

### Ancient Rome aids Welsh Martyrs?

I spent a happy couple of hours with The Martyrs Supporters Trust at Merthyr Tydfells' Penidarren Park last week. They were having a Trust meeting to discuss things around being in Administration, and it proved an interesting and entertaining evening.

Victims of a sole benefactor who found it difficult to share power, and is the main creditor, the club is now in Administration. The fans of The Martyrs are pleased to have the Supporters Trust running the club at least temporarily, under licence from the Administrator.

Its' an uncertain future though . The Administrator is obliged to find the best deal for the sale of the lease, and of course there are developers sniffing round, presumably with the usual offers of social housing in order to gain planning permission on land intended for leisure use only.

One problem for the erstwhile house builder however, is the fact that a couple of feet under the ground, and running from corner flag to corner flag is the remains of a Roman fort!

This is pretty rare, as seemingly the Romans didn't bother too much with Wales.

The audience was initially pleased to hear that the local archaeological bods at County Hall would be fighting tooth and nail to disallow building on the site.

A more subdued note was struck when the gathering was reminded that the Welsh Assembly could overrule the local authority, and grant planning permission to build after allowing a time period to excavate the site..

Hope rose once more, when someone said he was sure there was a Covenant confirming the land could only be used for leisure, and yet another felt there was a clause in the lease stipulating that the ground could be used for "no other purpose than professional or semi professional football".

Then came the lesson which sobered the room.

A buyer purchasing the lease, could in fact lock the gates for however long it took and simply let the grass grow. He would not be offending covenant or clause, because he would not in fact be using the land for any other purpose than etc. etc.....he would be doing nothing! The strategy being of course that the Council would one day get fed up with looking at a bomb site and grant planning permission.

Makes you think doesn't it?

Good luck to the people down there. My your troubles be small ones.

Terry P