

CAERWENT HISTORIC TRUST

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Annual General Meeting

Our AGM this year will be 7.30pm on Monday November 13th at the Wentwood Inn (venue to be confirmed).

Saturday 21st October 2.00pm ***The Argoed Road, the Cribba and Bicca Common***

A 2 hour walk following the ancient and unmetalled Argoed Road to Earlswood, down into the Cwm and back up the other side to cross the eastern end of Gray Hill. Meet at the Cadw car park Caerwent (ST 467906).

N.B. We take every care with the preparation of our walks and visits, but you participate at your own risk.

The Story of the Wentwood Inn (3)

The Lewises took it over, about 1960. They improved the premises and raised the standard of the café. Definitely tablecloths and flowers now! In 1970 it was a typical pleasant transport café with petrol and servicing facilities on site, very busy, especially due to coaches stopping. Early in the 1970s the Lewises applied for a licence and when successful changed the name to Wentwood Inn. With a good cuisine, new decor and its open countryside aspect it became a very popular place for “eating out” – just at the right time to catch a new trend.

ed John Nettleship

I used to work on weekends as a waitress at the Wentwood Inn. This was about 28 years ago when the Lewis's owned it, and I was still at school. My Grandmother Kath Bulley worked at what I seem to recall was called the Austral Cafe and later she was second chef at the Wentwood Inn. She worked there until she was about 60 which was about 25 years ago. I am sure it had large red illuminated letters spelling out the name.

The chef was from Yugoslavia and his name was Peter Yovatitch (sic) and he was quite eccentric. I know his daughter Joanne so I know Peter is still very much alive! There were 2 trainee chefs there called Gary and Kevin. I believe Gary is now the head chef at the pub on the A48 just after the turning to Mathern. The head waiter was called Peter. Mr and Mrs Lewis who owned the place had a handicapped son and daughter who was OK. I didn't work there for long though (about a year) so that is all I can recall I'm afraid.

Sallie Mogford

It has provided us with a good meeting place and it commands a pleasant view but in recent years it has been difficult to make a success of the Wentwood Inn. Several similar premises along the A48 are chasing too little custom. It's not in a village so few customers live within easy walking distance and the better enforcement of drink-driving laws has not encouraged people to come from farther away. The idea of making it a night club venue seems to have faded, to the relief of its few neighbours. The appearance of the refreshments trailer in the car park brought a smile to some of us – was the clock turning back to the very earliest days of Pat's café? Even that has gone now and we must wait and see what its present owners, Punch House Hotels, decide to try next.

JN