

December 2023

The December meeting continued the format adopted last year. By charging a small extra entry fee, we were in a good position to provide plenty of drink and nibbles.

As a Christmas treat, Lyn Owen devised a quiz on a variety of subjects, for example:

- Which sport do you play if you are a toxophilite? Answer: archery
- What word has three pairs of consecutive letters? Answer: bookkeeping
- How many players are there in a netball team? Answer: seven.

Lyn used her IT skills to project all the questions and answers onto a screen – together with some music. Well done Lyn – same again please next Christmas!

November 2023

At our well-attended meeting in November, we were given an update by Jessica Clement and Eleanor Crowley from Transport for Wales on the new Cardiff Metro railway project.

We heard about:

- Increasing the frequency of the services – but alas, not the Rhiwbina line yet as it is single track with no passing loops
- The series of new trains, some of which are already in operation. These are replacing the current stock, some being over 50 years old. The tram trains class 398s are currently being delivered by road(!) to the new depot at Taffs Well – visible from the A470 just north of the Radyr junction.
- Electrification of all the lines with overhead pantographs being gradually installed on all lines, which is greener, quieter and more efficient than the potentially dangerous third rail system. A start has been made on the Rhiwbina line.
- Redevelopment of the Cardiff Bay line which will run direct to Cardiff Central station rather than the existing Queen Street.
- A zonal system of ticketing similar to London's Oyster card is planned as it's a better link-up with local buses.



October 2023



At our October meeting Mike Skelton, a volunteer for the Royal Society of the Protection of Birds (RSPB), gave us a well-illustrated talk called 'Newport Wetlands – Rising Out of the Ashes'. He described the history of the RSPB from its modest beginnings in the late 19th century (trying to deter ladies from using bird feathers as a fashion item) to the current national charity to protect birds with 222 reserves.

The Newport site was opened in 1998 as a result of the Cardiff Bay development (so that there was still a place for the local birds to go!). Mike showed the building of the site, the ongoing conservation work and a range of photos of the more interesting birds to be seen there. A variety of habits with both freshwater and saline areas is a big asset.

September 2023

In September Professor Robert Jones, a Rhiwbina Society member, gave us a talk entitled 'Iron and Steel in South Wales'. He traced the development of iron and steelmaking through the years mentioning the tough times workers endured driven by the ironmasters. He also mentioned the significant South Wales tinplating industry including the Melingriffith works in Whitchurch which has been replaced by a big housing estate. Just a water pump remains as testimony. Finally, he outlined the current state of the iron and steel industry in South Wales, for example, the Tata works in Port Talbot, and the environmental challenges it faces.

Bob explained well a potentially complex subject in layman's terms – accompanied by lots of visuals.