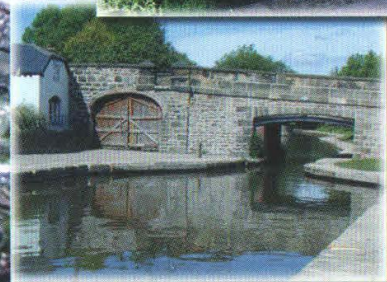
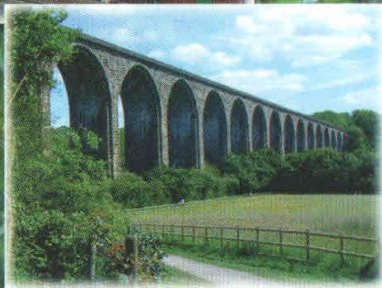
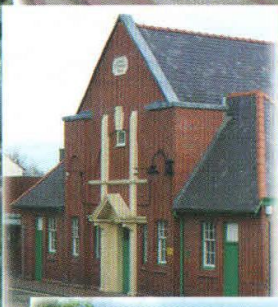
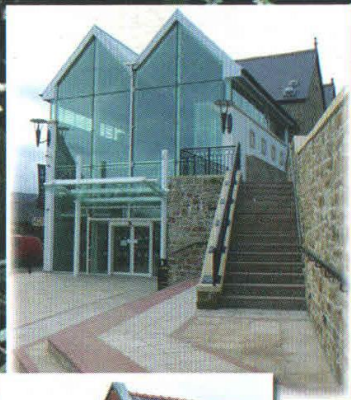


5 Walks
around

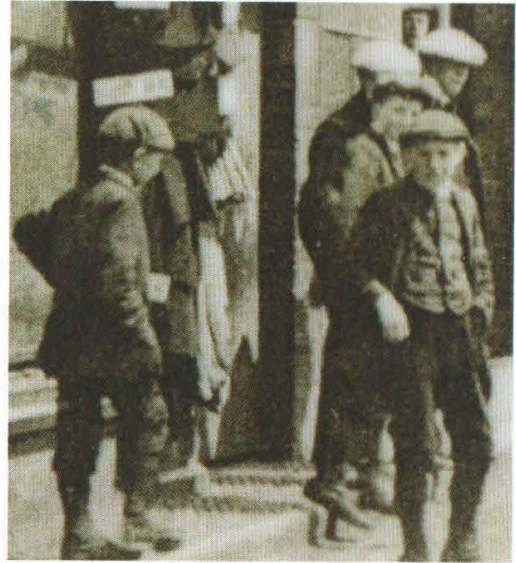
the
Cefn Mawr
Heritage
Trail



Cefn Mawr Heritage Trail



Crane Street in the 1900s



This booklet aims to guide you around the Cefn Mawr Heritage Trail which has been set up to celebrate the area's rich heritage. A heritage that includes the building of the highest aqueduct in Britain and the making of tiles that have graced royal palaces.

The Trail is divided into four shorter walks which each lead to two major heritage features, and a fifth walk around the whole outer trail.

The walks take you along the old streets and paths that were once busy thoroughfares full of people. People going to and from work, to the many shops and to the many pubs and chapels;

thirsty miners and quarry men drinking the beer that was safer to drink than the water. All amid the sounds and smells of clanking engines, chemicals, smoky chimneys and the occasional clatter of horse's hoofs.

The legacy of all this is a fascinating network of narrow pathways and steps between the fine stone and terracotta houses of old Cefn Mawr, greened-over gashes and heaps from quarrying and mining, and the grandeur of the beautiful Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Cefn Viaduct. All of which you will discover as you walk the Cefn Mawr Heritage Trail.

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Walk A - The Crane & Plas Kynaston



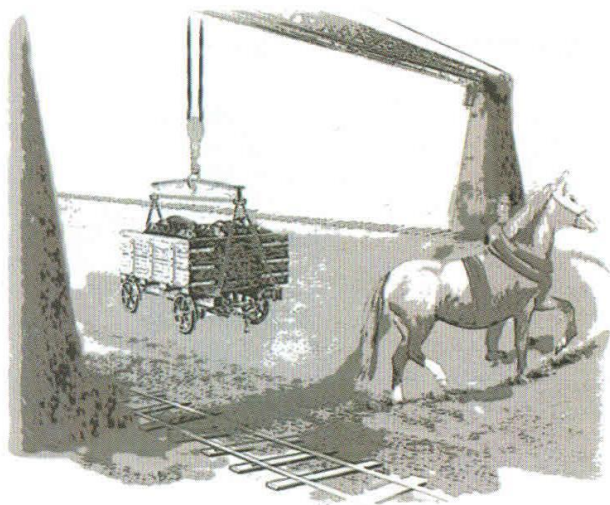
Cefn = Ridge
Mawr = Great

Walk A will take you around the centre of Cefn Mawr where many features that give this hilltop village its distinctive character may be seen. These include Plas Kynaston and its estate, former tramways and stone-walled paths criss-crossing old

chapels, pubs, shops and houses on the Great Ridge. Buildings of stone and terracotta standing on the gaps between the pits and quarries from which their building material came.

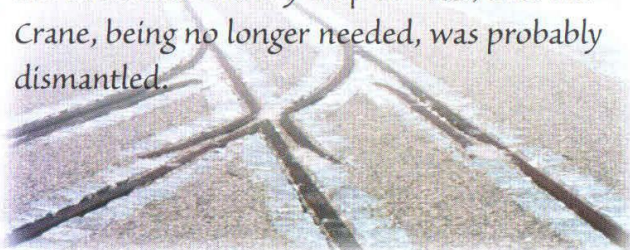
The Crane

Starting point:
Cefn Bank Car Park, Crane Street



In the first half of the 19th century it wasn't roads that crossed the place called the Crane, but tram rails. These were laid instead of taking the canal any further northwards from the Trevor Basin and were known as the Pontcysyllte Tramway. Goods were transferred from barges to wagons at Trevor. The wagons were then drawn by horse up a gentle winding ascent as far as Rhosllanerchrugog. Horses were not needed for the return trip as the wagons made the descent by gravity alone; with a 'brake man' on board to stop them when necessary!

The Crane was set up soon after 1808 when the Pontcysyllte Tramway was extended from the end of what was to become Oilworks Road. It was built to transfer the wagons between the two track stations which were at different levels. King Street was laid over the old track bed prior to the Ordnance Survey map of 1899, and The Crane, being no longer needed, was probably dismantled.



This is the shortest walk in the booklet. Most of the route is along surfaced lanes and pathways. It includes some steep slopes and steps. The Walk begins at Cefn Bank Car Park in Crane Street.

The car park was the site of the old market hall. At the rear of the car park is a walled area with a seat. From this viewpoint you can see the Vale of Llangollen's spectacular landscape and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. To the left is the Cefn Viaduct. To the right, the site of the Plaskynaston Industries. There have been chemical works on this site for over 200 years. At one time there was also 'the Gas Works', 'the Sylvester Screw and Bolt Works', 'Plaskynaston Pottery' and 'Plaskynaston Foundry'.

Tramlines once ran through here bringing stone from the quarries to the canal wharf at Trevor Basin via the lower Pontcysyllte Tramway, passing down 'The Crane'.

1 Turn left out of the car park and walk to the Post Office.

The Post Office stands on the site of the Crane. It has left no visual remains other than in the place-names Crane Street, Crane House and the site on which it stood The Crane.

2 Cross over the side street to the bus shelter, you are now on King Street. Walk along the side of King Street on the pavement.

3 Take the turning on your right leading into Minshalls Croft, and carry on up to High Street.

4 Turn left onto the High Street.

Distance:
approx. 1.6 kilometres 1 mile

110 High Street is an example of a typical 1800's workshop. This used to be a busy shopping street, particularly from here towards Crane Street.

The High Street runs on the edge of the Great Ridge that gave Cefn Mawr its name. The low ground on the left was once occupied by the Plaskynaston Industries and is still an industrial site today.



Grosvenor Inn

On the left hand side of the High Street is a stone house with a fine entrance, number 88 High Street. This was formerly an Inn called The Grosvenor Arms. It was built by a quarry owner who worked the Cefn-y-fedw Stone,

possibly at Rock Place nearby.

Continue up the High Street to the entrance gate of Zion Chapel's peaceful burial ground.

The chapel itself has gone and a house now occupies the site. Zion Chapel's Memorial Garden affords a superb viewpoint and a convenient resting place. Its fine tombstones and memorials are of historical interest.

To see the Edward Evans memorial plaque continue down High Street to the left of the entrance gate. (If not, avoiding another steep hill, on leaving the gardens bear left onto Cae Coch Lane and continue up the slope to rejoin at **6** .)

On the wall between the chapel gardens and the bungalow is a plaque commemorating the founding of the chapel by Edward Evans in 1805. The minister helped the workers in his congregation to form trade unions, or combinations as they were then called.



Edward Evans Plaque

Evan's successor in 1817 was Ellis Evans, who also strove to improve the social and moral welfare of the community which only a decade earlier had been notorious for bull and bear baiting, cockfighting and street fights.

5 Leave the High Street and walk up narrow King's Lane on the right immediately behind the bungalow.

6 At the crossroad of Kings Lane, Cae Coch Lane and Brown's Lane, bear right up Browns Lane.

Cae Glo Lane to the left, leads to Cae Glo (= coalfield) where there were five coal pits.

Walk up Brown's Lane and follow its course through the houses. Go down the steps leading into a triangular open space.

These steps are known locally as the ABC steps due to there being 26 in total, one for each letter of the alphabet.

7 Stay on the left-hand side and walk down the tarmac footpath with high metal fencing on its left side.

One of the old Cae Coch quarries can be seen through the fence. This path was used by miners to get to the Cae Glo pits. Once a miner was so frightened by a ghostly figure on the path that he turned round and went back home. That day there was a terrible accident at the mine. The apparition had saved the miner's life.

8 Continue down the path until it meets Well Street, opposite the supermarket.

The car park stands on the site of Chatham's Yard where stone masons cut and dressed the quarried stone.



Chatham's Yard

Cross the road then turn right.

This is Cefn Mawr's main shopping area where there are fine buildings built of local bricks and tiles.

Cross the road by the mural towards the car park.

To the left of the mural is the 'Old Bank'. Built around 1890, this was a key building in the economical development of the area. Alongside the former bank are the decorative façades of Paris House and shops, built around 1922 and originally selling prams, bicycles and gramophones.

Carry on up the street until you get to The Vaults public house.

Have a look at the 'Island Green' Brewery windows at The Vaults. On the other side of the street is George Edwards' Hall



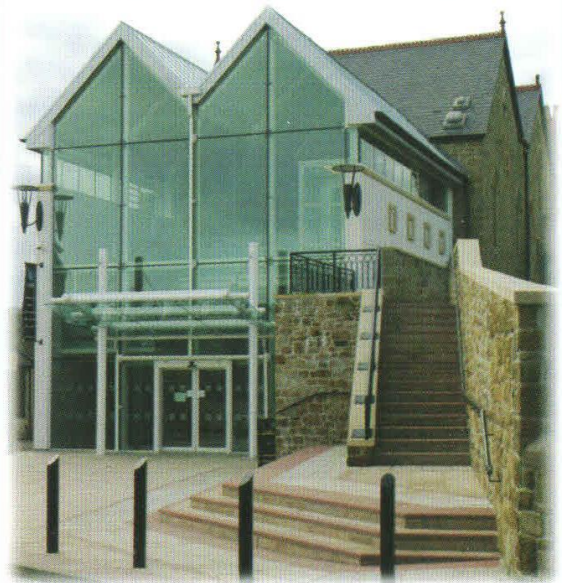
George Edward's Hall

which replaced the old Market Hall at the site where this walk began. It later became the 'Kinema' in the era of silent films and piano accompaniment. In the 1930s there was another cinema a

little further on called the Palace and on Saturday nights street vendors sold all kinds of goods to the crowds queuing for both venues.

Continue past The Vaults to Ebenezer Chapel.

Ebenezer Chapel closed in the 1990's. As part of the 'Heart of Cefn Mawr' redevelopment project, the chapel has been converted to the Ebenezer Centre, which includes a café, heritage information and full amenities. The area in front of the centre has been renamed 'Cefn Mawr Square'.



The Ebenezer Centre

Plas Kynaston

9 Cross the road. With the Hollybush Inn on the left, walk around the corner and little way down Hill Street. Go down the steps on the left to see Plas Kynaston Hall.

Continue down from Plas Kynaston Hall, past the library and cross the road at the bottom. Turn right along Plas Kynaston Lane passing the cenotaph on your right.

The Cenotaph is a commemoration to the brave soldiers who lost their lives to war.

10 Carry on along Plas Kynaston Road to the junction with Hill Street opposite the Chapel.

The Chapel was built in 1866 and is now Hill Street United Reformed Church.

11 Cross the road to the Chapel and head downhill. Almost immediately turn right to follow a small lane between a high stone wall and a house (No. 10 Sunnyside).

12 Carry on until reaching a flight of steps straight ahead.

The steps are known as the Doctor's Steps because they used to access the old Cefn Mawr surgery.

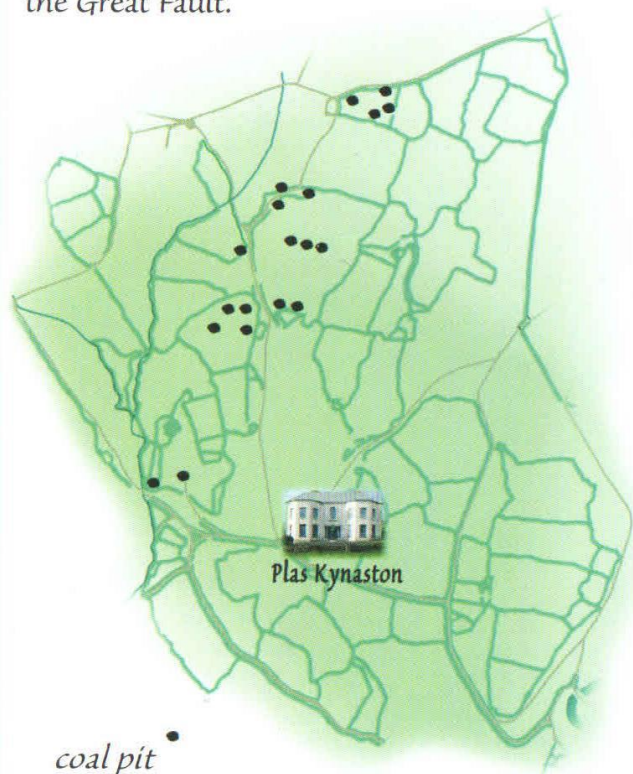
Walk up the steps to Crane Street. Turn left along Crane Street to return to the Car Park.



The Doctor's Steps

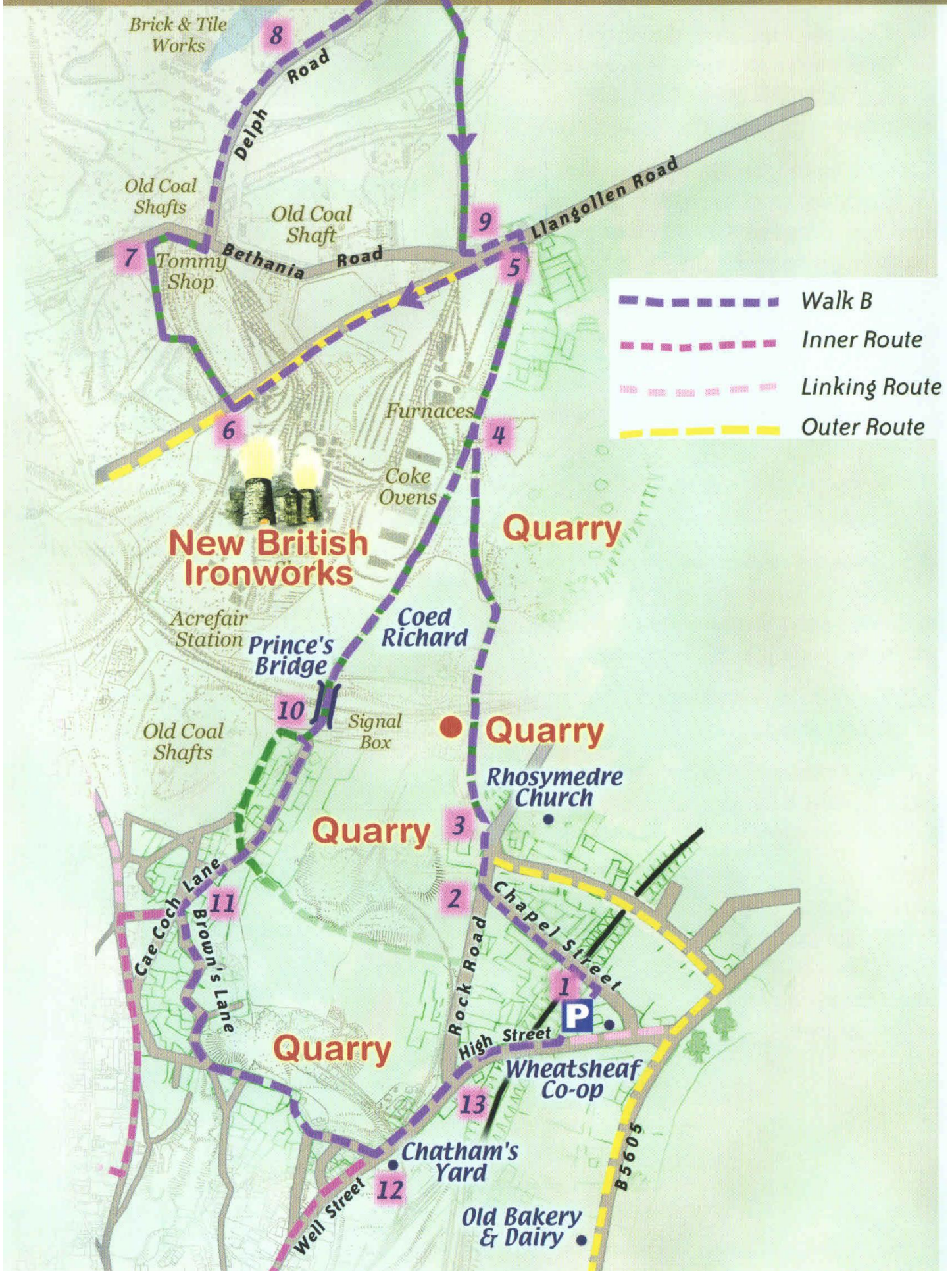


Plas Kynaston, or 'the Hall' as it was known locally, was at the centre of rural life in the neighbourhood. In the 17th century, coal was being dug from the fields on the estate and by the mid 19th century industry stood alongside farms and very close to the hall itself. The map below shows the Plas Kynaston estate in 1804 and the nineteen coal pits in use at that time following the line of the Great Fault.



Walk B - Quarries

& New British Ironworks



Starting point: Car park near Wheatsheaf Workshop, High Street., Rhosymedre.

Distance:
approx. 3 kilometres 2 miles

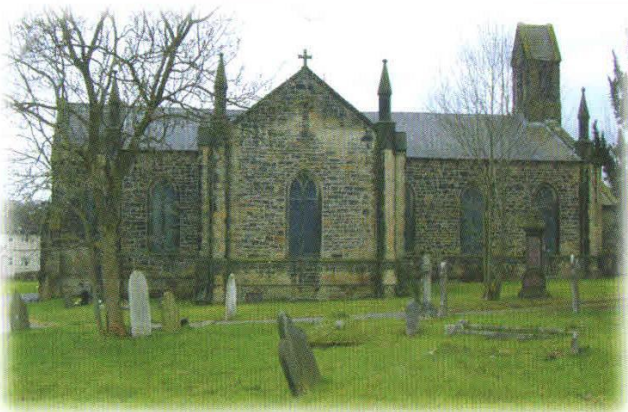
This walk will take you over the quarry tops, past the ironworks and through the mass of tramways and railways that were so important to the early prosperity. The route has some steep slopes and steps.

The Wheatsheaf was the North West head office for the Co-operative Store and is now the base for local enterprises.

1 From behind the Wheatsheaf leave the car park from rear exit to turn left onto Chapel Street. Cross the railway bridge and walk between the rows of stone houses.

2 After passing the Rhosymedre Methodist Chapel turn right on to Rock Road, so-called because it led to the quarry.

The path is a little further on across the road, but first take a look at St John's Church on the right.



St John's Church, Rhosymedre

The Church is built of Cefn-y-fedw stone in Gothic style and has inside a beautiful altarpiece made of tiles from the Trefynant Fireclay Works.

3 Cross the road and follow the footpath up the slope across the old railway cutting.

There was a stone quarry very close to the railway and another further along on the right.

4 Carry on until you get to a crossroads in the path. Turn right keeping the playground on the left and houses on the right.

This path runs along the edge of the New British Iron Works site, now occupied by Air Products Ltd.

5 Where the path joins the main road opposite the Hampden Arms, turn left down Llangollen Road (Busy road, take care).

On the opposite side of the road past the new housing you will see the red brick building of the old 'Drill Hall'. This was built during the First World War to help recruit and train the Home Guard and later the Territorial Army. Pass the entrance to 'Air Products', where you will find a 'Heritage Trail' information board on the left. (If you walk up the few steps by the board you will find a pleasant resting place.)

6 Cross the road with care, and follow the footpath sign through a narrow gap by the green gate.

You are now walking on the bed of the tramway that brought coal from the 'Delph' to fire up the 'Ironworks'. For the next mile of this walk you will see a lot of evidence, of the criss-cross of tramways that were once so busy carrying goods to and from the industries.

Stone Quarries



There were several quarries on the Great Ridge where Cefn-y-fedw Sandstone had been cut since medieval times. Cefn-y-fedw Sandstone is a fine building material, that has been used in many prestigious buildings in London, Liverpool, North Wales and elsewhere. Cefn-y-fedw Sandstone was processed in Chatham's Yard on a site now occupied by a Supermarket and Car Park on Well Street.



Shortly on the left you will see a set of concrete steps, walk up these onto the Air Products Social Club field, walk right along the edge to the road. As you join the road opposite the former 'Mairwen Church' look around at the church houses and walls.

Much of the brick, capstone and tile work is from the nearby J.C. Edwards Clay and Terracotta Works.

7 Cross the road and turn right over the former tram bridge. Then turn left into Delph Road. Take care along this road as there is no footpath.

As you walk along, you will see another tramway bridge.

8 Continue past the riding stables and the former 'Bluebell Inn'.

On the left you will pass the site of the Delph coal mines. This area has now been landscaped and contains a pond which gives passing home to Canada Geese and ducks.

As the road bends round to the left, follow the footpath sign on the right through a wooden kissing gate.

This path takes you along the route of another length of tramway.

9 As the path emerges back onto the roadway (Bethania Road), bear left to the Hampden Arms (Llangollen Road). Then cross over and retrace your steps to the footpath towards the playground.

Walk back along the path until you reach the crossroads by the playground, carry straight on.

New British Ironworks

The Ironworks occupied most of the land to the right up to the railway cutting but there is a rare piece of common ground called Coed Richard just before Prince's Bridge. The bridge was named after the Prince of Wales who was to become Edward VII, but it is known locally as Pont Y Cuttin. This site was Cae Coch Quarry No 2, but Henry Robertson cut through the rock in 1862, to take the railway line to Llangollen. The railway line was dismantled in the 1960's.

10 After crossing the bridge turn left then right into Cae Coch Lane. Carry straight on until reaching Brown's Lane.

11 Turn left into Brown's Lane. Walk along this road until you come to steps, which you go down into a triangular open space. Stay on the left-hand side and continue downhill on the footpath.

The red brick buildings straight ahead are the Old Bakery and Dairy. On the left is Cae Coch Quarry No. 1 Rock, later called Chatham's Rock.

12 Continue down the path until it meets Well Street opposite the Supermarket Car Park.

The car park used to be Chatham's Yard (see old photo left). This was where the stone masons cut and dressed the Cefn-y-fedw Sandstone before sending it by rail to its destination.

13 Cross the road and turn left. Continue along the road and cross the railway bridge using the pedestrian walkway on the left and return to the Wheatsheaf car park.



When the blast furnaces were working there was no need for street lighting at night. Coal was brought from the nearby pits on clanking tramlines and converted into coke that provided the searing heat necessary to smelt the iron ore when burnt in the furnaces.

The ironmaster owned a notorious 'Tommy Shop' where his employees' families were forced to buy food at extortionate prices because he paid his workers in tokens that could only be spent in the company shop.

George Borrow described the blast furnaces in 1854. "Two enormous sheets of flame shot up high into the air from ovens, illumining two spectral chimneys as high as steeples, also smoky buildings, and grimy figures moving about. There was a clanging of engines, a noise of shovels and a falling of coals truly horrible."

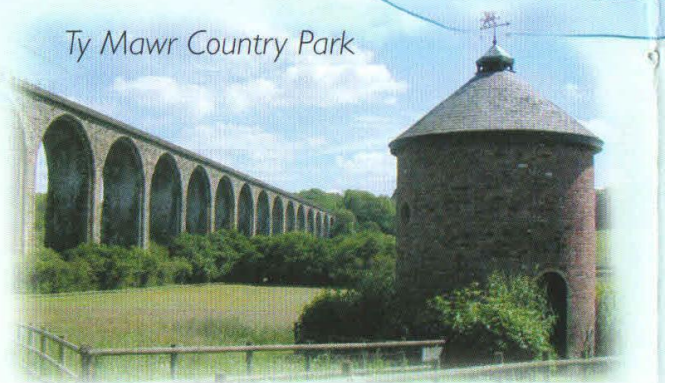
When the ironworks closed down in 1888 it caused great hardship in the area.

Walk C - Aqueduct & Viaduct



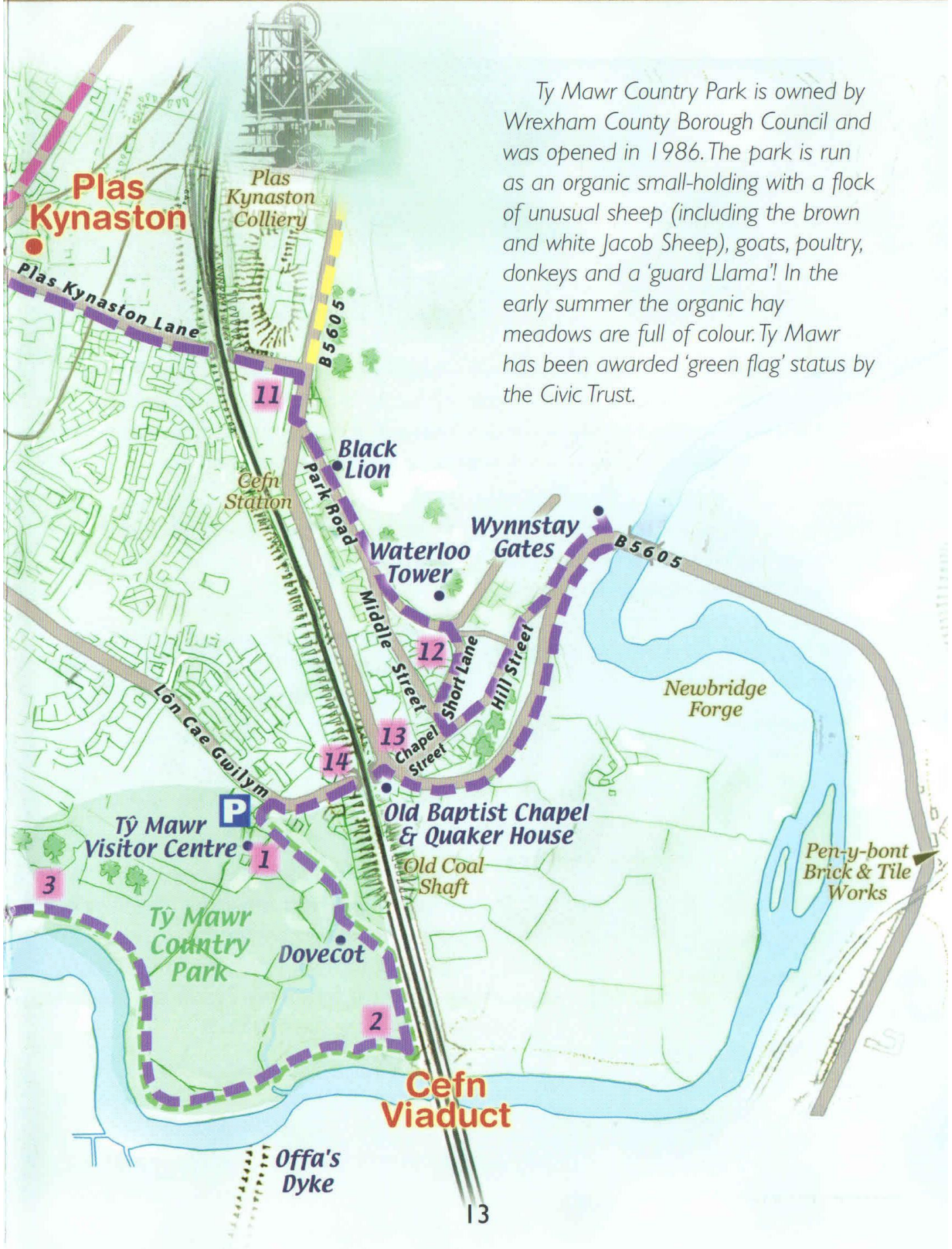
Walk C will take you along the banks of the River Dee linking two great bridges, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and the Cefn Viaduct.

The walk follows surfaced footpaths and lanes. There are 2 flights of steps and some slopes.



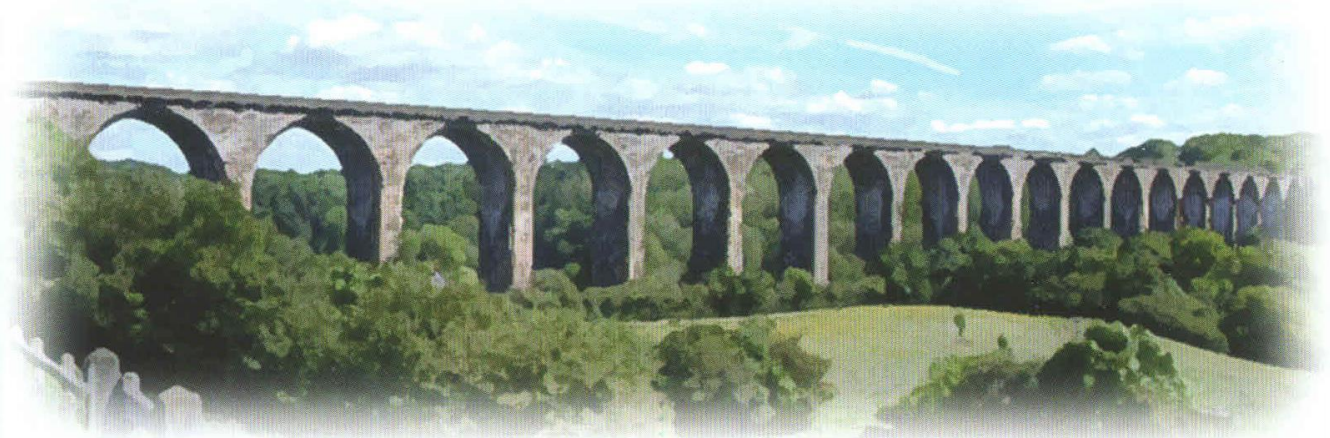
Starting point:
Ty Mawr Country Park

Distance:
approx. 4.5 kilometres/3 miles.



Ty Mawr Country Park is owned by Wrexham County Borough Council and was opened in 1986. The park is run as an organic small-holding with a flock of unusual sheep (including the brown and white Jacob Sheep), goats, poultry, donkeys and a 'guard Llama'! In the early summer the organic hay meadows are full of colour. Ty Mawr has been awarded 'green flag' status by the Civic Trust.

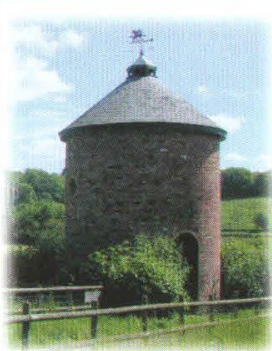
Viaduct



George Stephenson had considered the broad Dee Valley to be impractical to cross but his pupil Henry Robertson bridged it with his elegant viaduct of 19 arches which was opened in 1848. The first train to cross the bridge broke down half way across, it was full of dignitaries who were stranded there overnight. The ironwork came from the Plas Kynaston Foundry.

1 Start at the Heritage Trail information board near the entrance at Ty Mawr Country Park. With the Heritage Trail board on your right, walk down the track through the side of large gate. Go down the lane until you can see the Dovecot.

The Dovecot was built in 1993 as a memorial to a locally born soldier who was killed while on peacekeeping duties in Bosnia. The white doves are symbols of peace.



The Dovecot

Follow the surfaced path towards the viaduct.

The Cefn Viaduct was built in 1848, using locally quarried Cefn Mawr sandstone. It carries the Chester to Shrewsbury line 147 feet above the River Dee.

2 Follow the footpath alongside the Viaduct.

3 Bear right by the bench beneath the Viaduct, enjoy the view of Castel Dinas Bran atop the knoll in the distance and keep to the main footpath down the hill and over the footbridge to the 'beach'.

Pause by the picnic benches and look back to take in the view of the Viaduct and its 19 arches.

Continue on the footpath between the hedgerow and fields above the river. When you reach the signpost for 'Pontcysyllte Aqueduct' turn left down the flight of steps and over the boardwalk. Follow the limestone footpath along the riverbank.

The River Dee carries water from Bala Lake through Chester and out to the sea at Deeside. The river is rich in life boasting salmon and trout. This part of the river is a

Construction began on the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct to Thomas Telford's design in 1795 and was completed ten years later. The ambitious plan to take the canal onto Chester was curtailed by competition from the railways so that it ended at Trevor Basin with a feeder canal running up the Valley to Llangollen.



SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) because of its high wildlife value.

4 At the end of the footpath turn left onto the track and cross the bridge over the Trefynant Brook.

This stream has powered the mill wheels for much of the early industry around the Cefn Mawr area. You will come across this stream again later.

Follow the track past the brick built building.

This is the Flexys pumphouse. It was built to supply water to the chemical works after the collapse of the Kynaston Canal in 1945. It is still in use and pumps thousands of litres of water from the river every day.

Carry on past the pumphouse onto the path that crosses the boardwalk.

The rusty colour of the ground water is caused by iron ore draining from the old coal mines.

The path takes you over a culvert that carries the canal overflow down to the river.



Bridge over culvert

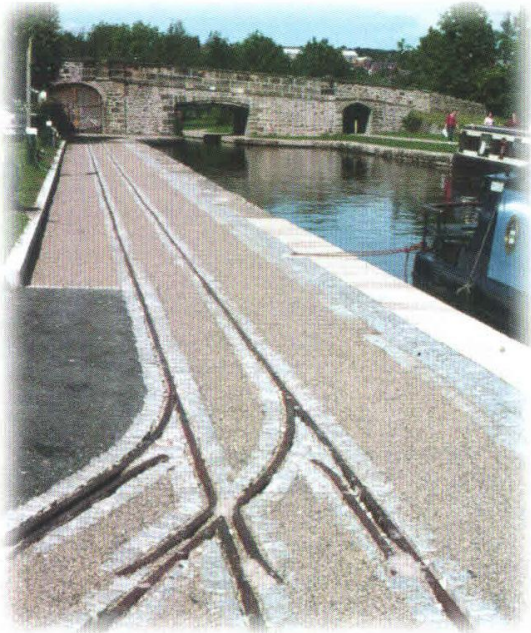
At the foot of the Aqueduct look closely at the fine stonework. The stone is so closely fitting it required very little mortar. The mortar that was used apparently was a mixture of lime and ox blood.

5 Turn right and climb the stepped path.

Half-way up, take a break and look back along the line of pillars. For over 200 years the 19 pillars have remained in a perfect straight line!

Continue up to the Trevor Basin, keeping to the path on the right of the Aqueduct until you are on the canal towpath (do not take path under the Aqueduct).

The trail turns to the right at the top but before going that way, if you have a good head for heights, walk a little to the left onto the Aqueduct towpath. There is a good view of the Cefn Viaduct from there and in the other direction the medieval 'Bont' bridge.



Pontcysyllte Tramway

6 Continue on the towpath over a small wooden bridge passing the Heritage Trail information board until the car park becomes visible on your right. Leave Trevor basin through the car park and turn right onto New Road (narrow lane, take care).

The Kynaston Canal, which continued right into Cefn Mawr, and the Pontcysyllte Tramway formerly encircled the northern end of this area connecting the industries with Trevor Basin.

7 Walk to the end of New Road and turn right over the bridge.

Look over the bridge to see the Trefynant Brook again. This stream was used

to power the corn mill nearby and industrial machinery on the Plas Kynaston estate. There was a coal shaft on the right side of the road. All the earliest 17th century pits were in this western area where the coal seams were near the surface.

8 Leave the road and take the path to the right called Mill Lane with Trefynant Brook on your right and carry on up the hill until you see a shallow flight of steps on the left. Follow these to the top where you reach a lane.

The stone wall beneath the Queens Hotel on the left, blocks off a tunnel through which a tramway once ran from the end of the Kynaston Canal to Plas Kynaston Colliery.

9 Turn left up a further short flight of steps and then bear left to a T-junction where you turn right onto Queens Street.

Further down to the left is a steep path called the American Hill after the 'American shop' which stood nearby and whose owner had made enough money in America to buy a shop.



American Hill

10 Continue until you see a road to the right called Plas Kynaston Lane. Take this road past the Cenotaph which is on your left (see Walk A for details). Carry on along Plas Kynaston Lane, on your left you will pass the library.

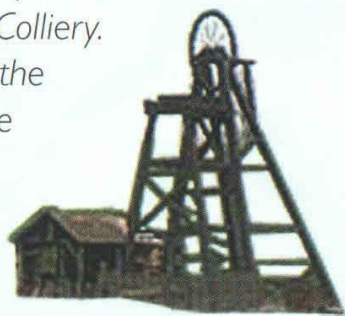
Behind the library you will see a large building, Plas Kynaston Hall (see page 7 for info on the Hall).



Plas Kynaston

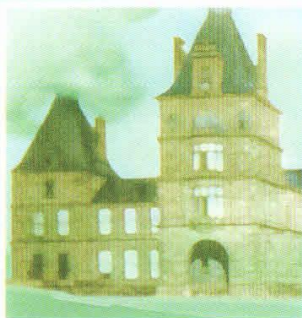
11 Walk by the Plas Kynaston Sports Complex and under the Railway bridge.

The area to the left is the site of Plas Kynaston Colliery. Two shafts, known as the Waterloo Pits after the nearby Waterloo Tower, were sunk here to mine the deep Cannel Coal used for making coal gas.



12 When reaching the main road, turn right towards Chirk, cross the road and take the first left up the slope.

This is Park Road which runs alongside the estate walls of Wynnstay, home of the powerful Watkins Wynn family. The huge estate covers land to Ruabon and Rhosymadoc. The hall was formerly called Watstay after Wats Dyke which runs parallel to Offa's Dyke through the estate.



Wynnstay

There are fabulous views over the valley to the right as you climb the hill.

Follow the left hand fork then leave Park Road by turning into Short Lane. Walk to the end of Short Lane, among fine Cefn-y-fedw

Sandstone houses, then turn left onto Hill Street.

This small village is called Newbridge or in Welsh, Cefn Bychan which means 'Little Ridge', distinguishing the locality from Cefn Mawr - the Great Ridge.

Walk down to the junction with the B5605.

Cross the road.

If you would like to see the fine gateway and drive to the Wynnstay Estate, turn downhill, if not then continue to walk up the hill and go straight to **13**.

Just beyond the Wynnstay gateway is the bridge that gave the area its English name, Newbridge. If you look to the right you can see the remains of the pillars of the 'old bridge'. A little further upstream was Newbridge Forge and on the other side of the river almost encircled by a meander was J.C.Edwards' Pen-y-bont Brick and Tile Works (now a landfill site).

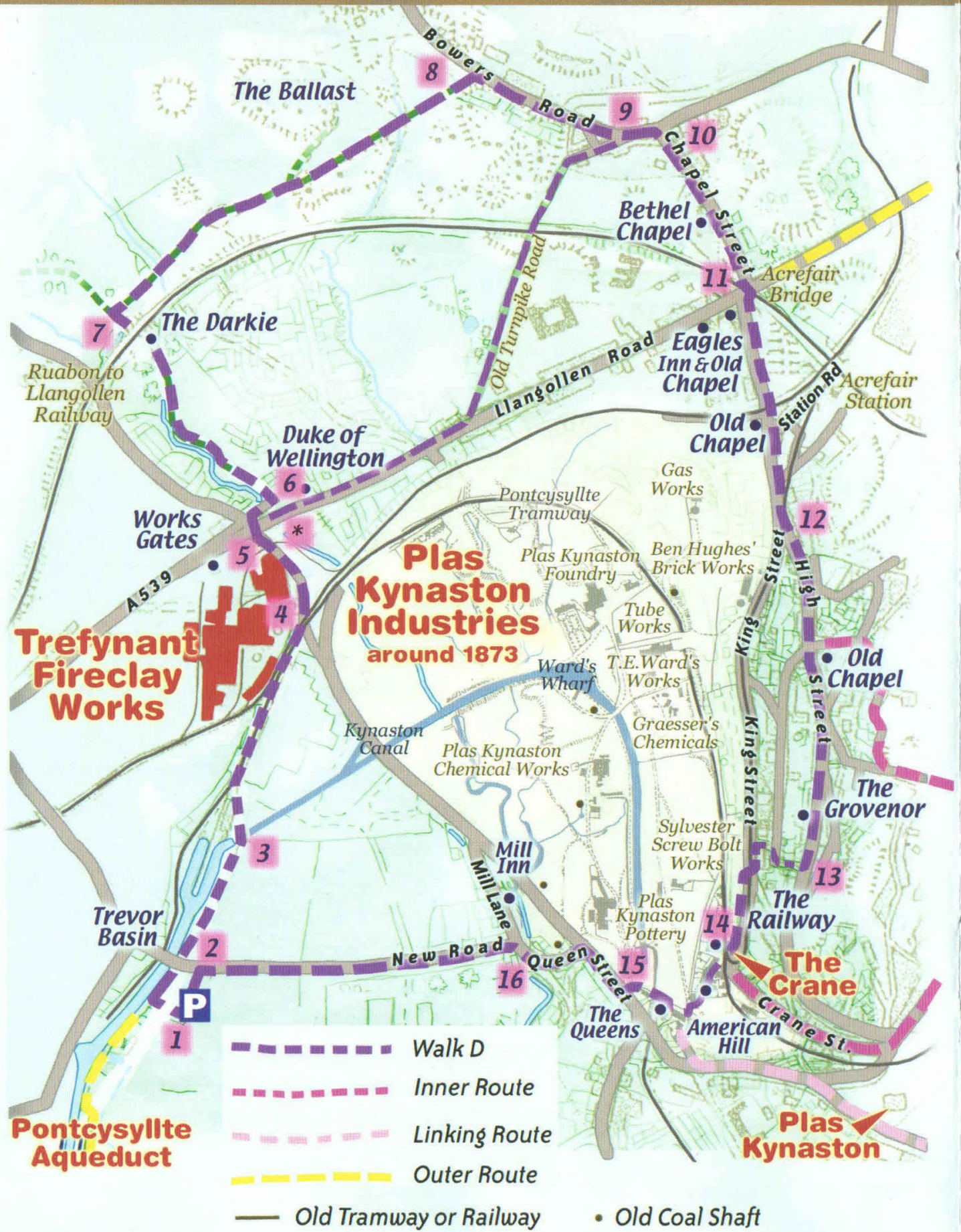
Turn back and retrace your steps up the hill.

13 Turn left at the chapel onto Cae Gwilym Lane.

On the left is the Old Baptist Chapel and Quaker house. There were often links between the non-conformist chapels and early education, and here the loft in the Quaker Chapel was used as a classroom.

14 To complete the walk, go under the bridge and turn left into Ty Mawr Country Park a little further on.

Walk D - Plas Kynaston Industries & Trefynant Fireclay Works



Starting point:
Trevor Basin car park

Distance:
approx. 3.5 kilometres 2 1/2 miles

Walk D takes you around an interesting circular route exploring the industrial past of the area.

The walk covers a mixture of terrains, some surfaced paths, some un-surfaced paths crossing fields. There are steps and steep slopes along the route. (At **5** there is an alternative route which avoids the un-surfaced field crossing which can get muddy after rain.)

1 Walk from the car park towards the canal, between the two entrance sculptures and turn right onto the towpath.

This canal wharf once bustled with commercial activity where raw goods and products going to and from the local industries were transferred from barge to wagon. Across the canal can be seen rails marking the route of the Pontcysyllte Tramway.

2 Walk under the road bridge and on to where the canal splits into two spurs.

The left-hand canal spur served the Trefynant Fireclay Works; the right hand spur continued as the Kynaston Canal under the now blocked-up bridge into the Plas Kynaston estate. The Kynaston Canal had its own quayside known as Ward's Wharf after T. E. Ward who at one time owned the Plas Kynaston foundry and other works. Food and other goods for the people of Cefn Mawr was brought to the Wharf as well as raw materials for the industries. Graesser's Chemicals required substances that could not legally be brought by road or rail. Crude acid was delivered by canal boat with the barge

and family only separated from the tank by a wooden partition. The canal has been filled-in and industry has spread over its route. Beyond the industrial estate the Great Ridge dominates the scene.



Canal spurs

3 Continue along the path and over the 'bridge' and straight on where the gravel path joins a tarmac road.

On the left is a stone-faced embankment built to carry the Pontcysyllte Railway. The horse-drawn tramway had been converted to carry steam engines, and joined up with the railway line to Llangollen. Behind the stone wall is the overgrown site of J. C. Edwards' Trefynant Works.

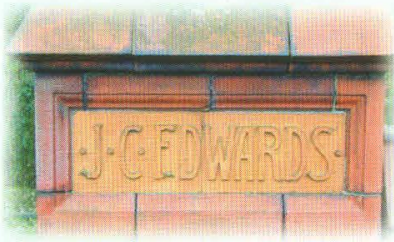
4 Follow the road up and turn left at the next junction.

Remnants of a Pontcysyllte Railway bridge are visible here.

5 Walk up to the junction with the A539 Llangollen Road.

To see the Trefynant Works Gates walk to the left a little way up the hill and then return to this point to continue the walk.

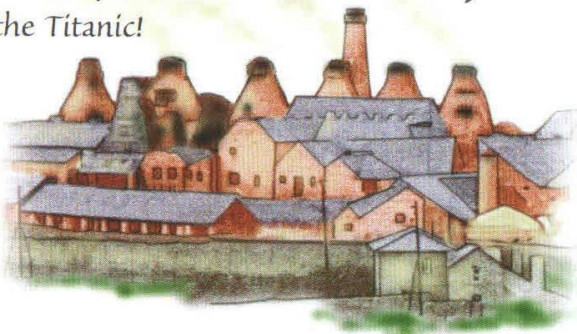
Trefynant Fireclay Works



Today the factory gateposts on Llangollen Road are all there is to be seen of the Trefynant Fireclay Works, which closed in 1965, but their influence can be seen all around the area.

The works were set up by James Coster Edwards, a local man who began working the local clay with his father in the 1860's. By 1896, when he died he was described as 'the largest and most successful manufacturer of terracotta in the world'. Incidentally, he owned the Plas Kynaston Pottery and the Penybont Brick and Tile Works as well as the Trefynant Works.

The Products of J. C. Edwards' Works can be seen all over Britain and many countries all over the world. London's Natural History Museum, Kensington demonstrates the decorative appearance of J. C. Edwards' terracotta. Locally the Bryn Howell at Trevor, the home built for his retirement but never lived in, is another fine example of the architectural potential of clay products, and J.C. Edwards tiles were used to decorate the fine fireplaces in that ill-fated luxury liner the Titanic!



Cross the road and turn right to pass in front of some fine terracotta houses once inhabited by the works manager.



* At this point you may wish to take an alternative route which avoids the un-surfaced field crossing which can be muddy after rain. (However you may wish to follow the first section of the path alongside the stream to 'the Darkie' and then retrace your steps to this point if it is too muddy)

* Alternative route. Continue along Llangollen Road past the 'Duke of Wellington'. Turn left just before the old chapel and Trinity Hall that is now a furniture warehouse (Beds & Pine Ltd), onto the Turnpike Road. Leave the road and follow the footpath straight ahead past a school. Carry on up the slope with the hand-rail. Go straight ahead until reaching the road. Rejoin the trail at **9**.

6 Go through the metal barrier to the left of the Duke of Wellington pub. Follow the path along the Trefynant Brook, until you reach the tunnel known as 'The Darkie'.

The Ruabon to Barmouth Railway Line used to run over The Darkie. The line which had opened in 1861 was finally closed in 1965 after a flood washed away part of the line at Llandderfel beyond Corwen. Twenty years earlier a train was de-railed when the canal, which ran alongside, burst its banks and washed away the line near The Sun at Trevor.



The Darkie

7 Walk through the tunnel, and follow the waymarker posts up through the woodlands, across the stream and across the field.

Here just before the stream an old ruined house can be found. This field is known as 'the Ballast', an area of overgrown spoil heaps and old pits.

8 The path through the Ballast crosses a stream and stile before coming out opposite Bryn Terrace (1906) onto Bowers Road where you turn right.

The old Turnpike Road, once the major route to Llangollen, crosses the route where the road bends to the left.

9 Continue, bearing right into Chapel Street, passing the Odd Fellows Arms and Bethel Chapel, walk to the junction with the A539 Llangollen Road.

The embankments here used to support the Acrefair Bridge, which was also known as Pont Betsen. Betsen Richards, who owned the Eagles Inn, sold some adjoining land not knowing that a chapel was to be built there. That was not good for her business as this was at a time when chapel members were told not to drink alcohol.

10 Cross the A539 Llangollen Road (using the crossing to the right) and go straight on into King Street passing red brick terraced houses (Maelor Terrace 1894).

Station Road opposite the red brick chapel built in 1894 indicates where Acrefair Station used to be. The Pontcysyllte Railway, which superseded the old tramway, crossed the road at this point.

11 Turn left into High Street.

To the right beyond King Street was the Plas Kynaston Industries' site. Ben Hughes' Brickworks produced household ware as well as bricks from clay that was mined nearby. The Tube Works sent out a boatload of pipes by canal every night. Ward's factory was about level with Zion Chapel on the corner of King's Lane. The huts where Graesser first experimented with coal waste were in the next plot.

12 At the junction by the Zion Chapel Memorial Gardens carry straight on to follow High Street. (Perhaps stopping in the gardens for a rest).



Acrefair Bridge

Plas Kynaston Industries



William Hazeldine built the foundry on the Plas Kynaston Estate around 1800 to provide ironwork for the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and the tramways and canals. A cluster of engineering works grew up near the foundry and the clay industries were also represented in Ben Hughes' brickworks and the Plas Kynaston pottery.

It was the chemical industry that was going to remain the longest however. Robert Graesser set up his 'oil works' in the late 1860s. The chief process carried out was the extraction of paraffin oil and wax from the local coal mining waste. His resourcefulness rode over the slump caused by cheap American oil when he turned to refining crude coal tar to manufacture fabric dyes and explosives. Graesser formed a partnership with an American company, Monsanto who became the sole owners in the early 20th century and whose business spread over the whole Plas Kynaston Industries site and continued in business there for a hundred years. The site is now occupied by the Flexys Ruabon works.

13 Walk up High Street passing the former Grosvenor Inn.

Grosvenor Inn is the house with the Coat of Arms, now No 88 High Street.



Grosvenor Inn

Continue past the lay-by where the wall is lower and go down a set of narrow walled steps on the right. The path bears right to join a road then immediately turns left down 3 steps and a sloped path with a handrail. Continue downhill and turn left at the bottom onto King Street, the track bed of the Pontcysyllte Tramway.

14 Cross the road and join the pavement.

Walk toward the Post Office, the former site of 'The Crane'. (See Walk A page 3 for details.)

Go down the steeply descending path (American Hill), to the right of the Post Office. Turn right at the fork in the path.



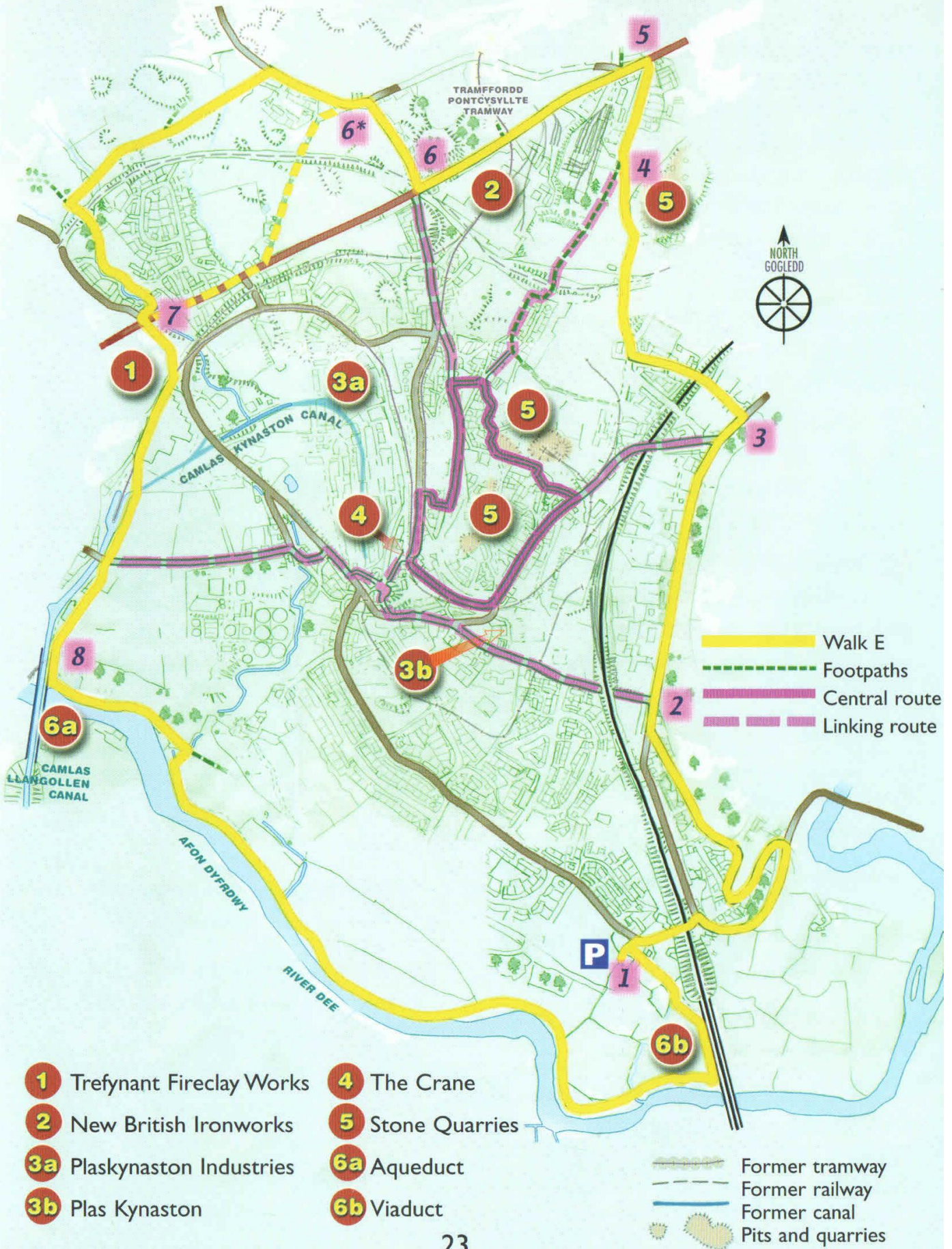
American Hill

Beneath this path is a blocked up tunnel through which a tramway used to come from the end of the Kynaston Canal.

15 At the foot of the hill go down the short flight of steps and turn right onto Queens Street, and then take the first road (one way system) on your left.

16 Follow this road round to the right and over the bridge, bearing left up New Road. Continue on New Road to the Trevor Basin car park.

Walk E - The Cefn Mawr Heritage Trail



Starting point:
Ty Mawr Country Park

Distance:
approx. 8 kilometres 5 miles

This is the longest route in the booklet and takes in the whole outer trail. It covers some of the paths used in the shorter routes and includes the major features of the Cefn Mawr Heritage Trail, including the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, and the clay works, coal pits and stone quarries which together made Cefn Mawr such an important and successful industrial area.

The walk covers a mixture of terrains, some surfaced paths, at times along road ways, some un-surfaced paths crossing fields. There are steps and steep slopes along the route.

(At point **6*** there is an alternative route marked which avoids the un-surfaced field crossing which can get muddy after rain)

1 Walk from the Ty Mawr car park back towards the road entrance. Leave the park turning right along the footpath. Cross over and walk under the railway arch. (Beware of traffic.)

On the right is the Old Baptist Chapel and Quaker house. The loft in the Quaker Chapel was used as one of the first classrooms.

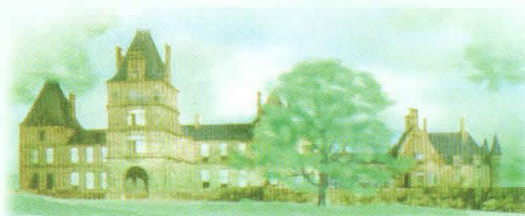
In front of you is Newbridge House which used to be the quarry masters house, and to the left is the quarry that supplied much of the stone for the Cefn Viaduct.

Cross over and walk up Chapel Street. At the top turn left into Short Lane.

This small village is called Newbridge or its Welsh name Cefn Bychan. This translates to mean 'Little Ridge', distinguishing the locality from Cefn Mawr – the Great Ridge.

Toward the end of Short Lane, on the corner you can look over to the River Dee as it meanders around the former Pen-y-bont Clay Works. This works was famous for its tiles and bricks. If you travel towards Chirk you will see the fine work on the former office at the entrance to the now landfill site! This was one of a number of clay works in the area.

From this point you may also see the double towers of the former Wynnstay Manor house.



At the end of Short Lane, turn left onto Park Road.

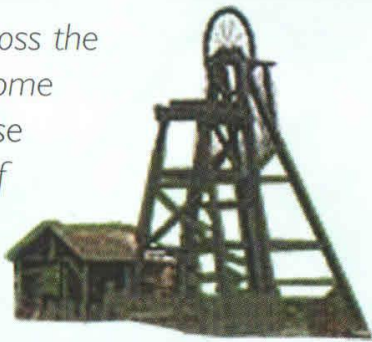
Park Road runs alongside the walls of the Wynnstay estate, home of the powerful Watkin Wynn family. The huge estate covers land to Ruabon and Rhosymadoc. The hall was formerly called Watstay after Wats Dyke which runs parallel to Offa's Dyke through the estate.

There are fabulous views over the valley to the left as you descend the hill.

2 At the bottom of the hill turn right and walk along the main road (B5605) following the estate walls.

On your left you will pass a white building. This was, until recently, a public house locally known as the 'Coach' as it was a former coaching inn where travellers could take a break.

If you look across the road you will see some industrial units, these stand on the site of Plas Kynaston Colliery. Two shafts, known as the Waterloo Pits, were sunk here to mine the deep Cannel Coal used for making coal gas. At one time there were 19 coal pits in the Heritage Trail area.

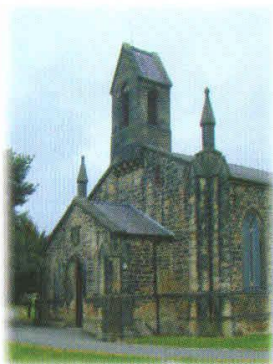


You will also see the 'Bakery' situated in the 'Co-operative buildings'. Rhosymedre was an important centre for the Co-operative Movement. The area housed the North West head office for the Co-operative Store.

3 Pass the 'Plough Inn', and cross the road just before the 'Park View residential home'. Walk down the narrow road beside 'Park View' and carry on over the railway bridge towards the church.

Park View used to be a public house called the Eagles. At one time 46 pubs were listed in the Cefn Mawr area. Apparently the water was unfit to drink so the thirsty workers had to drink beer instead!

Take a look at St John's Church on the right. The Church is built of Cefn Mawr sandstone in Gothic style and has inside a beautiful altarpiece made of tiles from the Trefynant Fireclay Works.



St John's Church

At the end of Church Street, cross over the road and follow the footpath up the slope to the right, across the old railway cutting. There was a stone quarry very close to the railway and another further along on the right.

4 Carry on until you get to a crossroads in the path. Turn right keeping the playground on the left and houses on the right. This path runs along the edge of the New British Iron Works site, now occupied by Air Products Ltd.

5 Where the path joins the main road opposite the Hampden Arms, turn left down Llangollen Road (Busy road, take care).

On the opposite side of the road past the new housing you will see the red brick building of the old 'Drill Hall'. This was built during the First World War to help recruit and train the Home Guard and later the Territorial Army.

Continue on past the entrance to 'Air Products', where you will find a 'Heritage Trail' information board on the left. (If you walk up the few steps by the board you will find a pleasant resting place).

6 Continue down the road a little to the crossroads. Cross over and walk up Chapel Street passing the Odd Fellows Arms and Bethel Chapel.

(**6*** At this point you may wish to take an alternative route which avoids the un-surfaced field crossing which can get muddy after rain. See **6*** below.)

For the main trail, continue on as the road name changes to Bowers Road.

Opposite Bryn Terrace (1906) you will see a footpath sign to the left, follow this path over the stile and across the field.

This field is known as 'the Ballast', an area of overgrown spoil heaps and old coal pits.

Follow the path into the woodland and over the stream past the ruined house. Follow the way markers down the slope and to the left, where you will find a stile and a tunnel. Known as 'The Darkie'.

The tunnel passes under the former Ruabon to Barmouth Railway. The line which had opened in 1861 was finally closed in 1965 after flooding washed away part of the line at Llandderfel beyond Corwen. Twenty years earlier a train was de-railed when the canal,



The Darkie

which ran alongside, burst its banks and washed away the line near the Sun Inn at Trevor.

Follow the path along the Trefynant Brook coming out by the Duke of Wellington.

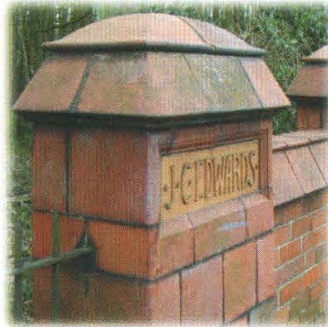
This stream has been the power source for the mill wheels for much of the early industry around the Cefn Mawr area.

6* Alternative route. After the Oddfellows Arms, turn left. Continue on down the slope with the hand rail,

past the school and onto the turnpike road. Rejoin the Llangollen Road, and bear right past the 'Duke of Wellington'.

Rejoin the trail at point **7**.

7 Cross the busy Llangollen road, and go straight ahead onto the road with the metal railings.



Llangollen Road entrance

Through the wire fencing on your right is the site of J.C. Edwards Trefynant Fireclay Works, See page 20 for info.

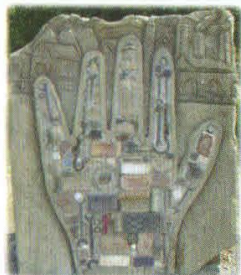
As you pass the high stone structure that used to carry the railway bridge, turn right along a single track lane.

Ahead you will see a stone sculpture depicting the many industries of the area, and signaling your entrance to the Trevor Basin and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct.

This canal wharf once bustled with commercial activity where raw goods and products going to and from the local industries were transferred from barge to wagon. This link with the markets of the Midlands was made possible by the building of the canals and the aqueduct.

Construction began on the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct to Thomas Telford's design in 1795 and was completed ten years later. The ambitious plan to take the canal on to Chester was curtailed by competition from the railways so that it ended at Trevor Basin with a feeder canal running up the Valley to Llangollen.

As you walk through the canal basin there are many interesting information boards and sculptures.



8 Continue along the towpath over the swing bridge, on your left is a Visitor Centre. Just beyond this is the footpath to continue your trail, but before going that way if you have a good head for heights walk a little to the left onto the Aqueduct itself.

There is a good view of the Cefn Viaduct from there and in the other direction the medieval 'Bont' bridge.



Walk down the path and steps beside the aqueduct.

The sandstone is so closely fitting it required very little mortar. The mortar that was used

apparently was a mixture of lime and ox blood.

Half-way down, take a break and look back along the line of the pillars. For over 200 years the 19 pillars have remained in a perfect straight line!

At the base of the steps turn left and follow the path alongside the River Dee back to Ty Mawr Country park.

The River Dee carries water from Bala Lake through Chester and out to the sea at Deeside. The river is rich in life boasting salmon and trout. This part of the river is a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) because of its high wildlife value.

As you enter the Country Park at the top of the steps turn right.

Ty Mawr Country Park is owned by Wrexham County Borough Council and was opened in 1986. The park is run as an organic small holding with a flock of unusual sheep (including the brown and white Jacob Sheep), goats, poultry, donkeys and a 'guard Llama'! In the early summer the organic hay meadows are full of colour. Ty Mawr has been awarded 'green flag' status by the Civic trust.

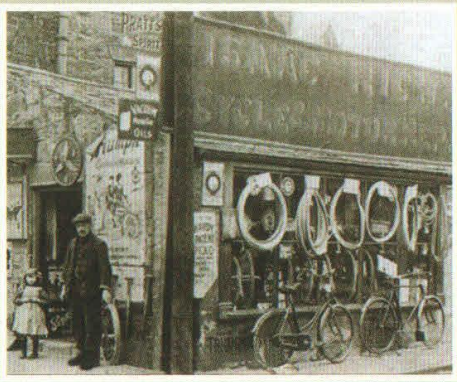
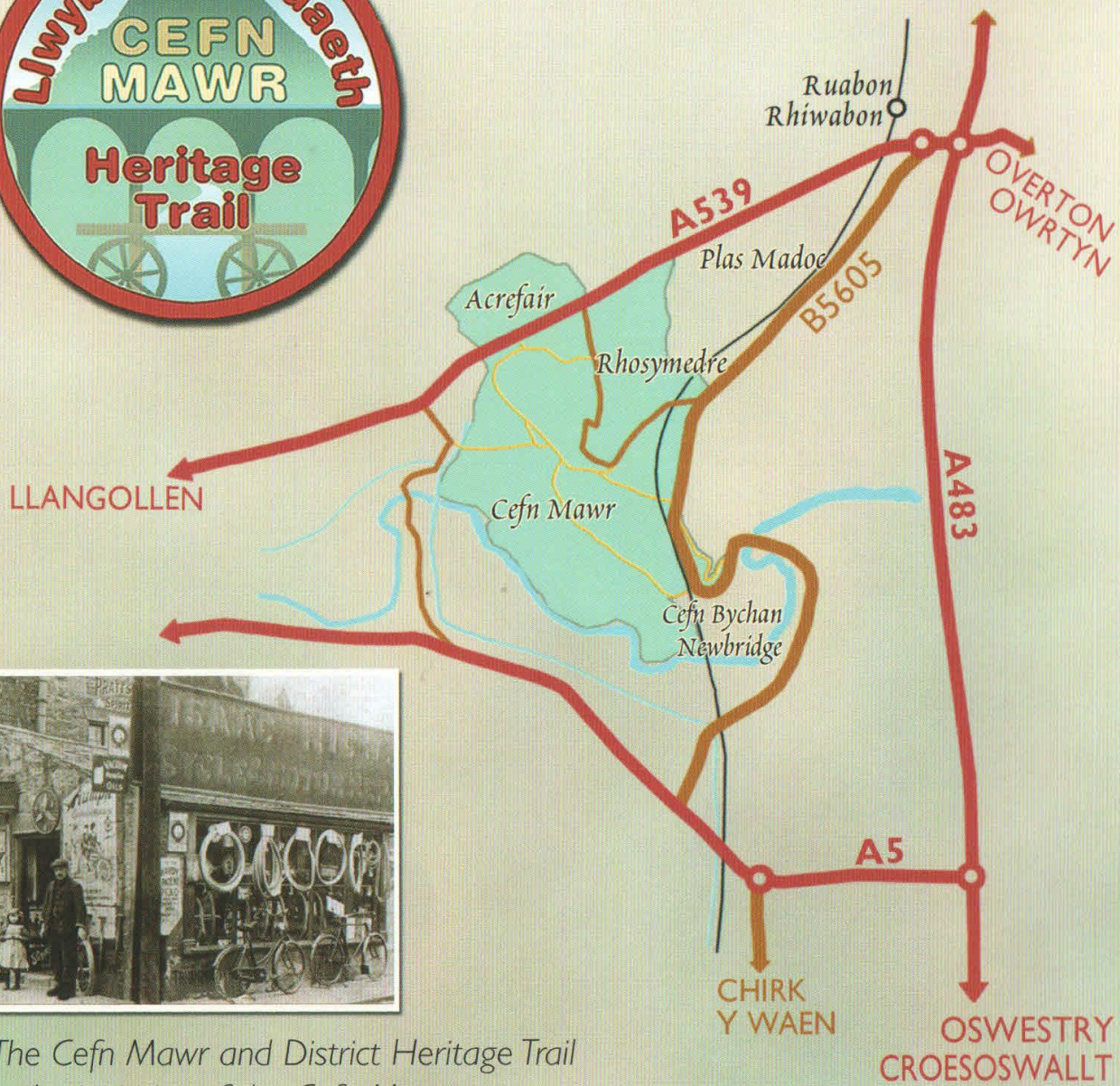
Continue along the path which brings you alongside the Cefn Viaduct.

The Cefn Viaduct was built in 1848 with locally quarried sandstone. It carries the Chester to Shrewsbury line 147 feet above the river Dee.

Follow the path past the memorial Dovecote and back to the Visitor Centre and car park.



CHESTER CAER
WREXHAM WRECSAM



The Cefn Mawr and District Heritage Trail is the initiative of the Cefn Mawr, Rhosymedre and Newbridge Community Association Ltd.

