

News Release



Gŵyl Twm Siôn Cati (Blaenau Tywi) Festival



20.4.2009

SEARCH FOR TWM SION CATI'S SIGNATURE

The walls of a cave above Rhandir-mwyn, near Llandovery, are to be thoroughly examined to determine if hundreds of names carved on the rock face include that of Twm Siôn Cati, who used the cave as a hiding place during the sixteenth century.

The local community is about to celebrate the life of the man who is frequently described as the Welsh Robin Hood. On the 400th anniversary of his death, the inhabitants of Rhandir-mwyn will be staging a festival in his honour at Ystrad-ffin Farm, Rhandir-mwyn, between 21-23 August. The aim is to raise enough money to build a memorial worthy of this iconic character and to make the cave itself more accessible.

“It would be an added attraction if Twm Siôn Cati’s name, carved by himself on the rock face, were to be found,” said local historian and festival secretary, Alun Jones. “We have already discovered names dating from the beginning of the nineteenth century, but so far we haven’t been able to examine those that are less easy to read, and others which are higher up on the rock face.

“We also want to restore Twm Siôn Cati’s tarnished character. It is true that in his younger days, he was a wild and mischievous character, and was even feared for his daring exploits at the expense of the rich and noble. But in later years turned to poetry and became an accomplished heraldic bard.”

Twm Siôn Cati has been the subject of numerous books, in English and Welsh, and a BBC series, *Hawkmoor*, starring John Ogwen and Jane Asher, was televised in the 1970s.

“It’s a shame that the thousands of people who flock each year to the hills above Rhandir-mwyn to see the Llyn Brienne reservoir and the once-endangered red kite, are not made aware of Twm Siôn Cati. At present, there is nothing to indicate the location of his cave,” said Alun Jones.

“At one time, Twm’s hiding place was a popular attraction. The cave attracted charabanc-loads of day trippers from all over Wales, and our aim is to make it popular once more. We are keeping our fingers crossed that we shall eventually discover Twm’s signature on the rocks.”

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