A historical map of Abergavenny, Wales, showing the town's layout, the River Usk, and various landmarks. The map is hand-drawn with a sepia tone and includes labels for numerous locations. A white box with a gold border is overlaid on the top part of the map, containing the title and subtitle.

YOUNG ALHS

*Abergavenny History for Children
(and their parents and grandparents)
from the ALHS website*

The short articles in this collection have all appeared on the children's page of the Abergavenny Local History Society website (Young ALHS) between September 2024 and December 2025.

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THE FIRE INSURANCE MARK AT 22 HIGH STREET

September 2024

Next time you are outside Greggs look up to see the fire insurance mark to the right of the shop name. These plaques were put up on buildings where the owner had bought fire insurance



and ensured that when the fire engine came the firemen tried to put out the fire. Without insurance, or if the building was insured with another company, the firemen might go away and not help. You could be left hoping that your neighbours would form a bucket chain to the nearest supply of water so you could put the fire out yourself.

The plaque outside Greggs is a replica of the original one from the Birmingham Fire Office Company (the original is in Abergavenny Museum but is not on display). The company used marks like this one between 1805 and 1867. From 1851 to 1879 this building was a china shop belonging to William Crump and his wife.



The Birmingham Fire Office Company provided a Merryweather manual fire engine, like the one in this photograph, that was used in Abergavenny right up until 1921. It was kept at one stage in Monk Street, probably in a shed or stable. But it would have been pulled to the fire by the firemen and any other strong men who were near, not horses. When there was a fire someone would have to run round and tell all the firemen that they were needed.

Image below: Science Museum Group Collection



GHOULIES AND GHOSTIES

October 2024



On the night of *Nos Galan Gaeaf*, the Welsh version of Halloween, country people in Wales used to avoid churchyards, stiles, and crossroads, since spirits were thought to gather there. In some areas, tales were told of a fearsome spirit called *Yr Hwch Ddu Gwta*, a huge black sow without a tail, which roamed the countryside accompanied by a headless woman!!! (Image: public domain)

In some parts of Wales, people kept up the pagan tradition of wearing masks to keep evil spirits away, and this developed into the tradition of carving faces on turnips and showing them in the windows of the houses, lit with a candle. Using pumpkins for carving lanterns is a twentieth century invention that came from America and took over as pumpkins are so much easier to carve than turnips.

Some Local Ghosts

The Two-faced ghost - *Yr Ysbryd Dauwynebog*

One of the most interesting local traditions is *Yr Ysbryd Dauwynebog* - the Two-Faced Ghost. This apparition was unnaturally tall, so that it could look into the top windows of farmhouses and cottages along the lanes. But the most terrifying thing about this spirit was that it had two faces - one at the front and the other at the back of its head! Why not make a mask?

The Tŷ Gwyn Poltergeist

Tŷ Gwyn Farmhouse (built in the 17th Century) near Gilwern was said to be haunted for many years by a poltergeist. It didn't throw things around or harm people (unless you count scaring them half to death!), but would just tap them very, very lightly on the shoulders as if from behind.

The "Gate Shifter"

A favourite trick of local spooks was, apparently, throwing field gates off their hinges and laying them flat in the lanes. One time, so the story goes, twenty-nine gates had to be replaced the morning after *Nos Galan Gaeaf*!

The Mountain Witch: *Hen Wrach y Bryniau*

On the tops of the hills to the South and West of Abergavenny, if you were very unlucky, you might see the mountain witch. She appeared as a poor old woman, carrying a wooden bowl, and if you met her, you were certain to lose your way, however well you knew the road!



(Based on *Llên Gwerin Blaenau Gwent* by Frank Olding)

(Images: Wikimedia Commons)

A POTTY STORY

November 2024

In the days when there were no inside toilets, just a 'privy' in the garden if you were lucky, everyone used potties (or chamber pots as they were known) not just small children.

Chamber pots were kept under the bed so they were sometimes called a 'gozunder'. Or they were kept in a cupboard which was part of a bedside table, ready for use in the night.

This chamber pot is on display in Abergavenny Museum. It was made in Bristol in about 1740 and is typical of chamber pots made in the west of England from about 1620 to the 1750s. Many of them were exported to the American colonies.



This sort of decoration is called slipware as the potter would have put the brown layer of slip over the cream-coloured base and scratched the patterns through the brown slip to show the cream beneath.

This chamber pot came from number 17 Nevill Street (which is now the Foy Williams estate agent) but we don't know when it arrived there so we can only guess who might have used it.



A lot of different people lived in number 17 Nevill Street over the years and the building had a lot of different uses, including a school for young ladies, a drapers, an upholsterers and, in the 1930s, a servants registry (employment) office.

In the Census of 1851 we can see that a Mrs Marcia Gabb lived there with her daughters Marcia 15, Julia 12, Elleanor 7 and her son Charles who was 7. There was also a Servant Jane Thomas who was 21.

Mrs Gabb was quite wealthy so she may have owned an expensive chamber pot made by the famous potters Minton or Spode. So if this slipware pot was there at that time then might have been used by the children or Jane the servant. Jane would have had to carry the potties out to the garden to empty them.

(Images: Abergavenny Local History Society)

THE MARIE LWYD

December 2024

Imagine a dark night a long time ago, in one of the local villages at about Christmas time or New Year. In the distance you can hear trudging feet and perhaps some laughter or the jingle of a bell. Then a group of men and boys appear, one or two carrying lamps and one leading a strange white creature that looks like a ghostly white horse. They stumble their way to the pub and knock loudly on the door, shouting to be let in. From inside there are muffled cries of “Go away”.



The group outside sings a song saying why they should be let in. Then from inside comes another song telling them why they can't come in. This is followed by a second song and reason to be let in from the outside group, and another reason not to let them in from the people inside. Back and forth this goes until the people inside the pub run out of songs and group outside are allowed in to get warm and eat and drink whatever is on offer. They eventually move on to another house or pub, wishing all the company a Happy Christmas or a Happy New Year as they leave.

This is the tradition of the Marie Lwyd (which means Grey Mare) and it probably goes back to before history began. You will never forget the first time you see the Marie Lwyd, as she can be very scary. Coming through the dark, the white horse must have looked very like a ghost horse. But to see the Mari Lwyd approaching a home or pub was to be said to bring good luck. The Marie Lwyd scares some people because her head is usually a real horse's skull with some decorations attached. The lower jaw was sometimes spring-loaded so it could snap at people. The head is stuck on a pole which is carried by a man, who is completely covered in a white sheet, to look like the body of the horse. The ceremony was probably more popular in the villages rather than in town.



This photo shows the Marie Lwyd picture that is now over the front door of the old Llanover Post Office. The glass over the picture has reflections and dirt that make it difficult to see it clearly. It was probably the inn sign from when the building was a pub called the Nag's Head. Alongside is an engraving from 1862, showing what the original picture looked like.



(Images: Peoples Collection Wales
<https://clivehicksjenkins.wordpress.com/2013/08/04/the-groom-approaches/>)

MYTHICAL CREATURES

January 2025

Stories about mythical creatures have been told to children for many hundreds of years. Mythical creatures are not real: they only appear in stories. But sometimes it can be difficult to know which animals are real and which are mythical. To someone very young a unicorn can feel very much more real than, say, a rhinoceros. After all, they see a lot more pictures of unicorns than of rhinos.



In the past, children could not often see pictures of *any* animals, let alone mythical ones, but some of them appeared on the inn signs around Abergavenny. There has been a unicorn with the lion on the front of the King's Arms Inn for a very long time – look at the royal coat of arms. There is a much bigger coat of arms in a picture in St Mary's Priory church with a very elegant unicorn. Did you know that there is a wooden carving of a dragon in St Mary's church too? Look at the choir stalls.

The Welsh red dragon is another mythical animal you will know well. You can't walk around town without seeing a lot of Welsh dragons. Have you tried counting them? In the 1850s The Coffee Pot in Nevill Street was the Dragon's Head Inn. And there was a very old pub in Lion Street called the Green Dragon.

The building that is now The Little Treat coffee shop in Frogmore Street was part of the Griffin Inn for about a hundred years. A griffin has an eagle's front half and a lion's back legs and tail. If you can't imagine this then you can see two griffins holding shields carved in stone on the main gate of Bailey Park in the Hereford Road. And if you want to see some more mythical creatures and are in Parc Pen-y-fal, then have a look at the chimneys on the old hospital building to see an amazing collection.



(Images: Abergavenny Local History Society)

OH YES IT IS! OH NO IT ISN'T!

February 2025

The tradition of pantomimes goes back hundreds of years and many of the stories are even older. Originally, a pantomime would form part of an evening's entertainment that might include an opera and a ballet. It wasn't until the late 1800s that pantomimes became family entertainment, particularly popular at Christmas. There must have been pantomimes at the Borough Theatre, performed by travelling pantomime companies, from when it opened in



1870, but the earliest one we know about was *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* in 1882. The dancing and music were said to be "excellent" and the skating of Mr JH Simpson and Miss Minnie Russell "should be seen to be appreciated"!

In 1917 the Abergavenny mayor, Zachariah Wheatley, organised a tea, Christmas Tree and pantomime (it was *Babes in the Wood*) for all the children in the town whose fathers or other close relatives were away fighting in the Great War. The Abergavenny Chronicle reported that 1000 children, plus wounded soldiers from Maindiff Court Hospital, went to this treat!

Several amateur pantomime companies were formed in Abergavenny including the Pen-y-fal Hospital Players and the Scorpio Group. Our current pantomime group started as the 'Trinity Sunday Schools' and put on pantomimes in the 1890s. They changed their name to the Abergavenny Pantomime Company in 1959. In our picture you can see families waiting to go into the Borough Theatre to see the pantomime in 1955. It was *The Sleeping Beauty* that year.

Lots of local schools put on their own pantomimes and Grosmont School was one. You can see their 1975 pantomime cow in our picture below.

The 2024 pantomime at the Borough Theatre combined two traditional stories - *Robin Hood and the Babes in the Wood*. Were you there?

(Images: Monlife Heritage)



HOUSE MARKS

March 2025

You may have seen different sorts of decoration on the shops and buildings in Abergavenny. Plaques like the cherubs on The Coffee Pot in Nevill Street were probably put up just because they looked pretty. But the boar's head over the archway at the bottom of Cross Street, by Balti Delight, is there because the Blue Boar Inn used to be down the alleyway, although we think there may have been butcher's shops there at some stage too.



Some marks were put on houses to show who built and owned them. The Estate of the Marquess of Abergavenny put marks on a number of their buildings using symbols from the Nevill coat of arms. On the house next to Nevill Hall Hospital you can see a selection of the marks used – the 'A' for Abergavenny, a crown, a portcullis, a rose and a bull wearing a crown as a collar. On the old Nevill Hall gate house (to the left of the hospital entrance) there is a mark over the door showing the bull.

Nearer into town but still on the Brecon Road, there is a lovely ornate 'A' on the stone house by the entrance to The Knoll. Coming back into town you can find five of the Abergavenny marks on the houses in Pant Lane and there are two in Tudor Street. Have you seen all these house marks?

These are more Abergavenny Estate house marks around the town. If you spot any others, please tell us where they are.

(Images: Abergavenny Local History Society)



THE INVENTOR

April 2025

If you had walked along Park Road before the First World War, just about where Abergavenny Nursery is now (although the road layout was very different then) you would have seen Jones Brothers Engineers, the garage run by the two Jones brothers.



You might have heard of their invention, the Light Car Utility Jack, but you would probably never have guessed that Walter, one of the brothers, was the inventor of a hydroplane, a two-seater cycle car, an air-propelled cycle car and a mono plane that flew across the English Channel and other marvellous machines.

Meanwhile in Devon, Sir Edward Channing Wills was a great supporter of science and the arts. He used some of his family fortune, made from tobacco and slavery, to support the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter and the associated University College Exeter. He was a surgeon and was vehemently opposed to smoking. We don't know how he came to meet Walter Jones but he appears to have funded some of Walter's inventions and constructions, like the two-seater cycle car and a hydroplane converted to air propulsion.

Walter's machines mostly seem to have been built from parts from other machines so the garage in Park Road may have looked very strange while vehicles were taken apart and new selections of parts gathered for the next wonderful machine.

(Images: Monlife Heritage)



THE END OF WW2 IN ABERGAVENNY

May 2025

My name is John Davies, I am eight years old and I live in Abergavenny. It is May 1945. A few nights ago I woke up because there was a noise in the street outside. There were neighbours out there dancing in their pyjamas. Mother explained to me that Germany had surrendered and the war in Europe is over. The next day was a holiday and called VE Day. We didn't have to go to school for two whole days!



A few days later there was a party for the children in our street. There was so much food – sandwiches, cake and blancmange. I don't know how the mothers managed it with all the rationing that there is. A man in an ermine gown with a chain round his neck came round. I thought it might be the King but my teacher told me he is the Mayor of Abergavenny. At the end of the evening the grown-ups built a bonfire and burnt a guy that they said was Hitler. We all cheered. All the children were given a silver sixpence each. I am not going to spend mine; I am going to keep it for ever. I asked Mother if this meant that Father would be coming home soon. She said, 'Not yet as he is fighting out East'. I hope it won't be too long as I don't want to forget what he looks like.

(Images: (above) VE Day Celebrations in Mill Street, Abergavenny – Facebook, Abergavenny Voice
Street parties in Barry Island (above) and Penarth - People's Collection Wales)



ABERGAVENNY - a History Quiz

June 2025

How many of our quiz questions about Abergavenny history can you get right ?

The answers are on Page 18.



- 1 What did drovers bring to Abergavenny Market to sell?
 - A chickens and ducks
 - B cattle and sheep
 - C wool
 - D sweets and ice cream

- 2 What did the Abergavenny Wig makers use to make the wigs?
 - A wool
 - B human hair
 - C goat hair
 - D Angora rabbit hair

- 3 What happened to the WW1 tank that used to be on the plinth in Bailey Park?
 - A It melted in a fire
 - B A gang of youths from Merthyr stole it
 - C Fairies stole it in the night
 - D It was turned into scrap metal

- 4 Why does the clock on the Town Hall have one black face?
 - A The clockmaker ran out of white ones
 - B They were all meant to be black but the Mayor said they were too gloomy
 - C To remember Prince Albert
 - D It was painted black as a joke

- 5 Who was a prisoner at Maindiff Court?
 - A Adolf Hitler
 - B Guy Fawkes
 - C The Marquess of Abergavenny
 - D Rudolf Hess

- 6 Why is there a plaque showing Roman soldiers beside the Castle Street car park?
 - A There was once a Roman fort there
 - B A Roman re-enactment group practices there
 - C Emperor Hadrian once visited Abergavenny
 - D The Romans fought a battle with the local tribe, Silurians, here

VULCANA – Abergavenny Strongwoman

July 2025

It is now impossible to imagine what Tudor Street looked like before Abergavenny's "slum clearance" when it had closely packed buildings along both sides of the road. At the top of Byefield Lane (where the big car park is now) there was a building which held a gymnasium run by a man called William Hedley Roberts. He was unusual, for the late 1800s, because he trained women as well as men. He also had a troupe of strongmen and women who performed in vaudeville theatres.

Kate Williams was only 15 when she joined the gym, but she was healthy and strong from her work in a tannery. She trained very hard and became the strongest woman at the gym and won medals for her lifting. She joined the performing troupe, calling herself "Vulcana" and William called himself "Atlas". They performed together as a pretend brother and sister act "Atlas and Vulcana". The troupe was very popular and travelled all over the UK, France, Holland and Spain and even had a tour in Australia.

Some people thought that Atlas claimed feats of strength that he had not actually performed and that the weights he used were lighter than he said. But nobody ever doubted Vulcana's abilities as the weights she lifted were checked and proved accurate. There are photos of her holding a man or woman over her head, on one hand.

If you search Vulcana online you will find photos and stories about her feats of heroism, like when she rescued two boys from the River Usk in Abergavenny in 1901 or rescued two performing horses from a fire in a theatre in 1921. She and William had six children by then, some of whom performed with the troupe.

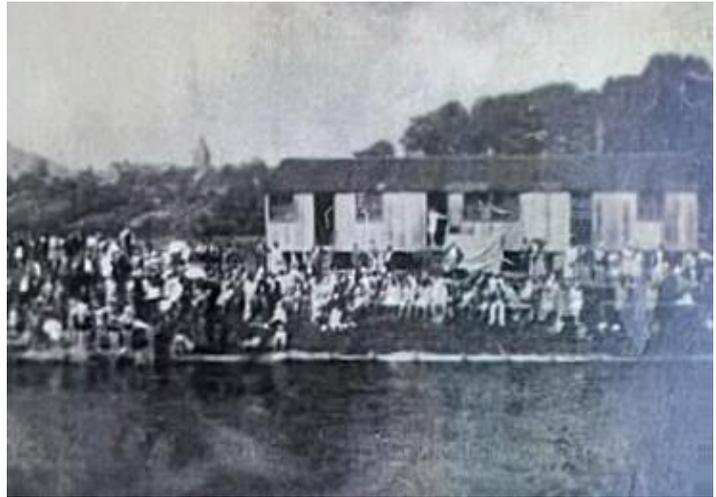
(Images: Wikimedia Commons)



LEARNING TO SWIM IN ABERGAVENNY

August 2025

Very few people swim in the River Usk in Abergavenny now, because of the poor water quality. In the past lots of people learnt to swim in the Usk because there was no swimming pool. There used to be changing rooms on Castle Meadows. You could learn to swim with the aid of a rope round your middle which was attached to the end of a long pole. The other end of the pole was held by the swimming teacher who walked along the bank and shouted instructions to you. This went on until well into the 20th century.



In the 1930s the Council decided to build an outdoor swimming pool in Bailey Park and this was opened in 1941. There was an adult pool, a children's pool and a paddling pool. You could buy a season ticket for 7s 6d (37p now, but worth more like £12 then). Some children went there after school – so long as they did their homework first. The pool was very popular for many years but became expensive to maintain. It was closed and demolished in 1996 and the site was levelled in 2006. Now it is quite difficult to see where it used to be. Recent plans to build a new Lido have had to be abandoned but most of us now learn to swim in the Leisure Centre swimming pool. Keeper's Pond is now the most popular place for outdoor swimming.

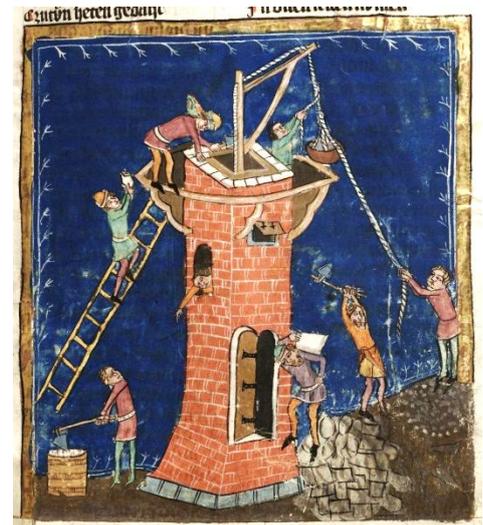
(Bathing hut image: Chris Edward's father via Abergavenny Voice. Other images by kind permission of the Abergavenny Chronicle, Colour image: Udo Schultz.)



SCAFFOLDING

September 2025

You will often have seen scaffolding going up or down around buildings in town, but have you ever wondered what scaffolding was like when it was used to construct stone castles? In the Middle Ages they would have used wood to make the scaffolding. Ropes and pulleys were used to lift the stone up to the higher levels. It was dangerous work and many men must have fallen to their death.

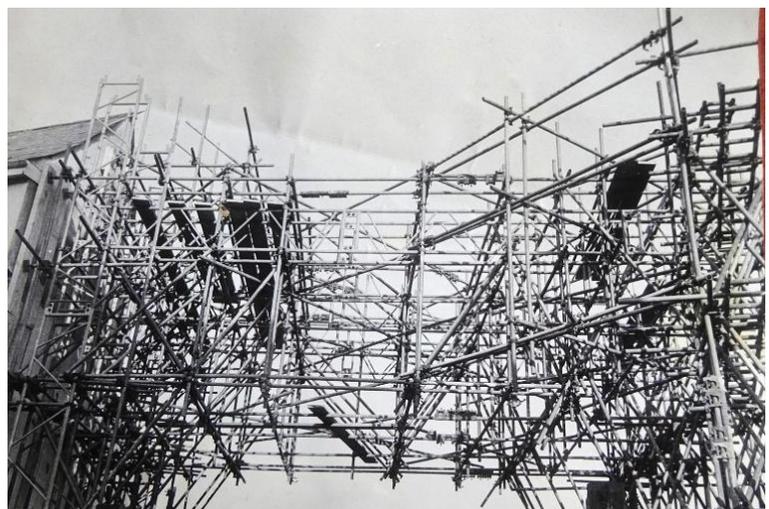


Platforms were added so the masons and labourers had a safer area to work on. The platforms were supported by shorter poles with the ends slotted into holes left in the castle walls. These were called putlog holes and you can still see them left now. Chepstow Castle has a number of them. Below is a photo showing some of the putlog holes in Abergavenny Castle.

The Industrial Revolution led to the invention of steel and gradually it became the standard to use galvanised steel poles to build scaffolding and cast iron or cast steel clamps for fixing them. But it is only in more recent times that safety regulations have been taken more seriously. In 1974, not long before the photograph below was taken in Abergavenny, the Health and Safety at Work Act came in to force and now very few people get hurt on scaffolding.

Guedelon Castle in central France is being built as if it were a 13th Century Castle using period tools, methods and materials. Find out more about it on the Guedelon Castle website - <https://www.guedelon.fr/en/>

(Images: Wikimedia Commons, ALHS Research Group, Monlife Heritage)



LIVESTOCK MARKETS IN ABERGAVENNY

October 2025

Even those people who can remember the old Abergavenny livestock market sometimes have difficulty picturing the days when Morrisson's car park was full of pens of sheep or cattle being auctioned. Long ago you could find animals being sold all over the town on market days. Chicken Street was where you could find (guess what!) chickens. But Nevill Street was where cattle were sold. The old name for Nevill Street was Rother Street and rother was an old name for cattle. That might be why No 22, now the Wool Croft, was decorated with cows' heads.



Horses were put through their paces along Castle Street before buyer and seller agreed a price. The pigs that came to market sometimes managed to escape, as did the pigs kept in people's back gardens. In 1794 the Town Commissioners ruled that stray pigs were to be rounded up and put in the Pound until the owners paid five shillings to collect them. In 1874 Joshua Gosselin painted Monk Street with a pig in the middle of the road, and another painting he did of Llanfoist Bridge also shows a stray pig.

Then in 1829 the new market, designed by John Nash (who was later to become very famous) was built where the Town Hall is now and the livestock market was in the area between Lion Street and the field that later became Bailey Park.

In about 1880 the new Town Hall and Market Hall were built and a couple of years later a slaughterhouse was built on the livestock market site but almost no other new buildings were ever built there. The auctioneers were unable to modernise on that site so they closed in 2013 and the market moved to Raglan.

(Images: People's Collection Wales, Wikimedia Commons, Sioned Davies via Abergavenny Voice)



DISASTERS AT ABERGAVENNY CASTLE

November 2025

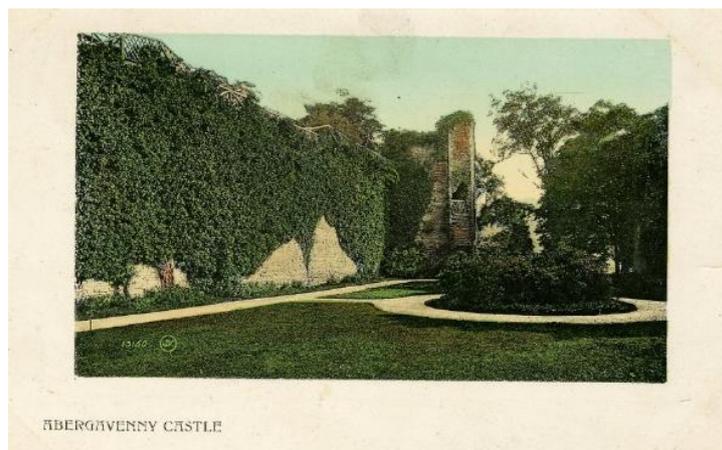
We have all heard about the massacre at Abergavenny Castle in 1175 but lesser disasters have happened occasionally ever since the Castle opened to the public.

The Easter Monday Fete at the Castle in 1882 was a great success with gymnastics, a steeplechase all over the Castle grounds and performances by Mr Ohmy a contortionist. But during the Firework Display in the evening some staging collapsed when too many children climbed on it to see better. No serious injuries were reported at the time but Miss Augusta Kate Grieve, a 19 year old who lived in Penny-Pound, was found to have been seriously crushed and she died later of her injuries.

In 1909 Alice Maud Taylor of Blaenavon was struck on the head by a swing boat when she bent to pick up a friend's hat. She survived but needed 18 stitches in her wound and developed a squint.

In May 1910 the Amateur Wrestling Championships were held in the Castle grounds. Just before the competitions ended an exceptionally heavy thunderstorm swept over town with torrential rain, thunder and lightning. Several persons on the wall gantry ran for shelter to the wooden turret at the head of the rustic staircase. Miss Grant was struck on the head, her nose and face were badly scorched and she was knocked unconscious. Miss Morgan was also struck on the head. Treatment was given by the St John's Ambulance men and Miss Grant was taken home in an ambulance. Mr Nash was struck on the back of his head and Mr Morgan had his right arm and left hand severely scorched. Both were able to travel home after treatment. The turret shelter was damaged and the upright support splintered but no marks of burning were seen.

(Images: Abergavenny Chronicle May 1910, www.monlifecollections.co.uk)



THUNDERSTORM AND CASUALTIES.

Just before the finish of the competitions, thunder was heard in the distance, and within half an hour an exceptionally heavy thunderstorm swept over the town, accompanied by torrential rain, hail and vivid lightning. The lightning struck the Castle wall just above the banquetting-hall, and several persons who had assembled on the wall top to enjoy the charming scenery ran for shelter to the wooden turret which covers the head of the rustic staircase at the southern end of the wall. Among these was Miss Grant, Stanhope-street, Abergavenny, who was struck on the head, her nose and face being badly scorched, and she was rendered unconscious. Miss Morgan, Hatherleigh-road, Abergavenny, a friend of Miss Grant's, was also struck on the head. The St. John Ambulance men rendered first aid. After treatment by Dr. Lloyd, Miss Grant was conveyed home in the ambulance carriage. Miss Morgan recovered. Mr. G. Nash, Merthyr, was struck on the back of the head, and Mr. V. R. Morgan, Merthyr, was struck on the right side, his right arm being severely scorched, and also his left hand. Both received the attention of the ambulance party, and were enabled to journey home. The turret shelter was damaged, and the upright support splintered, but there are no marks of burning.

The rainstorm was so heavy and so sudden that the drains could not carry off the water, so that it ran down the sloping gardens and back steps of some of the hotels and private houses, causing a good deal of damage.

We are pleased to be able to state that Miss Grant is progressing favourably.

TOY SHOPS IN ABERGAVENNY

(December 2025)

Even thousands of years ago children played with toys. Dolls and small model animals are found in archaeological sites. Parents would have made these for their children. From about Tudor times rich families would have more elaborate toys made for their children by craftsmen. The Industrial Revolution meant that many toys could be made more cheaply and more people had money to spend on non-essentials. Parents would still have made toys for their children, of course, like a hobby-horse or a doll, and by Victorian times some shops sold toys as well as other goods.



In around 1860, 22 High Street (now Greggs) was a shop run by William Crump which sold china and toys. 11 High Street (now Costa) was a 'Fancy Goods Repository' run by Elizabeth Taylor who was an 'Agent for the Christian Knowledge Society' and a toy dealer. 5 High Street (now Pandora) was a shop run by George Herring who was a toy-dealer, a perfumer, and sold tobacco. This shop was taken over by Thomas HARRY who later added hairdressing and umbrella repairs to his services!

More recently Abergavenny has lost some of the best shops to buy toys. Until about 10 years ago Richards the homeware store in Frogmore Street sold a wonderful selection of toys at Christmas. Sadly, the building burned down last year. Two popular shops that used to sell toys were Flying Tiger in Cross Street and Wilkinson's in Cibi Walk, now both gone. Most of your toys are probably bought online but can you imagine how the building below (now Ivy & Rose in Cross Street) would have looked when it sold toys and stationery in the 1930s?

Images: A Woolworths Christmas toy display 1941 – Wikimedia Commons, Conrad Poirier
A bear in the Abergavenny collection - Monlife Heritage
48 Cross Street - Abergavenny Street Survey



Answers to the history quiz on Page 11

1 B – Farmers in Wales who lived in isolated areas used the drovers to get their cattle and sheep to market. If they didn't go straight to market the animals were kept overnight on Castle Meadows before being driven on to the next market or even as far as London.

2 B Wigs were made from human hair. There was a local myth that local wigs were made from the hair of goats that wandered the hills around Abergavenny and provided healthier milk to drink. It was suggested that Abergavenny could become a health spa with the fresh unpolluted air and fresh goats milk. These goats (probably Bagot goats) would have had hair too short for making wigs, unlike Angora goats which were imported later.

3 D – During WW2 scrap metal was collected to make into aeroplanes and bombs so the Town Council decided to send the tank for scrap.

4 C – Even though the Town Hall was built nearly 10 years after Prince Albert (Queen Victoria's husband) died in 1861 it was decided to have one clock face black to commemorate him.

5 D – In WW2 Rudolf Hess was Hitler's second-in-command. He flew alone to Scotland to see the Duke of Hamilton who he thought would help him negotiate with Churchill. Instead he was held prisoner at the Tower of London and later for several years at Maindiff Court, outside Abergavenny, until he was sent for his trial. Local people sometimes saw him taking walks or having a drink in a pub.

6 A – The car park occupies the site where the Romans built a fort in 55-57AD. It linked with forts at Usk and Brecon to try to control the fierce local tribe of the Silures. It was rebuilt several times over the next 200 years.

Credits

These short articles include information contributed by members of Abergavenny Local History Society and the Research Group including: Irene Hofayz, Christina Maciejewski, David Smith, Sue Smith and Gill Wakley.

We are also very grateful for information received by contributors to the 'Abergavenny Voice' Facebook page.

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Cover image – Wikimedia Commons: Ordnance Survey Drawings: Abergavenny, Monmouthshire (Sir Fynwy) (OSD 194), Draughtsman – Charles Budgen



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