



Probud Club of Cardiff, Llanishen

Clwb Probud Caerdydd, Llanisien

**Wednesday October 10th - a ride on the Brecon Mountain Railway
along the beautiful Taf Fechan Gorge
followed by lunch at the Morlais Castle Golf Club
and an afternoon at Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Art Gallery**

**COST: £26 to include train ticket, lunch and guided tour of Cyfarthfa Castle
transport is not included and car sharing is encouraged.**

This event is open to members and partners.

Merthyr Tydfil, surrounded by beautiful countryside, steeped in history and the one-time iron capital of the world is still recovering from the Great Depression and has many sites which deserve to be seen. This visit takes us along the Taf Fechan valley on the track of the old Merthyr to Brecon Railway, passing the 13th century Morlais Castle and the reservoirs at Pontsticill and Dolygaer to reach the entrance to the now closed Torpantau Tunnel. The **Brecon Mountain Railway** (BMR) narrow gauge line which now follows this track first opened in 1980 and by 2014 had reached Torpantau. Steam engines lovingly restored in the BMRs workshops haul trains carrying up to 160 passengers up the final 1-in-37 gradient up to Torpantau, puffing vigorously.

Morlais Castle Golf Club, our lunch venue is opposite the BMR Pant station. The bed of the railway track which carried the limestone from the Morlais Quarry to the Dowlais iron Works is clearly visible as you cross the road. Stone from the same hill was used by Gilbert de Clare, Norman Lord of Glamorgan and Earl of Gloucester to build **Morlais Castle** in 1288, on the site of an iron age hill fort, as he asserted his power to his neighbour, Humphrey de Bohun, Lord of Brecknock and Earl of Hereford. The eventual outcome of this skirmishing was the brief imprisonment and subsequent fining of Gilbert by Edward I in the Tower of London and then the imposition of a substantial fine. The castle was abandoned in 1295 and has since fallen into ruin although a vault remains, originally part of one of two round towers.

Cyfarthfa Castle was built in 1825 in Cyfarthfa Park by Robert Lugar for William Crawshay II whose grandfather (Richard) and father William I developed the Cyfarthfa Iron Works, parts of which remain on the hillside opposite the castle. Cyfarthfa Works were the largest in the world in 1800 and supplied the increasing demand of the Royal Navy's warships for cannon. By 1889, the family had abandoned the house which was purchased by the local council in 1908 and opened part as a museum and art gallery in 1910 and the other part as Cyfarthfa Grammar School in 1913 which became Cyfarthfa High School in 1970.

Please email meurig@probudllanishen.org.uk to reserve your place by September 30th.

(We need to book in advance to obtain the Group Rate for our journey.)