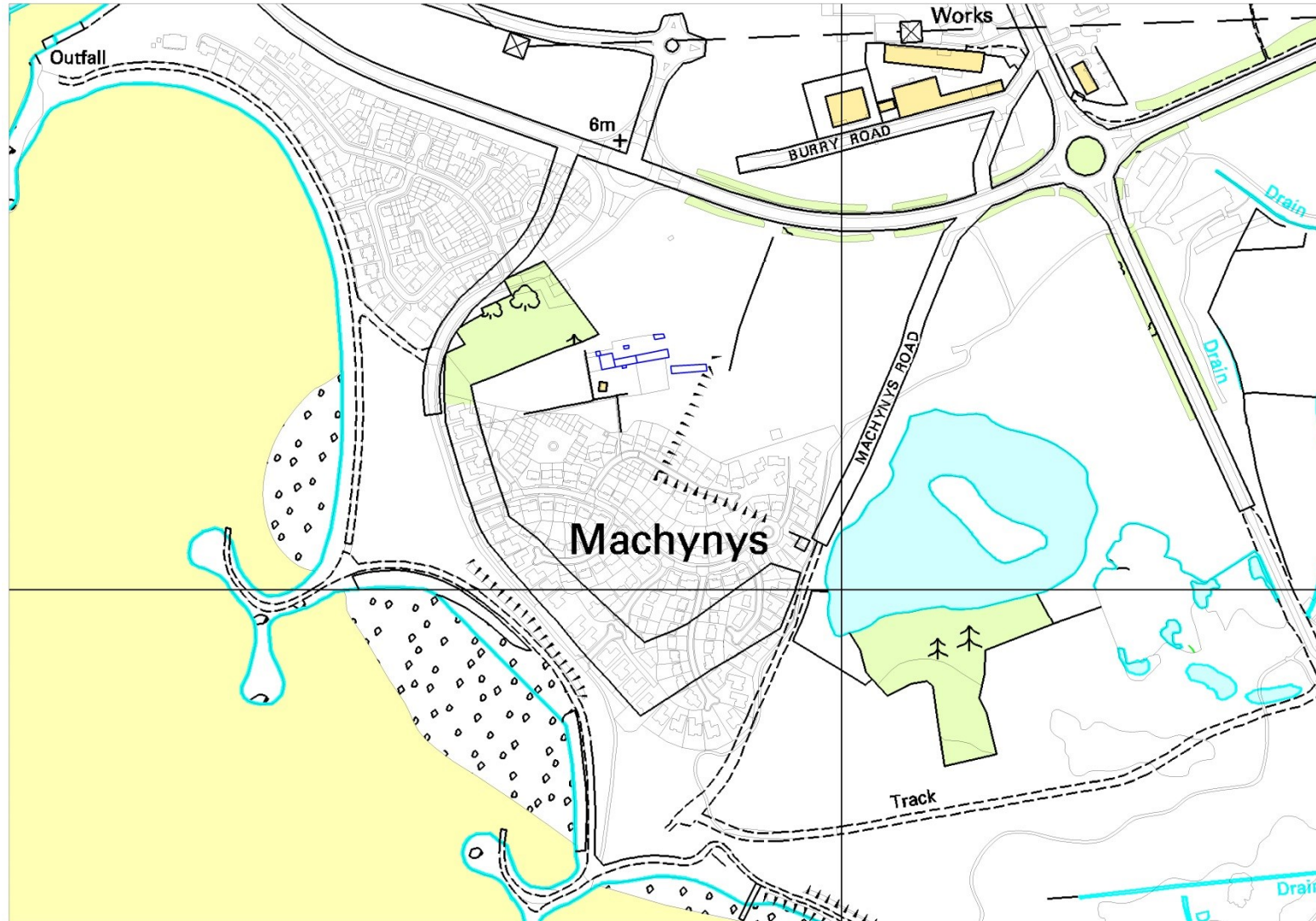


Figure 1: Location map (Machynys House and outbuildings outlined in blue) based on the Ordnance Survey.

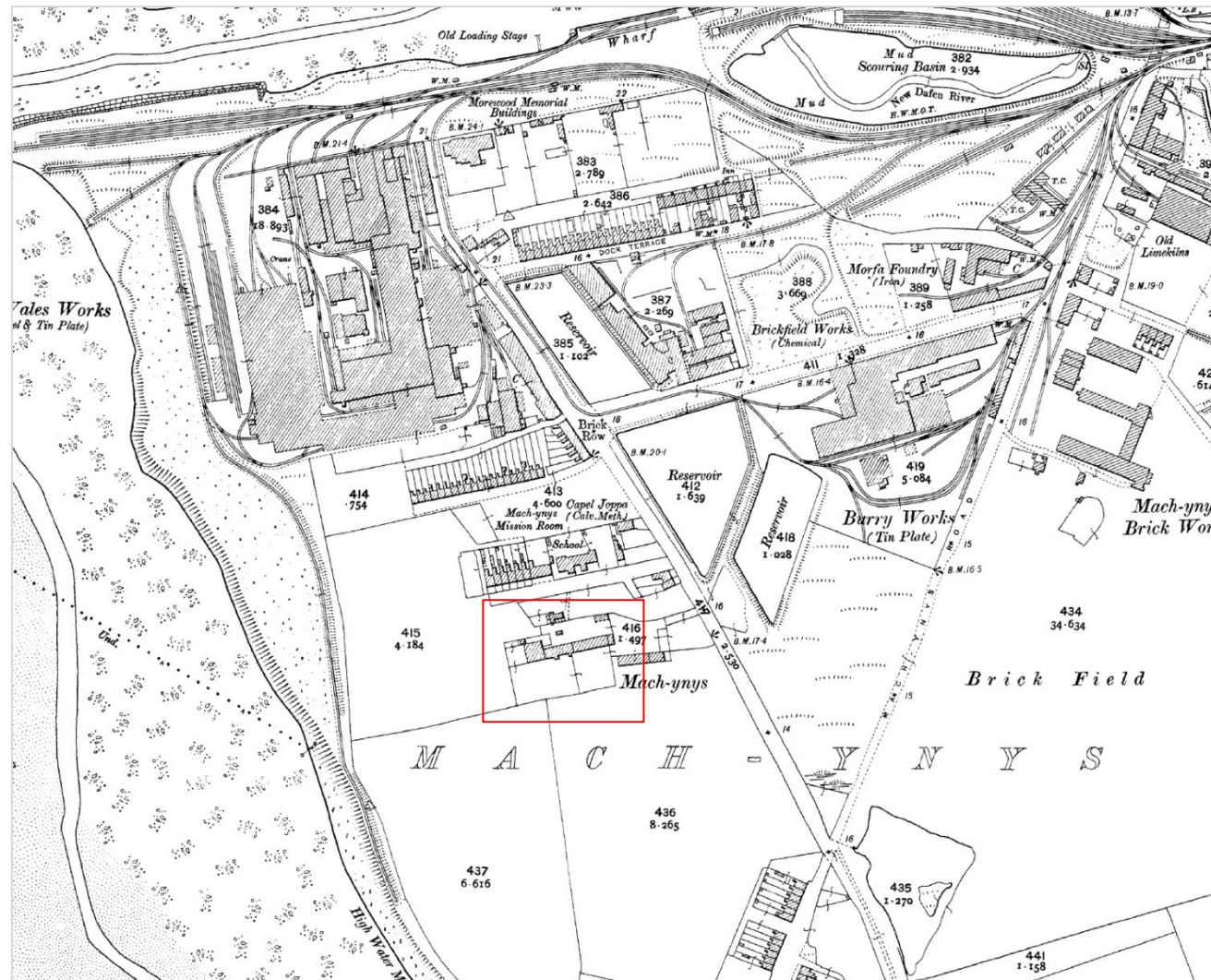


Figure 2: An extract of the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25" map published in 1907. Machynys House lies within the red box

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The aims of the project are:

- To provide opportunities for the local community to become engaged in their heritage
- To enhance our understanding of the history of Machynys.

The objectives are:

- Excavation within the footprint of the building in order to assess the date, character, condition, extent, depth and significance of any archaeological features associated with the development of Machynys House.
- To provide opportunities and training for members of the local community to become engaged in the programme of fieldwork to investigate the physical remains of Machynys farm / Machynys House.
- To provide opportunities and training for members of the local community to undertake research into the history of the Machynys area and the former farm
- To provide opportunities and training for members of the local community in the recording of the oral history of the area through the recording of personal memories of the Machynys area prior to its demolition in the 1970s.
- Collation of Data collected and preparation of an archive structured in accordance with established guidelines.
- Preparation of a detailed report as well as summary reports and journal articles.

METHODOLOGY

At the beginning of September clearance of the dense brambles that covered the site was undertaken with help from Carmarthenshire County Council and volunteers from Mencap (Photos 7 & 8).

It had originally been proposed that one trench measuring approximately 20m x 6m would be targeted across the lateral chimney and the western pile of the main building. An area of Japanese knotweed between the western garden wall and the house (that was left undisturbed) made it very difficult to calculate accurately the position of the former house. It was decided that an area to the east of the knotweed would be cleared by machine to ascertain the position of the house.

Following the vegetation clearance a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a flat bladed bucket removed a shallow layer of soil and demolition. Beneath this rubble the footprint of the west end of the house (Photo 9) could be clearly seen, as well as the outline of cellar areas.

However, during the machining it became clear that dispersed across the site of the demolished building were pieces of asbestos. This material was inspected by a licensed laboratory and found to be Amosite Asbestos that is regarded as an environmentally hazardous substance. Unfortunately because the asbestos was spread across the whole

site it was decided that no further work could be carried out in the area of the demolished house.

This unforeseen change in circumstances necessitated a new plan and after discussion with Cadw it was decided to undertake investigative work in the undeveloped area to the west of the house; looking for evidence of earlier, perhaps prehistoric, settlement at Machynys. Prior to the large scale reclamation of coastal marsh in the 19th & 20th centuries the raised area of Machynys would have formed an island surrounded by wetlands, an island highly likely to have been utilised during prehistoric times as a place of settlement.

This investigative work in October 2016, carried out by volunteers supervised by DAT staff, comprised the machine excavation of 4 trenches as well as the hand excavation of a series of 1m square test pits (Figure 3) and 3 small trenches against the west garden wall.

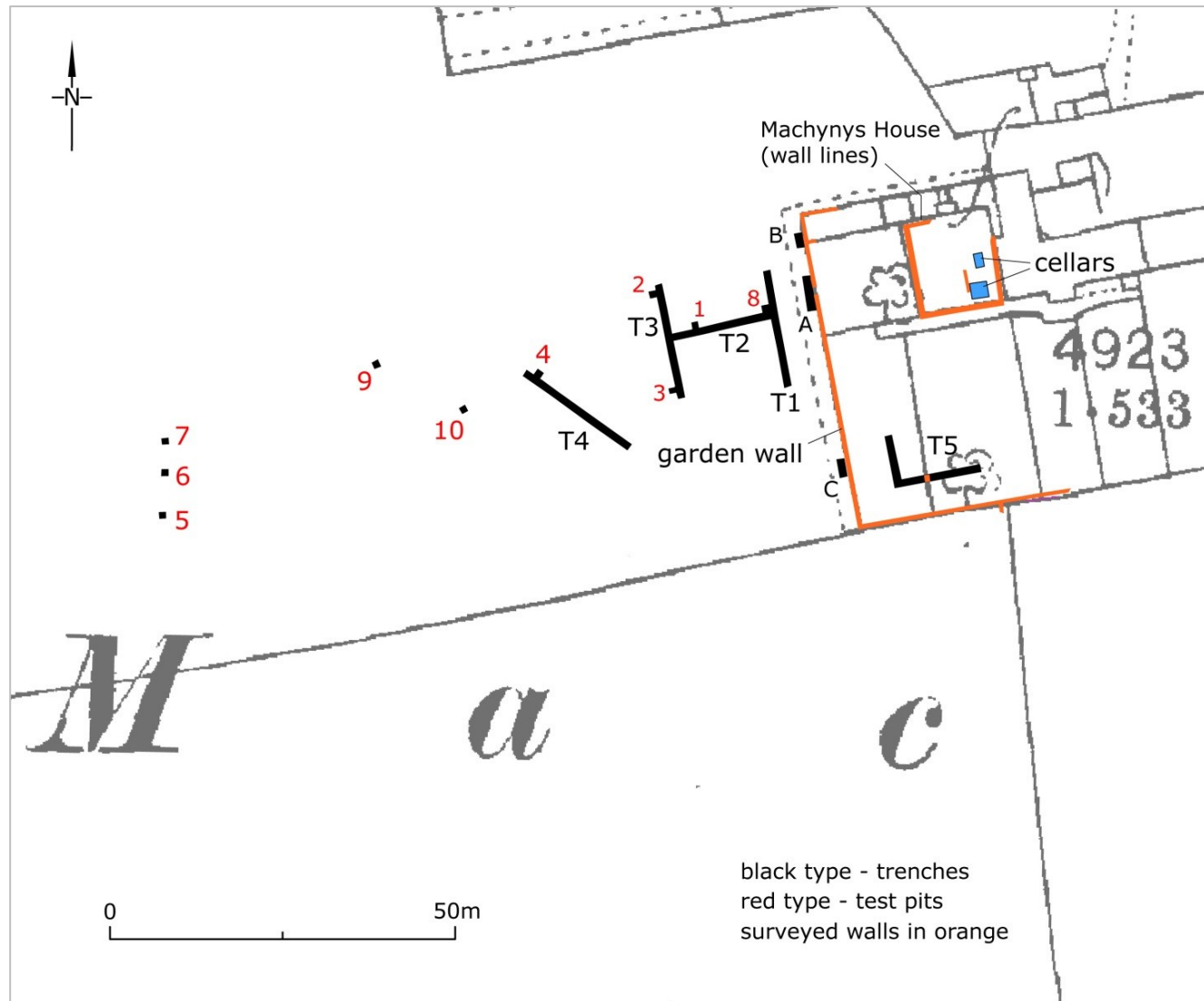


Figure 3: Plan of the trenches and test pits excavated in 2016 overlying an extract of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 25" map published in 1880.

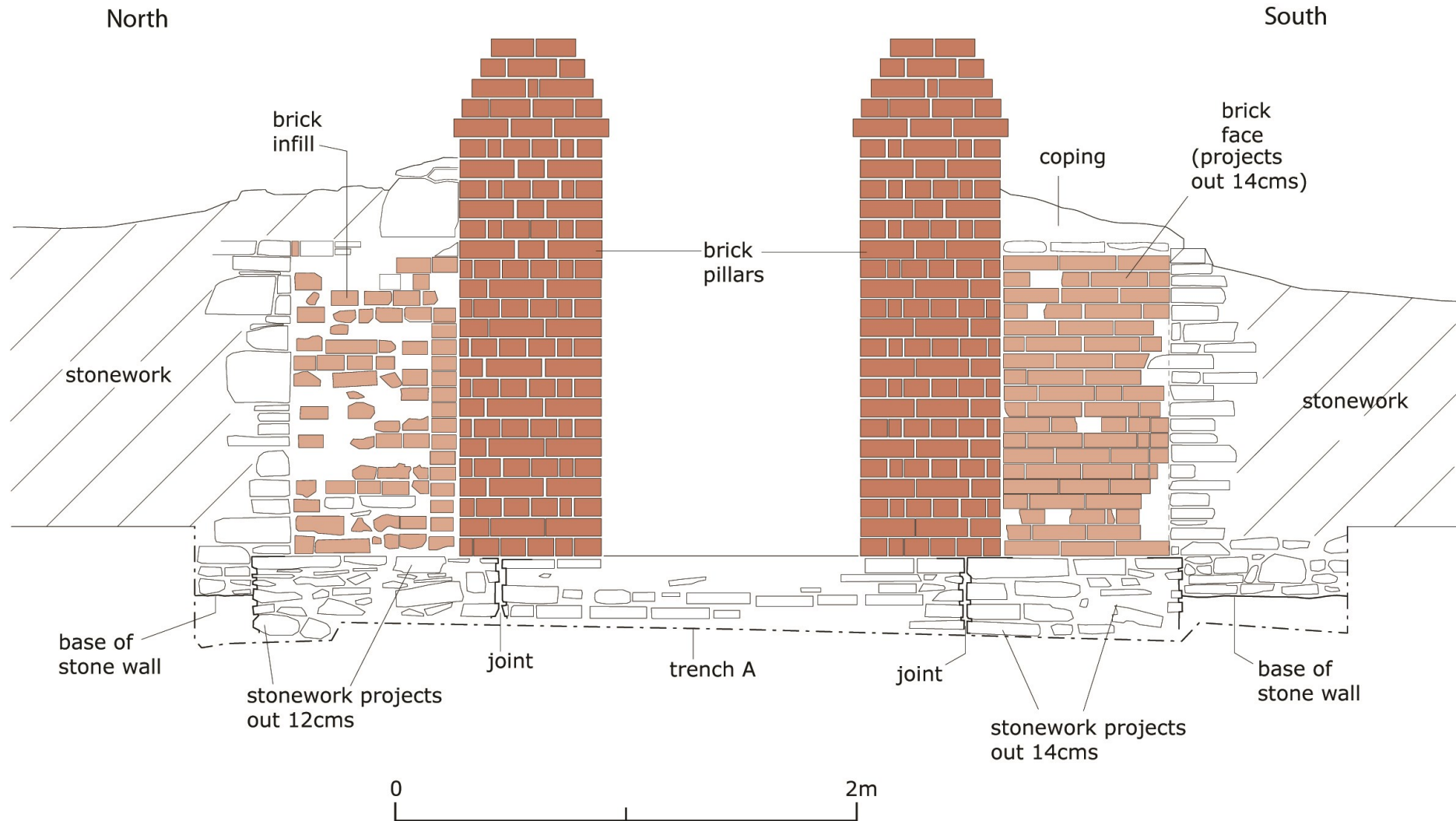


Figure 4: Elevation drawing of the west gateway to Machynys House.

RESULTS

The excavations took place from 4th – 14th October 2016

Trenches 1-4 and Test Pits 1-10

A number of trenches (Figure 3) were excavated by mechanical excavator down onto either archaeological levels or the underlying natural undisturbed ground surface. The trenches were cleaned by hand (Photos 10 & 11). Few archaeological features could be identified apart from a number of cultivation marks [304] & [314] (from which we had pottery) in Test Pits 2 and 3 and a spread of stone (103) across the southern half of Trench 1. There was evidence of a former trackway running diagonally across Trench 4 (Photo. 12). The trackway was visible as an area of compacted natural subsoil with 3 parallel shallow stone filled linear cuts; probably ruts filled with stone.

A number of 1m square test pits were excavated by hand. Once the topsoil was removed within the test pit the soil was excavated in arbitrary spits and all the soil was sieved to try and retrieve small artefacts, particularly worked flints. Ten test pits were excavated and a small number of flint flakes were retrieved from Test Pits 1, 2 and 3.

To the west of Trench 4 the topsoil in Test Pits 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 lay above a fairly uniform deposit of hard compacted stone and slag (602). The stones within this deposit varied in size across the test pits; from small to very large. (602) was extremely dense and proved very difficult to break up with a mattock. Attempts were made to excavate this deposit to ascertain its depth but after removing 0.30m of this material within Test Pit 6 the work was abandoned. (602) contained no finds other than a few fragments of brick. Test Pit 5 showed evidence that this compacted stone and slag may have filled a depression or large cut into the natural gravels of the glacial moraine, as there was a definite edge running SE-NW across the test pit, between the natural gravels and the stony slag deposit.

It is possible that this material is industrial waste from one of the many nearby ironworks filling a depression of perhaps even a former quarry? There is no documentary evidence to prove or disprove this.

Finds from the topsoil in Test Pits 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 comprised small sherds of post medieval pottery, modern glass, ceramic building material and pieces of corroded iron.

Deposit (602) was not recorded within any of the test pits to the east of Trench 4 suggesting that the infilling occurs only at the western end of the site.

Test pits 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 revealed a similar and very straightforward sequence of soils. For example in Test Pit 1 below the topsoil (201) that comprised friable dark brown silty loam (c.0.25-0.30m deep) was a slightly lighter medium brown clayey silt (202) containing charcoal, and numerous small fragments of lime of average depth of c.0.18m depth. Below this was the natural subsoil of banded siltstones and gravels (203).

It was apparent that layer (202) decreased in depth the further west one progressed; so in Test Pit 4 it was visible as a very thin layer between topsoil and the natural subsoil.

Disappointingly very little evidence of flint working was recovered from the process of sieving the material from the test pits. Only a few possible flint flakes were recovered from layer (202) in Trenches 1, 2 and 3.

Within test Pits 2 and 3 a thin, shallow linear cultivation mark was visible sealed by topsoil and cut into (202). The cultivation marks were orientated N-S and each contained a sherd of abraded green glazed pottery of indeterminate date (possibly 16th to early

18th century date, Dee Williams pers. comm.). The cultivation marks were nearly V-shaped in profile with a much clearer defined edge in plan to the east.

The soil sequence indicates just how deeply the soils have been cultivated and turned over across this area in the recent past. The topsoil (201) appeared to have had large quantities of ash and lime dug into it and contained quantities of coal, slag, glass (bottle and window), lime plaster, ceramic building material, animal bone, pottery and cockle and mussel shells. None of these artefacts were found in great quantities but were found as small, well broken down fragments throughout the layer.

Layer (202) contained similar types of artefacts but in much smaller numbers.

Beneath the topsoil an extensive area of tumbled rounded stone covered the southern half of Trench 1. This deposit may be the same as that recorded in Trench C. The deposit was not fully excavated and its true depth is not known but in Trench C the deposit was between 0.30-0.40m deep. Few finds were recovered from this layer apart from a number of fragments or corroded iron and iron nails.

Trenches A, B and C - the west face of the garden wall

Three small trenches (A, B and C) were excavated against the west face of the garden wall. Trench A was excavated in front of the gateway and revealed that the gateway had been altered many times during its lifetime.

The foundations of the main wall lay roughly 0.40m below the current ground surface but approximately 0.25m lower were two stone pillar bases that projected 0.14m out into the trench. Constructed on these two bases were two pillars built from red handmade bricks without indentations. The pillars were c.1.85m high and c.0.75m wide forming an entrance just over 2m wide; wide enough for a cart perhaps. These earlier pillars were not keyed into the stone walls to the north and south and may not be the original pillars that sat on the projecting stone bases.

The pillars were constructed from a rough brick infill faced with bricks. The northern pillar has lost its outer face and only the brick infill was visible. The outer northwest corner of the southern pillar has been chamfered.

At some point in time the ground between the two stone bases was built up to the top of the bases and two new pillars of machine manufactured bricks were constructed, reducing the size of the entranceway to 1.12m wide; wide enough for a pathway entrance eastwards to the front door of the house. There was evidence on the internal faces of the pillars that a gate had once been hung between them and that the path that led to the house was edged with bricks on edge.

Medium sized flat stones had been cemented to the top of the handmade brick pillars at an angle creating a type of capping or coping probably after the construction of the new modern brick pillars.

Interestingly the internal east facing side of the west wall running north and south from the handmade brick pillars was faced with handmade brick not stone, but only for the length of west wall that defined the front garden of the house.

Trenches A, B and C revealed the substantial depth of the foundations for the garden wall; in Trench B they extended 0.60m below the current ground surface and in Trench C 0.85m below. There was some evidence for a narrow construction cut [1107] running parallel with the wall that was difficult to see in plan but visible in section. No datable finds were recovered from this cut so it was not possible to date the wall construction.

From the three trenches it can be summarised that:

the cut for the wall cut through a loose mid brown sandy silt with 40% angular small stone. Overlying the backfilled wall construction cut were a number of deposits butting up against the wall indicative of a sequence of different dumps of discarded material and rubbish deposited over some period of time. The deposits included much ash and clinker, smashed window glass and gravel; containing, in contrast to the test pits, quantities of 18th, 19th and 20th century pottery, window and bottle glass, slate, iron objects including quantity of nails, animal bone, many showing butchery marks, clay pipe fragments and mussel and cockle shells. Within Trench A and B these deposits overlay an obvious deposit of chalk and flint nodules (1102). Within Trench C they overlay a thick layer of rounded stones within a silt matrix similar to that recorded in the southern half of Trench 1.

CONCLUSIONS

Unfortunately the area west of the house had been far more disturbed in the past than we hoped. Test pits 5-7, 9 and 10 appeared to show that the western end of the area had been used as a dump for industrial waste in the recent past. The remaining test pits and Trenches 1-4 provided evidence that the ground in front of the west wall of Machynys House had been well tilled over the years but little direct evidence for earlier prehistoric activity, although 5/6 flakes of undiagnostic pebble flint were recovered from topsoil within test pits 1, 2, and 3 indicating the possibility of prehistoric activity in the near area. The vast majority of the pottery was recovered from trenches A, B and C alongside the west garden wall; and apart from a few late 17th /early 18th century pottery sherds the majority of sherds are of 19th to 20th century date. These sherds together with the window and bottle glass, slate, iron objects, animal bone, clay pipe fragments and mussel and cockle shells together with other unwanted material dumped against the wall over time, probably represent a typical rubbish dump at this time and may originate from Machynys House. The foundations of the garden wall were surprisingly deep in places, showing the efforts made in constructing such a substantial boundary wall and the many phases of gateway construction undertaken in the 19th and early 20th centuries show the desire to alter the appearance of the entrance, as needs changed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks go to all the volunteers for their commitment and hard work. Our gratitude to Cadw for funding the project and to Llanelli Waterside Joint Venture for their support.

SOURCES

Jones, F 1987 *Historic Carmarthenshire Homes and their Families*

Poucher, P & Meek, J 2013 *Proposed Eco-Park & Residential Development, Machynys Mound, Llanelli: Archaeological Desk-Based & Impact Assessment Update 2013*, DAT Unpublished Report No. 2013/10

VOLUNTEERS

The vegetation obscuring the site was cleared with the help of 10 volunteers and their carers from the local Mencap support group.

The excavation at Machynys was undertaken with the assistance of volunteers. The excavation was advertised in preceding months. Information on the aims of the work were supplied to all interested volunteers, together with practical information on working on site.

There were in total 11 working days where volunteers could work on the excavations between Tuesday 4th October and Friday 14th October. In total 32 volunteers worked on the site throughout the 2 weeks of the investigations.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednes- day	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	04/10/16	05/10/16	06/10/16	07/10/16	08/10/16	09/10/16
	5	6	5	9	5	8
10/10/16	11/10/16	12/10/16	13/10/16	14/10/16		
10	9	12	7	8		

Volunteer numbers per day on-site

Although a few people had worked with DAT before, the majority were completely new to volunteering with DAT and had been attracted by the location of the excavation in east Carmarthenshire. Opportunities were provided for volunteers to learn excavation techniques from site cleaning using trowels, mattocking and shovelling, through to hand excavation of archaeological features. Opportunities were provided to carry out recording through drawn, written and photographic record techniques. Training in the use of and opportunities to use the level and electronic distance measurer was provided. Training was carried through direct supervision from a member of DAT staff or via the use of simple instruction sheets where a volunteer felt more confident to work more independently. DAT staff were always available to ask questions or provide assistance. Not all volunteers wished to do all tasks available. Copies of the site recording manual were also provided on-site.

Outreach

Over the 2 weeks of the project we had approximately 50-60 visitors who having heard about the excavation turned up to visit the site. They comprised members of the surrounding communities, or friends and family of volunteers, as well as reporters from local newspapers.

Many of the visitors visited the excavations because they had once lived in the surrounding area and remembered Machynys House when it was an active farm. Llanelli Community Heritage has over many years been compiling oral testimonies of what life was like in Machynys and researching documentary references to the house, its owners, occupants, and its history. Members of the heritage group volunteered on the excavation and many discussions were had between volunteers and visitors. Close links have been formed between Dyfed Archaeological Trust and Llanelli Community Heritage and further research will be reciprocated. Much of their research is published on their website. Recently Lyn Johns and Robert Hopkins have been researching into the history of Machynys School and news reports relating to Machynys House. The results of this research can be found in Appendix III of this report and will be referenced on the relevant Historic Environment Records.

PHOTOGRAPHS:



Photo 1: Looking south across the site of Machynys House towards the houses of Pentre Nicklaus Village (DAT 2016).



Photo 2: Looking east at the remains of the western garden wall and gateway of Machynys House (DAT 2016).

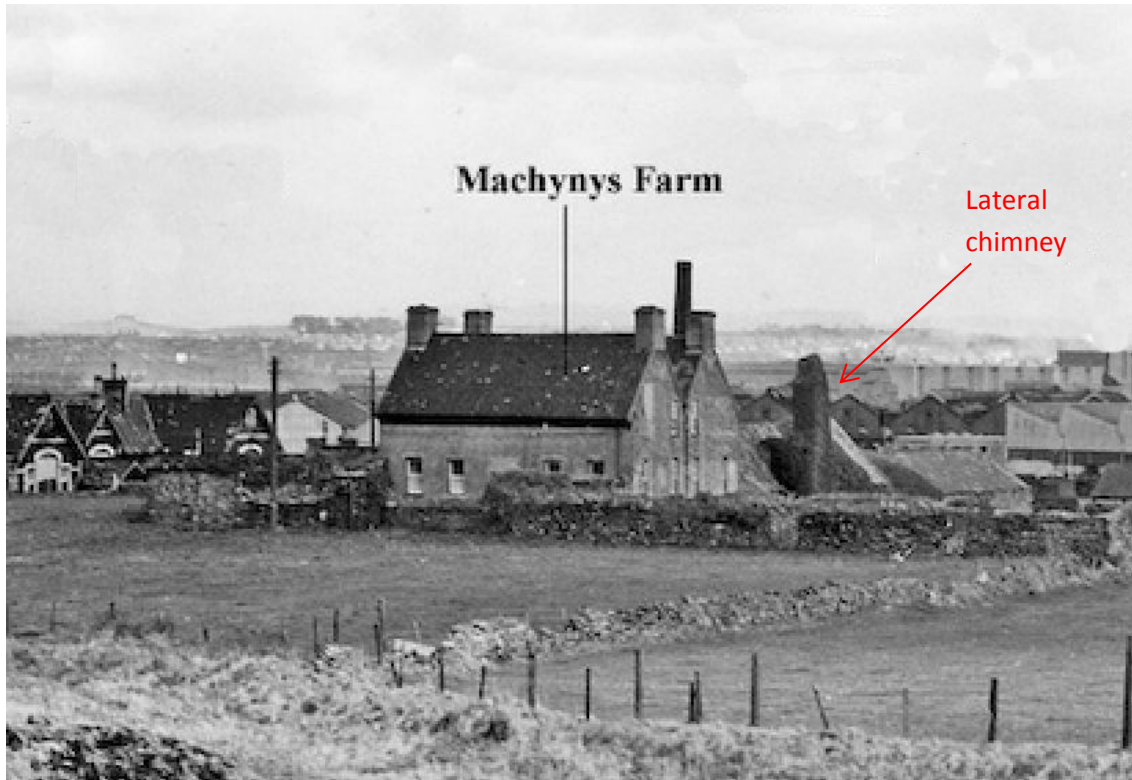


Photo 3: A photograph taken in the 1960s looking towards Machynys House from the southwest. The surviving ivy covered lateral chimney can be seen to the right of the main building.



Photo 4: Western façade of Machynys Farm c.1970 (CRO ref: DX/35/2)



Photo 5: Eastern facade of Machynys Farm following demolition of former attached barn c.1970 (CRO ref: DX/35/2)



Photo 6: Looking southeast across the site of Machynys House showing in the houses of Pentre Nicklaus Village in the background.



Photo 7: Clearing the brambles in front of the west garden wall with the houses of Pentre Nicklaus Village in the background.



Photo 8: Clearing the brambles in front of the west garden wall with help from the Mencap team.



Photo 9: The front west wall of Machynys House made visible during machining.



Photo 10: Looking east at Trench 1 and 2.



Photo 11: Looking north along Trench 3.



Photo 12: Evidence of a former trackway running across Trench 4. 1m scale



Photo 13: Ruth and Rob sieving the soil from Test Pit 1.



Photo 14: Menna, Amanda & Sue sieving the soil from Test Pit 4.



Photo 15: Sieving the soil from Test Pits 5, 6 & 7.



Photo 16: Hubert and Dave setting up the total station theodolite.



Photo 17: Jenny and Laurie at the start of excavations in Trench A.



Photo 18: Trench A – showing the pillars of the west gateway. 1m scale



Photo 19: Caralinda excavating the lower levels of Trench A.



Photo 20: The layers of ash, clinker and chalk built up against the west wall in the gateway area. 0.5m scale



Photo 21: Lynn excavating Trench B.



Photo 22: Looking northeast at Trench B showing the substantial foundations of the garden wall. 1m scale.



Photo 23: Rob drawing the sections within Trench B.



Photo 24: Laurie and Jenny excavating the lower levels of Trench C.



Photo 25: Looking east at the foundations of the garden wall. 1m scale



Photo 26: Laurie surveying on the last day, with Trostre in the background.



Photo 27: Our picnic site by the side of the road.

Appendix I - List of recorded contexts

Context No	Context Type	Trench No	Test Pit No	Context Description	Artefacts	Same as
101	Layer/topsoil	1	8	Friable dark brown sandy silty loam containing small and medium stones	Pottery, animal bone, glass, ceramic building material, slag, coal, lime plaster, cockle shell, mussel shell	201,301,311,401
102	Layer	1	8	Fairly compact medium orange/brown clayey silt with infrequent rounded stones. More orange colour as its mixed with underlying natural indicating how well the soil has been turned over.	Pottery, animal bone, glass, ceramic building material, cockle shell, mussel shell, modern iron objects.	202,302,312,402
103	Layer	1	-	Very compacted medium brown sandy silt containing 70% med/large rounded stone – possible levelling layer – possibly same as seen in Trenches A & C	Brick	No
201	Layer/topsoil	2	1	Friable dark brown sandy silty loam containing small and medium stones	Pottery, animal bone, glass, ceramic building material, slag, coal, clay pipe stem, flint flake	101,301,311,401
202	Layer	2	1	Fairly compact medium orange/brown clayey silt with infrequent rounded stones.	Pottery, animal bone, iron object, clay pipe, slate	102,302,312,402
301	Layer/topsoil	3	3	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silty loam containing small and medium stones	Pottery, flint flakes, animal bone, glass, glass waste ceramic building material, slag, coal, glass waste	101,201,311,401

302	Layer	3	3	Fairly compact medium orange/brown clayey silt with infrequent rounded stones.	Pottery, animal bone, iron object, glass, clay pipe, slate	102,202,312,402
303	Fill of [304]	3	3	Compact dark brown clayey silt with infrequent stone	One pottery sherd	
304	Cut	3	3	Narrow linear N-S cut visible in plan in TP3 after removal of (301). Clear straight E edge. Doesn't continue all way across TP but stops short of S facing section. Nearly V-shaped in profile. 0.16m wide and 0.15m deep.		
311	Layer/topsoil	3	2	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silty loam containing 20% small and medium stones	Pottery, flint flakes, animal bone, glass, glass waste ceramic building material, slag, coal, glass waste	101,201,301,401
312	Layer	3	2	Fairly compact medium orange/brown clayey silt with infrequent rounded stones. Gradually lightens with depth.		102,202,302,402
313	Fill of [314]	3	2	Fairly compact dark brown clayey silt with infrequent sml rounded pebbles.	One pottery sherd	
314	Cut	3	2	Possible linear cut seen in TP2 that is similar to that seen in TP3. Orientated N-S. Extremely shallow just cuts into (312) but clearer E edge in plan. Very bottom of truncated cut?		
401	Layer/topsoil	4	4	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silty loam containing small and medium stones	Glass, slag, coal,	101,201,301,311
402	Layer	4	4	Fairly compact medium brown clayey silt with infrequent rounded stones. Much thinner than similar layer seen in other trenches.		102,202,302,312
403	Fill of [406]	4	-----	A fill of very compact dark brown sandy silt with 60% rounded large & med. stones lying in a linear depression parallel with (404) & (405). Would appear to be former ruts of trackway infilled with stone. Stone is compacted into natural subsoil	Two pottery sherds	

				below and between the stone filled linears the natural subsoil has been heavily compacted. Lies directly below topsoil (401) and topsoil fills the top of the depressions. Probable trackway leading to back of house on N side?		
404	Fill of [407]	4	----	See (403). Some large flat stones placed within top surface of fill.	Musket ball, 2 pottery sherds, ceramic building material	
405	Fill of [408]	4	----	See (403). Less stone than (403) or (404)		
406	Cut	4	----	Shallow flat bottomed linear depression, c. 0.56m wide, 0.05m deep		
407	Cut	4	----	Shallow flat bottomed linear depression, c. 0.72m wide, 0.09m deep		
408	Cut	4	----	Shallow flat bottomed linear depression, c. 0.43m wide, 0.06m deep		
501	Layer/topsoil	-----	5	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silty loam containing a number of large rounded stones/boulders	Pottery sherds, slag, ceramic building material, furnace brick	
601	Layer/topsoil	-----	6	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silty loam containing a number of large rounded stones/boulders and a large quantity of slag	Slag, ceramic building material, furnace brick	
602	Layer	-----	6	Very compact dark orangey brown sandy silt with 50% small/med. stones and pieces of slag. Rock hard layer – not completely excavated – c. 0.30m excavated	Slag, ceramic building material, furnace brick	
701	Layer/topsoil	-----	6	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silty loam containing a number of large rounded stones/boulders and a large quantity of slag	Pottery, glass, fe objects, ceramic building material, slag	
1001	Layer	A	-----	Trench excavated in front of west garden wall gateway. Mixed deposit removed in arbitrary spits in narrow trench. Topsoil, gravel, stones, ash, lime mortar – interleaved deposits butting up against garden wall. Appears to be result of many dumps	Animal bone (much of it cow or pig) showing butchery marks, cockle and oyster shell, clay	

				of material thrown down. Worn down to west of gateway indicating path taken from gate. No proper surface seen in plan just more compacted to indicate path. No attempt to differentiate between deposits during excavation, the pottery is very mixed and indicates small time difference in deposition. Areas of compacted stone – patching up of pathway? Many more cockle shells and bone then seen in trenches to west.	pipe stem, pottery	
1101	Layer/topsoil	B	-----	Very loose dark black silty loam. A mixed layer including a remnant of topsoil that lies above chalk rich layer (1102), built up against garden wall, includes large quantity of ash. Appears to be a series of small dumps of various materials including ash and clinker, gravel.	Pottery, glass, fe objects, parker ink bottle	
1102	Layer	B	-----	Soft but compacted dark brown sandy silt with 75% chalk lumps and flint nodules. Chalk rich layer with nodules butting up against garden wall. Seen in whole of Trench B.	Fe objects, pottery (marmalade jars).	
1103	Layer	B	-----	Loose mid greyish brown sandy silt with 30% angular stone and defined patches of broken sea shells (cockle, mussel) and dumps of lumpy mortar-like substance. Layer below (1102) extending over whole of trench. Could be buried soil? Greater concentration of large stone towards N end of trench where a large quantity of shattered window glass was also excavated. c.0.10m depth	Pottery, animal bone, clay pipe, slate, plaster, window glass, cockle & mussel shell	
1104	Layer	B	-----	Layer very similar to (1103) which appears to be cut by linear cut [1107] that runs parallel with wall (foundation cut?). Compacted mid brown sandy silt with 30-40% angular small stone. Not excavated.		
1105	Fill of [1107]	B	-----	Probable fill of [1107] and probably much the same as (1106). Friable mid brown sandy silt with frequent small rounded stone, occasional flecks of charcoal & very small pieces of degraded fired		1106?

				clay.		
1106	Fill of [1107]	B	-----	Fill of [1107] and probably much the same as (1106). Friable mid brown sandy silt with frequent small rounded stone, occasional flecks of charcoal & very small pieces of degraded fired clay. Its just that this material appears to have more lime mortar flecks but think these are both fills of foundation cut to wall that was difficult to see in plan but was visible in section.		1105?
1107	Cut	B	-----	Probable narrow construction cut for garden wall running parallel with west facing garden wall. Difficult to see in plan during excavation within trench but just visible in section.		
1201	Layer/topsoil	C	-----	Loose very dark brown/black sandy silty loam with occasional small stones. This topsoil decreases in depth east to west i.e. it's been deposited up against wall.	Coat hook, iron staple, animal bone with butchery marks, cockle, oyster & mussel shell	
1202	Layer	C	-----	Friable dark brown sandy silt with a large quantity of compacted med and large angular and rounded stones (similar to the cobbled surface or levelling in southern half of Trench 1). Seen across whole of Trench C	Pottery, plate glass, stone roof tile, slate, animal bone with butchery marks, bottle glass, oyster, cockle, mussel shell.	
1203	Layer	C	-----	Loose medium brown sandy silt. Dump of flat and angular stone and some brick & occasional furnace brick frags		

APPENDIX II

REPORT ON THE FINDS by Dee Williams

The Pottery:

West Wales wares

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 3	(303)	1	3
Test Pit 8	(102)	1	3
Totals		2 sherds	6g

Two recovered sherds are from wheel-thrown internally glazed vessels that lack dateable diagnostic features. They are from either jugs or jars. A Post-medieval date applies, possibly as early as the 16th century.

These sherds represent the earliest identifiable vessels found at Machynys House; they are from pots made in west Wales. Known overall as Dyfed gravel-tempered ware: The known production sites to date are a probable medieval kiln at Newcastle Emlyn (Early and Morgan 2004, 97-100) and a post-medieval kiln at Newport, Pembrokeshire (Talbot 1968). Excavation and conservation is on-going at the Newport kiln which should help to further our understanding of pottery production in West Wales during the post-medieval period.

Dyfed gravel-tempered wares have a date of origin at some time during the 12th century and a terminal date in the 16th or 17th century (Papazian and Campbell 1992, 56-59).

Sherds by Area

Test Pit 3 (303): One indeterminate body sherd in a fine sandy fabric, buff with a reduced grey core, with sparse red gravels and a few quartz inclusions. The interior has a pitted and worn dull olive green glaze.

Test Pit 8 (102): One indeterminate body sherd in a sandy fabric with sparse white quartz inclusions. The internal glaze is a very dark green.

North Devon wares

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
U/S	U/S	1	57
Test Pit 1	(201)	2	105
Test Pit 1	(202)	1	0.5
Test Pit 2	(311)	1	3
Test Pit 3	(301)	1	7
Test Pit 3	(302)	1	4
Test Pit 8	(101)	1	18
Test Pit 8	(102)	3	8
Trench 1	(101)	1	4
Trench A	(1001)	8	315
Trench B	(1103)	7	195
Trench C	(1201)	5	164
Trench C	(1202)	18	393
Totals		50 sherds	1273.5g

Fifty sherds are from vessels that were imported from North Devon, from the town potteries of Barnstaple and Bideford. All but one of the sherds is made from a gravel-tempered fabric. The few surviving rims are from bowls and basins (pancheons). A single base sherd in a gravel-free fabric is from a dish with internal sgraffito decoration.

Glazed coarsewares used both in the dairy and for food preparation date from the 16th-19th centuries. The main period of importation into South Wales was 17th-early 18th centuries.

Sherds by Area

All of the recovered gravel-tempered fabrics have either an olive green or brown internal glaze. The few rim forms are variations on Type 3B and 3G bowls (Allan 1984, p.137, fig.40). One sherd recovered from (1202) in Trench C is from a jar that has an out bent rim.

Trench C (1202): A single base sherd is from a shallow bowl in a gravel-free fabric. A yellow glaze (clear glaze over a white slip) covers the interior surface. Sgraffito decoration consists of a curved linear design made with a three-pronged comb. North Devon Sgraffito wares are most common in the second half of the 17th century.

Unsourced wares

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 2	(313)	1	7
Test Pit 8	(101)	1	4
Trench 1	(101)	1	2
Trench C	(1202)	1	17
Totals		4 sherds	30g

Four internally glazed sherds are of uncertain North Devon or Welsh manufacture. The clays from North Devon and West Wales are very similar which can make identification difficult. The four body sherds from the excavation lack diagnostic features, and as such are not closely dateable. A 16th century date is possible and certainly no later than the 18th century.

Staffordshire/Bristol type slipware

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 8	(102)	1	1
Trench A	(1001)	1	18
Trench C	(1202)	1	7
Totals		3 sherds	26g

Three 17th-18th century vessels made either in Staffordshire or Bristol are represented.

Sherds by Area

A press-moulded dish in a pale buff fabric was recovered from context (1001) in Trench A. The interior has brown slip decoration against a yellow ground (glaze colour appearing yellow over white slip). The exterior is unglazed. A late 17th-mid 18th century date applies.

Test Pit 8 (102) A very small body sherd is too small to determine the form. The buff fabric and double yellow glaze are typical of Staffordshire/Bristol products.

Trench C (1202) A handle (3 joining sherds) from a tankard or cup in a buff fabric with dark brown glaze. Bristol or Staffordshire are possible sources and an early 18th century date is likely.

Redware: miscellaneous glazed

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 1	(202)	1	40
Trench A	(1001)	1	24
Totals		2 sherds	64g

Storage jars and basins were used in the home for storing dry food stuffs as well as for salting, pickling, preserving and for all manner of dairy processes. Utility wares of this type are very common and were manufactured at potteries across the country.

These types of wares were manufactured over a long period. Certain types may have an 18th century origin but a 19th-20th century date seems likely here.

Sherds by Area

Test Pit 1 (202): A single body sherd is probably from a large storage jar. A black glaze covers both surfaces.

Trench A (1001): A base sherd in a fully oxidised fabric with a covering of brown glaze on the interior surface.

Redware: unglazed

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 1	(201)	2	29
Test Pit 8	(101)	4	5
Test Pit 8	(102)	1	2
Totals		7 sherds	36g

A handful of unglazed red earthenware sherds are from plant pots. A 19th-20th century date is likely.

Stoneware

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 8	(102)	1	4
Trench A	(1001)	4	133
Trench B	(1101)	1	9
Trench C	(1201)	1	15
Totals		7 sherds	161g

Sherds by Area

A single rim sherd from (102) in Test pit 8 is from a bottle or jug. It is made from grey coloured stoneware with a brown salt glaze inside and out. Part of a sprig-moulded leaf is applied below the lip.

All remaining sherds are from fluted grey stoneware preserve jars, a type that was very often retained for secondary use. 19th-early 20th century.

Industrial slip ware: Mocha and banded wares.

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 3	(302)	1	1
Test Pit 7	(701)	1	7
Test Pit 8	(101)	1	1
Trench B	(1103)	3	14
Totals		6 sherds	23g

Industrial slipware is also referred to as banded ware. Decoration consists of horizontal bands and lines usually painted against a white, grey or buff-coloured ground.

During the 19th century there were many potteries producing these cheap decorative wares, continuing in production into the 20th century. Cf. Godden (1980, 173, pl.296) for illustrated examples of mocha and banded wares available from T.G. Green and Co. of Church Gresley, Derbyshire, a factory founded in 1864.

A mid19th to early 20th century date applies.

Sherds by Area

The few recovered sherds are from a carinated bowl of the 'London' shape (1103), a tankard or jug that combines slipped bands with mocha decoration (701), and undecorated yellow-glazed utility vessels from (302) and (101).

Developed whiteware: plain and decorated

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
U/S	U/S	2	12
Test Pit 1	(201)	1	2
Test Pit 1	(202)	4	7
Test Pit 2	(311)	5	18
Test Pit 3	(301)	9	15
Test Pit 3	(302)	2	5
Test Pit 4	(403)	1	3
Test Pit 4	(404)	2	7
Test Pit 5	(501)	5	7
Test Pit 7	(701)	3	3
Test Pit 8	(101)	19	28
Test Pit 8	(102)	9	7
Trench 1	(101)	11	19
Trench A	(1001)	7	96
Trench B	(1101)	3	23
Trench B	(1102)	3	13
Trench B	(1103)	68	284

Trench C	(1201)	3	13
Trench C	(1202)	2	3
Totals		159 sherds	565g

Sherds comprise pieces from everyday dinner and tea services as well as some other household vessels. The majority are earthenware but a handful of bone china sherds are also present.

The greatest number of decorated sherds bear blue under-glaze transfer-prints depicting chinoiserie and floral designs. Other coloured transfer prints are present in small numbers. Vessels with under-glaze painted decoration include simple floral patterns in polychrome colours. Several plate sherds have a single painted band (some are worn or faded) around the edge of the rim. A few plate sherds have a blue shell-edged border, a common form of decoration produced at many of the potteries between the 1820's and 1890's (Goodwin & Barker 2009, 49).

None of the above pieces are marked but the Staffordshire factories are the most likely source of manufacture.

A white earthenware bowl with blue sponged decoration is possibly a product from the Llanelli Pottery. Sponge-ware was one of the factories main lines produced in its latest phase, between 1877 and 1922 (Hughes & Pugh 1990, 67).

A late 19th-20th century date would seem appropriate for the developed whitewares found at Machynys House.

Miscellaneous 19th-20th century wares

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 1	(202)	1	9
Test Pit 3	(301)	2	2
Test Pit 4	(403)	1	7
Totals		4 sherds	18g

Other Finds:

Ceramic Building Material

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 2	(311)	1	47
Test Pit 8	(102)	1	2
Trench 1	(101)	3	71
Trench 1	(103)	2	95
Trench A	(1001)	2	43
Trench C	(1204)	1	130
Totals		10 fragments	388g

One fragment of unglazed Malvernian ridge tile and nine fragments of green glazed North Devon ridge tile were recovered from the excavation. The Malvernian tile is likely to be 16th century and the North Devon tiles of 16th-17th century date.

A single black-glazed floor tile from (311) Test pit 2 is post-medieval.

Clay pipes

Thirteen unmarked stem fragments and one plain bowl fragment were recovered. A 19th century date is given.

Glass

Area	Context	Total sherd count	Weight (g)
Test Pit 1	(201)	1	1
Test Pit 2	(311)	1	1
Test Pit 3	(301)	1	1
Trench 1	(101)	3	17
Trench A	(1001)	1	3
Trench B	(1101)	1	1
Trench B	(1103)	8	210
Totals		16 fragments	234g

Neck body and base fragments from 18th century free-blown wine bottles were recovered from Trenches 1, A and B. Five small droplets of molten glass from contexts ((201), (311), (301), (101), (1101)), represent the slag waste from an industrial process.

Metals

A single lead musket ball was recovered from context (404) in Test pit 4.

Stone

A small but complete stone roof tile was recovered from (1202) in Trench C. The tile is well-made and has a single drilled nail/peg hole. The tile measures 200mm x 140mm.

Flint

Sixty small pieces weighing 41.5g.

References:

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- Hughes, G. and Pugh, R., 1990 *Llanelli Pottery*, Llanelli.
- Papazian, C. and Campbell, E., 1992 'Medieval pottery and roof tiles in Wales AD 1100-1600', *Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales* 13, 1-107.
- Talbot, E. J., 1968 'Welsh Ceramics: a documentary and archaeological survey', *Post-Med. Arch.* 2, 119-39.

APPENDIX III

RECENT RESEARCH BY LYN JOHN AND ROBERT HOPKINS OF LLANELLI COMMUNITY HERITAGE

Machynys School Part 1

Machynys School

Machynys School was opened on Friday 29 Feb 1884 to meet the needs of the growing industrial communities of Machynys and Bwlchygwynt. It initially occupied an early church school room. Following a school inspector's report complaining about the practice of teaching children in 'hired rooms in cramped conditions', new buildings were erected nearby. A new school opened its doors on Wednesday 31 January 1894. At the official opening of the school in the following week the children were reported to be 'bright, smiling, with cheerful faces spotless collars pinafores and skirts were treated to tea and cakes. By December 1916 due to 'difficulties in working' and the growing demands of industry the school was closed and sold to Richard Thomas & Co

Machynys School Notes

15 February 1883 School Board Meeting mention of a Machynys School, Rev Lewis Price offering to rent their school for £15 school per Annum – Board prepared to rent at £10 (South Wales Press)

March 15 1883 School Board Meeting proposed visit - report work to be done to make suitable for a infants school - rent or purchase? (South Wales Press)

12 April 1883 Census of Machynys to be taken and consider the est. of a school at Machynys (South Wales Press)

10 May 1883 Census of not attending school (South Wales Press)

13 September 1883 alteration of plans (South Wales Press)

11 October 1883 Plans to have an infant school at Machynys (South Wales Press)

15 November 1883 Tenders -Plans for alteration (South Wales Press)

13 December 1883 Plans for building alterations approved; vacant post to be advertised for a certified teacher (South Wales Press)

10 January 1884 School Board Meeting (South Wales Press)

Friday 29 Feb 1884 School opened (Llanelli Reference Library Local Collection No:4271)

13 March 1884 SBM Machynys School - attendance 81 (South Wales Press)

10 April 1884 SBM Machynys School – attendance 91 (South Wales Press)

15 May 1884 SBM Machynys School – attendance 92 (South Wales Press)

12 June 1884 SBM Machynys School – attendance 92 (South Wales Press)

28 May 1891? Machynys School Inspectors report? (The Llanelli & County Guardian)

26 May 1892? Machynys School Inspectors report? (The Llanelli & County Guardian)

1 February 1894 Machynys School Opening. Children passed into new building on the 31 January 1894 (The Llanelly Mercury p.7)

15 March 1894 Machynys School opening (The Llanelly Mercury)

15 April 1915 Machynys School difficulties in working (The Llanelly Mercury p.7)

13 December 1916 Machynys School sold to RTB (South Wales Press p.3)

14 December 1916 To Be sold for works extension (South Wales Press)

14 December 1916 Machynys School to be sold to R T & Co (The Llanelly Mercury p.7)

21 December 1916 Machynys School presentation to teachers (The Llanelly Mercury p.5)

21 December 1916 Machynys School closure and presentation to teachers (The Llanelly Mercury p.5)

*Lyn John
Llanelli Community Heritage*

Machynys School Part 2

The Llanelli Education Committee staff wages ledger covering the period October 1914 – March 1915 appeared in the Peter Francis auction in Carmarthen on the 21st September 2016 (Lot 311¹). Machynys mixed school is one of 26 educational establishments contained therein.

The book measures 16½" x 10¼", landscape orientated and hardback bound in deep plum. Each page is pre-printed on the one side, Arranged by calendar month, the schools are listed alphabetically within each month, a school per page, with separate pages for "Other" and "Supply" teachers, unfortunately, there is no record as to where each of these teachers were placed. The details are filled in by the respective school's Head or Principal teacher. As each sheet comes from a different school, this volume is a compilation of printed sheets or leaves removed from books kept at each school. On the inside of the front cover is a bookplate of "Lewis' Printing and Stationary Works Market Street Llanelly", who is presumably the bookbinder.

On each page, the principal teacher's appear first, followed by the "Other Teachers" in order of seniority, which is reflected by their annual/weekly pay, cleaners are the only domestic staff listed. Monthly wages and deductions appear against each name with the individual's signature, or in some cases an "X" where the individual - always a cleaner - was illiterate, across a 1d postage stamp ('stamp duty') in the final column. The death of a female supply teacher was noted (November 1914), father collected the wages. Each page was signed by a Committee member and a clerk; errors are corrected in red ink, for example where pay was deducted due to staff illness. Other annotations are for teachers who had voluntarily enlisted in the army and were still working in their schools until their 'call up'. On enlisting, they were immediately paid a daily wage by the army, depending on their rank, this was then deducted from their teaching wage. These deductions are noted, as were the dates of volunteering, and in one or two instances their rank.

The following are the staff of Machynys school compiled from the register for the period October 1914 – March 1915.

Name: Bowen, Annie M.
Position: Principal Teacher
Employed: October 1914 – March 1915
Gross Pay P.A.: £150

Name: Rees, ?Ida B.
Position: Other Teacher
Employed: October 1914 – November 1914
Gross Pay P.A.: £97

Name: Griffiths, Mary Sophia
Position: Other Teacher
Employed: December 1914 – March 1915
Gross Pay P.A.: £80

Name: Thomas, Catherine
Position: Other Teacher
Employed: October 1914
Gross Pay P.A.: £60

Name: Evans, Margaret H.
Position: Other Teacher
Employed: October 1914 – March 1915
Gross Pay P.A.: £60

Name: Edwards, Elizabeth
Position: Other Teacher
Employed: 2nd November 2014 – March 1915
Gross Pay P.A.: £45

Name: Davies, Selina,
Position: Cleaner
Employed: October 1914 – February 1915
Gross Pay P.A.: 23/- 9d

Name: Harries A.
Position: Cleaner
Employed: 1st March 1915
Gross Pay P.A.: 23/- 9d
Note: Illiterate

At any one time, the school employed 4 teaching staff, a principal and three others, and one cleaner.

Notes

1. <http://www.peterfrancis.co.uk/BidCat/detail.asp?SaleRef=GO141&LotRef=311>

Robert Hopkins

Machynys in the News

A search through the newspaper archives has added more information on Machynys Farm, its inhabitants, activity and changes to the surrounding area. References to the school, housing tenants and the brickworks have not been included. Note, 'Llanelly' has been spelt throughout.

The earliest mention of Machynys farm is an advertisement for the sale of stock and implements from '*The Cambrian*', 2nd September 1815 (p.2), informing us that it had livestock and arable, and was a producer of cheese

CARMARTHENSHIRE

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION.

Without reserve, on Monday, the 18th day of September, 1815, at Machynys Farm in the Parish of Llanelly,

By JOHN DAVIES

ALL the valuable genuine selection of LIVE and DEAD STOCK of the said Farm. The stock consists of 25 prime milch cows, two bulls of the Pembrokeshire breed, 19 steers and 9 heifers, two-years old, 31 yearlings, 20 calves, four good draught horses, two bay colts rising three years, one beautiful bay filly, by Valiant, rising two years, two bay colts rising two years, 16 capital tore sheep, 20 lambs, one breeding sow and eight pigs. - The Dead Stock consists of well-harvested prime wheat, barley and oats, in mows, 1½ ton of cheese, several implements of husbandry, and dairy utensils.

The Corn will be sold on Monday, the 4th day of September, 1815.

Credit will be given on the approved security, and will be specified at the time of sale.

The above is well worth the attention of Gentlemen, Farmers, and others; such as a choice selection of Cattle are seldom offered for sale.

In May 1874, a vet, Mr R.T. Morgan was alerted to a heifer with foot and mouth disease, which originally came from a farm on Pembrey Mountain, an area thought to have an outbreak of the disease. The farm was quarantined, and while all the cattle were eventually infected, none died ('*South Wales Daily News*', 4th May 1874, p.3).

In 1917, the '*South Wales Weekly Post*' (5th May p.2) reported that 7 boys dug up and stole 20 rows of potatoes planted at the end of March in a field at Bwlchygywynt. The Machynys farm (?)tenant, Mrs. Samuel claimed the losses would have sold for £4 - £5, but summonsed the boys for the loss of 5 shillings. Five defendants were found guilty and fined, the case against two were adjourned.

Mrs Samuel herself appeared before the Llanelly Police Court in April 1900 for "working a horse in an unfit state", she and her co-defendant, Thomas Davies, both of Machynys Farm pleaded guilty. Although the charge was against Mrs Samuel, the fine of 10 shillings was against William Samuel, and Thomas Davies received a fine of 5 shillings, both had to pay costs. ('*South Wales Daily Post*', 19th April 1900, p.4).

Could Thomas Davies be related to A J. Davies from Machynys farm who was a judge and entrant at agricultural shows? First prize of £3 in the Llanelly Horse Show of 1890, in the "Class 3, for the best cart mare, any age, the property of a tenant farmer-residing within the seven parishes of the Llanelly Union - Messrs. J. and D. Davies, Machynys, Llanelly" ('*The Carmarthen Journal and South Wales Weekly Advertiser*', 18th April 1890, p.3). At a ploughing match at the Penlleger in February 1890, a "Davies, Machynys" is one of the judges of the "First Class" ('*The Cambrian*', 14th February 1890, p.3) and at the Llanboidy Agricultural show of the same year, a Mr Davies of Machynys, Llanelly was one of the judges in the "Horse" category ('*The Carmarthen Journal and South Wales Weekly Advertiser*', 19th September 1890, p.8); 1st prize to J. and D. Davies, Machynys, Llanelly in the 'Agricultural brood mare, in foal or foal at foot' category at the Pontlliw Agricultural Show of 1893 ('*The South Wales Daily Post*' 5th September 1893, p.4) and a

J. Davies from Machynys was one of the horse judges at the Pontlliw Agricultural show in 1900 ('*The Cambrian*', 7th September 1900, p.7).

At the United Counties show held at Carmarthen in 1910, '*The Welshman*' reported on the 'long list of successes by tenant farmers', a Mr A.G. Jones of Machynys, Llanelly, won 3rd prize with 'Marvel' in the class for 'Hackney gelding or mare, exceeding 14 and not exceeding 15hh., to be ridden' (19th August 1910, p.6). 'Marvel' was also entered by Jones into the 'Cob, Mare or Gelding, over 13 ½ hands and under 15 hands to be driven in harness' category at the Bedwellty Agricultural Show in September of that year ('*The Merthyr Express*', 10th September 1910, p.11).

It's noteworthy that during 1900, the Samuel's are reported to be farming at Machynys in April, and the Davies' are there at least until September 1900. The Samuel's are there in 1900 & 1917 and 'tenant farmer' A.G. Jones in 1910. Census records may shed some light on the matter.

Over 40 years earlier in 1868, at the Carmarthenshire Agricultural Society Show, a Mr Humphreys of Machynys came highly commended in the category 'For the best yearling Colt or Filly of the hackney breed' ('*The Welshman*', 25th September 1868, p.3). Eleven years later, a Mr David Humphreys of Machynys had an entry on the Llanelly Agricultural Society show in the 'Breeding cow or heifer' category ('*South Wales Daily News*', 13th December 1879, p.4). The same David Humphreys made an application to the Local Board of Health in April 1872 for the supply of water at Machynys ('*The Welshman*', 5th April 1872, p.3). At the Petty Sessions on Wednesday 15th December 1869, David Humphreys brought a case against 2 defendants living in Machynys Row for the theft of 6 ducks. The case was thrown out due to the lack of evidence ('*The Welshman*', 17th December 1869, p.5). The Humphrey family were tenants at Machynys as early as January 1844, as a son was born to them on the 26th ('*The Cambrian*', 3rd February 1844, p.3).

Away from agriculture we see the start of housing development on the farmland. In 1851, an application was made by the Llanelly Building Club for 10 dwellings, this was granted ('*The Welshman*', 7th November 1851, p.2). In 1872, the year Morewood and Rogers opened their iron and tinplate factories at Machynys, they submitted plans to the Local Board of Health for 12 dwellings, however the Board insisted that the toilets be water rather than earth ('*The Welshman*', 21st June 1872, p.3). Two months later, the Board approved plans for houses and streets on land owned by Sir John Stepney ('*The Welshman*', 23rd August 1872, p.3), and in 1880, instructed that (?)public water taps be installed ('*South Wales Daily News*', 6th September 1880, p.3). February 1890 saw the opening of the Machynys Mission Hall ('*The Welshman*', 21st February 1890, p.8).

In 1864, the following advertisement appeared in '*The Welshman*' for the 9th September 1864 (p5):

RIGHT of BORING and SEARCHING for COAL on Machynys Farm, Llanelly. A guarantee of Lease Coal when found. Is situate close to the Docks

Whether anyone took up the lease is not recorded, however in 1877, a William Thomas of Cwmbach, Llanelly was given licence at the Llanelly Petty sessions for the construction of a 'powder magazine', a store for explosives ('*The Western Mail*', 15th March 1877, p.3). By 1890, prospection was in the hands of Sir Arthur Stepney, Bart., M.P., the landowner, who failed in his attempts to find any. '*The South Wales Daily News*' reported that prospecting for coal on land in the Machynys area was then with a (un-named) 'gentleman', but prospection was not on Stepney land but nearby 'Crown land' (1st August 1890, p.7).

Several miscellaneous newspaper reports are worthy of note, a Miss Morgan of Machynys attending a ball at the Llanelli Atheneum (*'The Welshman'*, 7th March 1862, p.5); and a labourer pleading guilty of 'obtaining 10s. 3d under false pretences at Machynys farm' in 1905 (*'The Cambrian'*, 24th February 1905, p.6). The hailstones on the evening of Thursday 16th December 1852 broke nearly window 80 panes, with *'The Welshman'* describing Machynys as 'its bare situation' (24th December 1852, p.3).

At the beginning of the 20th Century, south east Carmarthenshire had 4 rifle ranges, Danyralit, outside Carmarthen, Dinefwr, Stradey and Machynys. The earliest report for the rifle range on the Machynys shore comes from *'The Welshman'*, 13th September 1861, detailing the first competition held there over two days. The range underwent a refurbishment in 1897 at a cost of £150 and had a shooting range of 900 yards; and in early June, was awaiting approval by the volunteer adjutant (*'The Llanelli Mercury and South Wales Advertiser'*, 3rd June 1887 p.5), by Whit Monday 1897, the new rifle range at Machynys was ready for use (*'South Wales Echo'* 9th June 1897 p.4).

On 30th April 1909, *'The Welshman'* reported that the range had been 'condemned' (p.5); in July an inspection recommended that money be spent to improve the facilities (23rd July 1909 p.4). Presumably improvements were made as a year later, *'The Llanelli Mercury and South Wales Advertiser'* gave notice of the Carmarthenshire Rifle Association's annual competition at the Machynys range on the 1st October 1910 (22nd September 1910, p.5). When the range officially closed is not reported, however during the Second World War, it was used as a practice range (L. John *pers. comm.*).

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MACHYNYS HOUSE, LLANELLI, CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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This report has been checked and approved by K Murphy

on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position: Director Dyfed Archaeological Trust

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As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report



