

# **CONSULTANCY PROFILE**

**Ruth Letha Taylor-Davies**

**2005**

*OFFICE ADDRESS:*

*26 HEOL Y PARC*

*HENDY*

*CARMARTHENSHIRE*

*SA4 0XF*

*TEL: 01792 881762*

*Mobile 0786 2218066*

*[lethaconsultancy@fsmail.net](mailto:lethaconsultancy@fsmail.net)*

## *BACKGROUND*

Born in South Wales, Ruth has worked in the fields of heritage, tourism, arts and events for over thirteen years. Her academic background includes a BA (Hons) in archaeology, an MSC in public management, and she has just successfully completed the second year of a part-time Masters in Heritage Tourism.

She has practical experience of :

- researching and developing interpretative media;
- running attractions in both the public and voluntary sectors;
- tourism marketing (including campaign development and preparing marketing information);
- strategy and policy preparation;
- creating business plans;
- advising and assisting accommodation and attraction operators;
- working with communities on heritage-based projects;
- organising events for a wide range of audiences (from a small launch to concerts for several thousand people);
- undertaking surveys and audits, and analysing data
- managing staff and volunteers;
- successfully bidding for funding from various sources including ACW, WTB, ERDF, Cadw and HLF
- product development.

Ruth also has basic Welsh language skills (level 2); holds the Welcome Host and Welcome Host Arts customer care qualification, and has recently received project management training and Equal Opportunities training as part of her last employer's management training programme.

Ruth started her own consultancy in July 2004, and has secured contracts with the following clients:

HERIAN	Consultant Interpretive Adviser (2004/5)
Interpret Wales/ Dehongli Cymru	Coordinator/Secretariat (2005)
Capital Region Tourism,	Research on Cultural Tourism in SE Wales (2004)
Merthyr Tydfil CBC	Community Consultation re Museum web site (2005)
Merthyr Tydfil CBC	Work on European Funding bids (2004)

Carmarthenshire CBC      Working on the Brechfa Forest Visitor orientation and Interpretation Plan as part of a team put together by Ian Parkin Consultancy (2005)

Caerphilly CBC              Guest speaker at Tourist Association Meeting (2005)

In addition, Ruth lectured on the BA Tourism course at Trinity College

Carmarthen February – July 2005 (maternity cover), and assisted them with their Interreg Tourism Networking Project .

## **RELEVANT EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE**

*July 1996 – July 2004*

*Tourism Officer/Principal Tourism & Heritage Officer/Head of Arts, Culture & Tourism, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council*

Ruth was initially employed as the Tourism Officer, but by 1997, the duties grew to include additional heritage elements such as line managing three museum sites. The responsibilities included tourism (marketing/development/business advise & liaison), twinning, museums service (including Cyfarthfa Castle), heritage sites, municipal events, special events and leisure policy/strategy. In addition, Ruth was chair of a number of groups including the Wisdom and Walks marketing campaign steering group, and an Objective 1 (European grant aid status) Local Plan sub group, as well as being a member of various other marketing/product development groups within the region.

In October 2000, she was appointed as Head of Arts, Culture and Tourism: her areas of responsibility being further increased to include Arts Development, the Outdoor Pursuits Service, and other cultural activities.

Between the summer of 2001 and March 2002, Ruth acted in a care-taking role in charge of recreational facilities (leisure centres and community centres) in the absence of the departmental corporate chief officer.

She has ample experience in working across public, private and voluntary sectors. In November 2002, she was part of a public/voluntary sector team that developed a community conference on tourism within the County Borough. This was very successful, and resulted in a new focus on community-based tourism within the Community First wards (9 out of Merthyr Tydfil's 11 wards have the Community First designation), and is influencing funding priorities within the Council and the Local Partnership.

In February 2003, Ruth was chosen as one of a five-member team to lead on corporate improvement within the Council. Working with an external Change Manager, the team proactively lead on strategic planning, project management, performance management, communication, and financial planning. Ruth was appointed the lead officer on the 'Vision' project, whereby, she was required to work with and enable Elected Members to develop a vision, set of values and key strategic aims for Merthyr Tydfil CBC. This was successfully completed by the end of May 2003, leading to what the external Change Manager stated was one of the best local authority visions in the Country.

At Merthyr Tydfil, Ruth managed a staff of twenty five (excluding seasonals), a revenue budget in excess of £750,000, plus grant aid from sources such as European Funding, Wales Tourist Board, Arts Council For Wales, Council of Museums in Wales, Lottery funds etc, which exceeded £900,000 in her last year with the council.

Ruth was the alternate on the Regional Tourism Partnership, deputising for the Council's elected representative, and was also involved in providing technical support to the Economic Forum in South East Wales through the Tourism Working Group, as well as sitting on the cultural tourism working group.

*July 1995-July 1996*

*Tourism & Heritage Officer, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council*

The post involved overseeing heritage and tourism development, as well as marketing the Borough. A large element of this work included developing and implementing interpretation including panels, trails, booklets etc. It was at this time that Ruth set up the Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum; The purpose of which was to get small heritage based, voluntary organisations from the varying towns/villages of the Borough together to network and take forward joint initiatives.

*January 1994 – July 1995*

*Director (Executive), Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Trust*

Ruth worked for a body of Trustees, managing three small museums: - Joseph Parry's Cottage, Ynysfach Iron Heritage Centre and Drenewydd Museum, and employing three full time, and four part-time staff. The job covered everything from seeking sponsorship/grant aid, developing interpretation, running events; opening the museums to visitors; running three on-site shops and a café; to campaigning on behalf of historic buildings under threat etc.

*January 1991 – January 1994*

*Inventory Clerk/Heritage Assistant Blaenau Gwent Borough Council*

Ruth worked for Blaenau Gwent Borough Council, first as an inventory clerk, sorting out a badly mistreated 'museum' collection, which the Council no longer wanted. She had to undertake basic cataloguing, conservation, and source donors and return items etc. She was then employed as a heritage assistant, which gave her the opportunity to develop a Heritage Audit for the area, which in turn, led to her preparing a Heritage Strategy. She also undertook many small-scale projects e.g. developing guided walks, and overseeing restoration works at Clydach and Sirhowy ironworks.

1987 -1991

Ruth was involved in archaeological fieldwork work with the Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust in Monmouth and the Department of Urban Archaeology (London) on excavations at London Wall, and in the post excavation unit.

### **EDUCATIONAL HISTORY**

Pre 1987

9 'O' levels and '3' A levels at Comprehensive School in Ebbw Vale

1987-1990

Institute of Archaeology, University College London

Gordon Square, London W1

BA Hons 2:1 Archaeology

1996-1998

University of Glamorgan

Treforest Campus, Pontypridd, Mid Glamorgan

MSc: Public Management

2002 - present,

Trinity College Carmarthenshire

MA: Heritage Tourism (ongoing)

### **Other**

Welcome Host

Welcome Host Arts

Dosbath Nos level 2

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Association for Heritage Interpretation (Associate Member)

### **PUBLICATIONS**

Ruth has had an article published about the restoration of the Cyfarthfa Ironworks (Merthyr Historian), and edited a book on Folklore in Blaenau Gwent (on behalf of the CBC), which was published in 1992. She has also written copy for numerous tourism publications for both Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil CBC's