



THE LLANCARFAN SOCIETY

Newsletter 115 November 2002

Editorial I start with an apology for the lateness of the last Newsletter, which consequently made redundant the note on the Annual Dinner. This was no one's fault - just the vagaries of holidays and availability of willing but voluntary helpers. It has, however, made me think about our standing offer to include announcements of future events. This puts pressure on the editor unless ample warning is given - at least six weeks because of the time between Newsletters. I have consequently re-worded that offer to indicate this condition.

The Newsletter reaches a lot of people in the village and many more in the vicinity - it has always saddened me that not all organisations take advantage of this free publicity. Perhaps we should charge for the service - the old greengrocer's trick of putting up the price so customers perceive better quality! Free advertising, folks.

All previous Newsletters have been lodged with several local libraries and the Glamorgan Record Office. For this reason I have always maintained an index of articles which, until now, have been kept in 5-year blocks. As we have now reached our 15th year I have consolidated it into a single index. This will become available on the Web-site, but now so many people have computers, if anyone wants an electronic copy of the index, it is available as an Access 97 file together with the offer to provide copies of individual articles by e-mail.

People, places and local affairs

Community Association We have just received the good news that the Llancarfan & District Community Association has been awarded Charity Status, which means considerable savings on VAT, purchases etc. We considered a similar application for the Llancarfan Society, but unfortunately it does not really meet the requirements of the Charity Commissioners.

St Cadoc's graveyard memorials The Community Council has now completed a safety inspection. Ten memorials were found to be extremely dangerous and have been laid flat on the grass but cannot be left in this position as someone could trip over them. The Council has been able to contact some of the families and, hopefully, they will arrange for the necessary work to be done by a memorial mason.

If the families cannot be contacted or do not respond, the Council has three options: - i. The headstones will be laid on the graves if there is a base slab with kerbs. ii. They will be removed to a safe designated area of the churchyard. iii. A memorial mason will be instructed to remove the stones to storage for one year.

The Clerk to the Community Council, Joan Scott-Quelch, said that the Council does not wish the stones to be removed from the churchyard, so the first two options will be used. It would be too expensive to have the stones re-erected and would set an unfair precedent, but a memorial mason will still have to be employed, so some Council expenditure will be incurred.

Fortunately a grant has been received towards restoration of several of the historic chest memorials, some of which are adjacent to the Church door. The Grant has been awarded by the Vale of Glamorgan Council under the Community Action Self Help (C.A.S.H.) Grant Scheme. The memorial mason will be working in the Churchyard for a number of weeks, it would probably be less expensive for families if the memorials in need of re-erection could be done at this time. This is just a suggestion and the Council could not be directly involved.

Six of the unsafe graves have been reported to the families: - they are numbers 153; 200; 135; 159; 202; 210. The other four are 211 Canon Austin Evans; 213 Edward and Maureen Simnet; 217 John and Margaret Robinson and 300 Rev. Leonard Payne.

If any members of the Society have addresses for the four families: - Evans, Simnet, Payne or Robinson please contact the Editor or the Clerk to the Community Council, Joan Scott-Quelch, 2, Penylan House, Llancarfan, CF62 3AH (Phone 01446 781366).

Joan noted that there had been an illustrated article in the *Daily Telegraph*, featuring a Welsh Authority which had placed yellow 'dangerous memorial' bags around the memorials. She commented "it would look awful and be really embarrassing if we did this in our country churchyard. I've been told Barry Town Council intend to use these bags."

Obituary notice Don Hall, former landlord of the *Six Bells* in Penmark died last Wednesday after a fall at *Cottrell Park Golf Club* where he was running the restaurant.

Recycling The Vale of Glamorgan Council has issued a press release, which it hopes will improve awareness of recycling issues. The Council is currently overhauling its kerbside recycling scheme, which is currently for collection of newspapers, magazines and cans from outside homes throughout the Vale. A third material could be added in the next few months. Collections are fortnightly. If you require a kerbside collection calendar, please contact the Waste Management Section of the Vale Council on 02920 673000.

Llancarfan school memories

by John Gardner

During Phil Watts' absence in Italy, Committee Member, John, very kindly agreed to cope with the copying and sending-out of the Newsletters. He wrote to the Editor: "When I put the Newsletters into their envelopes I know who some of the contributors are, remembering them from the six and a half years during which I attended Llancarfan Primary School."

Llancarfan School has really only good memories for me. People say one should not look back, only forward, but recollections of those days are good ones.

There are memories of attending David Evans' *Garnllwyd*, Jeff and Vernon Thomas', *Gowlog*, birthday parties. I remember the difference in colour of Mrs Evans' sponge-cake (wonderful cook) - a deep yellow colour compared to my mother's pale sponges. The difference was between fresh eggs and the wartime dried egg powder.

Going to Jeff's and Vernon's parties has other memories - playing football with a pig's bladder and feeding pet lambs - happy days.

Then there were the actual school days, when I was the only boy who rode a bike to school, cycling from Llancadle to Pancross where I would leave my bike at Mrs Vizard's. Next door I collected the late Billy Tucker, his older sister Doreen and later on, younger sister Margaret. Then we would wait (if it was raining) to catch the school bus at the barn.

In those days I had to have lights on my bike to go to school and to come home during part of the year. The clock was two hours on during the war and the mornings were really cold (no global warming then!). I soon learned to ride no-hands and put my hands in my pockets to keep them warm. I came a cropper once or twice but dared not tell my mother that I had scratched my bike!

Arriving at school there was a huge fire burning brightly in all the classrooms. Mrs Griffiths, *Broomwell*, always saw to it during the winter months that the classrooms were warm, if not hot. Mrs Griffiths must have lit those fires at six thirty - a wonderful lady. The school was always clean and even the outside toilets were immaculate, wooden seats, no flush - just into a pit at the top of the school gardens. Then of course there was Mrs Griffiths' cupboard a dark place where "Postman's knock" was played during School Christmas parties. I recollect David Evans, *Garnllwyd*, mentioning this cupboard, where he used to kiss the late Mary Maddock.

Then there was lunchtime break; a game of 'fox and hounds' was always played. Who remembers this? We used to run for miles after a dinner of sandwiches and a cup of Miss Connie Griffiths' (infants' teacher) cocoa made all of milk with skin on top.

What a wonderful teacher she was - all done with slate and chalk (no Health and Safety!) - chalk-dust everywhere! Then Standard 1 & 2, Miss Thomas' class later to become Mrs Watts (Phil's Aunt) with the times-table around the classroom from two-times to twelve-times.

On to Mr Samuel's class 3 & 4 which, of course, was the 11+ class. What a wonderful style of writing he had. Thin strokes up and thick strokes down. At a school re-union we saw some of the old registers - all of the writing quite immaculate.

Of course, being an older boy in Mr Samuels' class carried privileges of missing lessons for such events as the occasion when Ann William's father, *Aberogon (Aberogwrn)*, could not get the milk ready in time to go on the school bus. Perhaps this was through a power-cut, and then the milk monitors had to *walk to Aberogon* with a cricket stump to collect the milk by inserting the stump through the handle and returning to school carrying it between them (Ann Williams is now Ann Radcliffe, *Penmark Place*).

The usual duty of the milk monitors was to carry the milk up the school hill from the bus!

The other privilege was walking to Llancadle Cross to pick up the piano tuner who was blind - I wonder who remembers him?

INSERT PIC

In those days "**Dig for Victory**" was a wartime slogan and all the boys in Standard 3 & 4 had gardens and gardening lessons were a part of the curriculum. Some good vegetables were grown and every boy had a pair of clogs to put on - school shoes cost coupons as well as money at that time.

I wondered, as I came across Barbara Jenkins', *Ty Uchaf*, address whether she remembers playing in the garden shed (now Barbara Millhuisen of Senesse de Sennabugue, France).

Who remembers which house they were allocated to go to if there was an air-raid during school hours. I had to go to Mrs Sweet's *New House*, first on the right after descending Pancross Hill. In those days when a funeral was taking place during playtime every child stood still and nobody spoke until the coffin went into the church.

I came across Katherine Maddock's address and wonder if she knew about the history of *Llanvithyn* in her younger days.

I wonder if my grandchildren's head teacher would [or could] allow them the freedom to walk and run the countryside as I did.

Little Mill, Lanvithyn: Part 1

by John M Cann

When Phil Watts arrived with a large bag of old deeds I tried to keep a cheerful face. He had them from Graham Levey, and they wanted me to see if there was any interesting information in them. Reading such documents is difficult enough, finding the 10% of useful information in them amongst the morass of legal verbiage is very time consuming and tedious. These older documents were written to make the lawyers money - they were paid by the word. However, when I started to read the Little Mill deeds I cheered up no end. There were members of the Jenkins family that I knew from going through *Flaxland* deeds and also William Jenkins of *Walterstone* and his descendants. So I was interested, and happy. There is now a reasonably full document of which this is a version but with emphasis on the bits that are likely to most interest

Newsletter readers. The various names given for *Little Mill*, and the spellings of *Llanvithyn* are those in the documents used.

Llanfeuthin Grange

The deeds from Graham Levey go back no further than 1774. Anxious to find out what happened before that, I dug around in the Glamorgan Record Office for deeds concerning *Llanvithyn* itself.

1190-1536 There was a pre-Norman cemetery and a chapel of around 1190 and the whole of *Llanvithyn* became a grange of the Cistercians of **Margam Abbey**. This is why *Llanvithyn* is extra parochial and paid no tithes to the Church. Margam owned about 470 acres, parcelled out into several tenancies, occupied and worked by lay tenants. *Little Mill* may have existed but it was most likely a separate tenancy, though owned by *Margam Abbey*.

1536-1712 With the dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536, the tenant of *Llanvithyn* was Sir John Raglan of *Garnllwyd*, the neighbouring mansion, but he didn't buy it. In 1546 the Crown sold it to Sir Edward Carne of *Ewenny Priory*. He died in 1561, and a few years later his son Thomas assigned the **grange of Llanvithen** to Hugh Griffith & his son William, the infamous Welsh recusant. When Hugh died in 1577 he had only 300 of the 470 acres of *Llanvithyn*. William owned the same in 1587 and sold it all in 1602 to Hugh Sandford, a neighbour in Wilton, Hereford, for £1,300. In 1628 Sandford sold it to a branch of the Bassetts who were already occupying it. The family link is unknown but Thomas Bassett sold to Sir Richard Bassett of *Beaupre* in 1679. After Sir Richard's death Robert Jones (the 1st) of *Fonmon* bought it in 1707.

INSERT PIC

Little Mill & its Owners

1602-1774 The original 1602 Indenture of sale by Griffith of the grange of *Llanvithyn* ("*commonly known as Monkton Farm*") exists in the *Fonmon* archives in the Glamorgan Record Office. A small attachment is headed "*A true and perfect note of all such leases as are meant and intended to be excepted in and by ye deed indented herunto annexed.*" These 'excepted' leases total about 170 acres, the difference between the whole of Margam's grange and that which Griffith owned. One is "*Item one lease heretofore made unto Ieuan David of and upon one mill and too and twentie acres of landes arable meadow and pasture for and during two lives at and upon the yearly rent of twelve poundes and other duties.*" So *Little Mill* was part of the grange of *Llanvithyn* in 1536, already separated by 1577 and by 1602 leased to a Ieuan David & probably his son.

In 1766 Thomas Edwards of Llandaff, Steward to the Cardiff Lordship of Lord Windsor, and Clerk of the Peace, bought *Little Mill* for £300 from the estate of Tho^s Hopkins of London. It was "*All that Watergrist Mill with its appurtenances Called the Little Mill and one Orchard and . . . containing in the whole ab^t 15 acres more or less "*

1774-1824 And now Graham's deeds take over the story. In August 1774 Robert Jones (the 3rd) exchanged, with Thomas Edwards, property in St. Fagans for "*All that Messuage tenement Mill and Several Closes of Land . . . called little Mill Farm containeing about twenty ffour acres . . . at Llanvithin in the parish of Lancarvan . . .*"

In December 1809, for £1,000, Mr Thomas Jenkins of Penmark, farmer, bought "*All that Messuage etc. . . . called Little Mill ffield and containing about twenty four acres*". This was part of a major deal with Edward Jenkins and his brothers in which Mrs Joanna Jones and her son Robert Jones (the 4th) of *Fonmon* sold "*one ffarm called Lanvithin containing 187 acres, one other farm called Lanvithin Vach containing 24 acres, one other farm called fflexland vawr containing 134 acres . . .*" as part of an enforced sale to cover the considerable debts of his profligate father. These Jenkins were the sons of William Jenkins of *Garnllwyd*.

Edward (of Picketston) got *Llanvithyn*, with Thomas as his tenant, Thomas got *Little Mill* and William (Jnr.) became William Jenkins of *Flaxland*, gent. (and later of *Moulton Court*)

In 1822 Thomas Jenkins mortgaged *Little Mill* to another brother, John of Penmark, farmer, for £1,400, of which he already had borrowed £500 (John was the only brother who didn't finish up bankrupt!). By now Thomas had "***newly built a Messuage or Dwelling House & Woollen manufactory . . . upon part of the said Tenement and Lands called the little Mill otherwise Lanvithin vach***". The mortgage was probably to pay for this Woollen manufactory. Both it and *Little Mill* were in the occupation of Thomas David. [The *Woollen Manufactory* was called 'Factory' in later Census returns. It became a *Bakehouse* in the 1900's and was converted in the 1950s to domestic use with the name *The Old Bakehouse*. The locals still called it '*The Factory*' in the 1960s, when the owner was not in earshot.] Building the woollen factory didn't save Thomas Jenkins. Whether due to over-extending himself or the agricultural depression, he was declared bankrupt in 1822 and sent to the King's Bench prison, Surrey. He was at that time a "***Dealer and Chapman***" (ie. travelling dealer/salesman) "***following the trade of Corn Dealer, buying Corn and selling the same again***". He didn't run the Mill, Thomas David did.

The major creditor of Thomas Jenkins was Edward Thomas of Bonvilstone, Gentleman, who also became one of two Assignees of his estate. On the 29th of August 1823, His Majesty's Commission sold to them ". . . ***Mill and several Closes of land called Little Mill field containing about Twenty four acres Situate lying and being at Lanvithan***". This Edward Thomas and his fellow assignee immediately sold to Edward's brother-in-law William Jenkins of Walterstone, Esquire, for £1,020, and appear to have repaid themselves and the other creditors. Less than a year later, William Jenkins of Walterstone sold it all back to Edward Thomas, in his own right, for £1,050, having made £30 for his trouble. Doubtless all this was a legal ruse.

When William Jenkins bought it in 1823 the ". . . ***Messuage or Dwelling house and the Water Corn Grist Mill adjoining . . .***" was called ". . . ***The Little Mill . . .***" which with the land was ". . . ***called together Little Mill Farm . . .***" Both the Mill and the Woollen Manufactory were ". . . ***worked by the same stream of Water . . .***" and were ". . . ***in the occupation of Thomas David . . . under the yearly rent of Eighty pounds***"

1824-1858 When Edward Thomas of Bonvilstone died in 1832, his son Edward inherited *Little Mill*, amongst much else. Edward jnr. was only 14 however, and yet to become Edward Thomas, gent. of Picketston. He died unmarried and young in 1849, his married younger brother John followed him two years later. Both are buried (with their mother) in an impressive table tomb near Llancafarn Church porch. Their mother Elizabeth Thomas of *Picketston House* (née Jenkins of Walterstone) was left holding all the property, including *Little Mill*. In 1858, having no remaining issue, she left *Little Mill* in trust to her brother Richard's son James Petre Jenkins and his children. James died in 1889, from then on it was owned by his son Frederick Thomas Jenkins until he sold it in 1905 to William Liscombe, the grandfather of Gwyn Liscombe and Phil Watts.

This is nearly all the information available from the deeds. However, William Liscombe was the last in a long line of Millers to live in *Little Mill*. Part 2 will be about the tenants, Millers and Weavers, that lived there including, of course, the Liscombes. Most of which I obtained from the Census returns.

Details and references are in 'A History of Little Mill, Lanvithin' by John M Cann, Malthouse April 2002.

'William Griffith of Llanvithyn, a Glamorgan Recusant' (Morgannwg XXX, 1986. pp.8-19) is worth readin.g

Annual Dinner The fifteenth Annual Dinner was held in the *Fox and Hounds* on Saturday October 12th attended by 63 guests. Everyone was pleased to be back in the *Fox and Hounds* for this occasion Sue and John Millard are to be congratulated on the quality of the food and the service.

The Chairman Philip Gammon gave short speech of welcome especially to Barbara Milhuisen from France, Jenny Griffiths from Shrewsbury and Margaret, her sister from the Cotswolds. It was nice to see members who had not attended before, and for members to meet old friends and make new friends. Phil Watts presented Mary, the Chairman's wife with a bouquet of flowers in spite of being hit on the head by her with a badminton racquet the previous evening! Forgiven maybe! Not forgotten!

We also made welcome to a newcomer to the village John Gunson, *The Hollies*, who has family connections with *Ty To Maen*, we shall hear from him in the Newsletter. We sincerely hope that Barbara will continue to attend the Society Dinner, but after hearing of her exploits with her motor car it is doubtful if her luck will hold out. She tells me that she was selected by either the French or Irish authorities to experiment, as a one off event. On arrival at Dublin off the ferry she drove on the right hand side of the road round the first roundabout. It turned out to be not a success. The police objected, as they had not been informed of this experiment!

I am told that there have been encounters with the French Police and the speed limit. She has circulated the M25 twice on the same day seeking an exit. Another case was taking a short cut through a ploughed field: blames Andrew Radcliffe for leaving the gate open!

Barbara has attended every dinner so far, she is to be congratulated on this and long may she continue to do so. P.W.

Whist Drive The recent Whist Drive on Oct. 18th was attended by 16 people, making up four tables. Every one enjoyed themselves Robert Hutchings acted as M.C., Audrey Porter made the Welsh Cakes, Joy and Tony Rees bought the prizes, Phil Watts lit the fire, Arwyn Rees supplied the wood, Ann and Dick Ferris look the money and sold the raffle tickets, Judy Hutchings, Audrey Porter, and Pam Webber (Audrey's sister) made tea and coffee. A lot of involvement for many people making it an enjoyable social occasion.

Two Whist Drives have been included in the Society's programme of events for 2003. We are wondering how we can attract more people to attend. One of the suggestions is that we have them more often, perhaps once a month. It is not thinkable that we should discontinue the Whist Drives, after all they have been part of village life for the past century. An event that used to be very popular was a Whist Drive followed by a Dance. The Whist people would stay for the dance and the dance folk would endure the whist for the sake of the dance afterwards. It wouldn't work today for many reasons. Do the members have any ideas to offer along these lines? P.W.

Golden Wedding Phil and Ruth Watts

On August 30th over a hundred guests joined us at St Cadoc's Church and then afterwards at the Fox and Hounds to celebrate our Golden Wedding. It was a beautiful day, as it was 50 years ago. Vivienne and Russell had taken care of most of the organising and having our Golden Wedding blessed was one of the surprises of the day. On the day we were chauffeur driven to the village. The car stopped outside the church where unbeknown to us many of the guests had gathered to greet us. Our grandsons Rhodri and Rhys presented Ruth with a beautiful posy of gold roses. Rev. Malcolm Davies led us to church where we were joined by two of our bridesmaids, Clare Buckley and Anne Thomas. Daphene Adair was unable to come on the day.

Ruth and I went in *via* the west door of the church, to the ringing of the church bells. Ahead of us we could see the guests we were expecting to meet at the *Fox*. Rev. Malcolm Davies conducted a lovely service of blessing of the marriage and Barbara Milhuisen (organist at our wedding) played the organ, assisted by Molly Vincent.

Following the service we made our way across to the *Fox and Hounds*, the gates had been tied and money was thrown for the gates to be opened. A superb lunch buffet was put on by John and Sue Millard whilst the guests enjoyed a day of chatting and reviving memories of years gone by. The day was completed with the cutting of the beautiful golden wedding cake and a toast.

We are delighted that so many friends and family were able to share with us our happy celebration. P.W.

More from Alfred Mills by John Etherington

The *Gem* of October 3rd published some more of Alfred Mills' memories of the Vale between the Wars. Alfred has previously allowed us to use some of his articles, which refer to Llancarfan, and we mentioned his lovely book, *Memories Immune to Time* in Newsletter 84 which contained an extract.

Alfred was born in 1911 and lived in Queen Street, Barry, a few doors from the house in which my wife Sheena grew-up, so I met him before the Llancarfan Society was a twinkle in anyone's eye.

Alfred's recent article mentioned the Hughes family. They lived next door to the Mills in Porthkerry and there were five Hughes children: Irene, Bob, Betty, Harry and Ivor. Bob was almost the same age as Alfred and they became best pals. Who knows what they got up to in those far off days when children were allowed real freedom but were given real discipline as well! Alfred gives a few clues.

Bob and Harry, in later life, were strongly associated with Llancarfan. Bob farmed at Llanbethery and Harry was our resident builder cum handyman.

Harry disliked social occasions and self-regarding people about equally. We got on well, and both liked the occasional pint or two in the *Fox*. He died almost a quarter of a century ago but I see him in the mind's eye as clearly as if he were still propping that bar with me. Indeed memories and long life make for a sort of immortality. Thanks Alfred, for reminding me of a friend.

The late Brinley May - an unexpected memory by John Etherington

Reading John Gardner, above, on the subject of the "fox and hounds" game reminded me of the first time I ever heard about it.

People who lived in Llancarfan in the 1950s will remember the May family, living at *Ford Cross*. Later on Brinley May and his mother lived in one of the houses at Tir Onnen west of Bonvilston.

Brinley was a regular at the *Fox and Hounds*; one of the very last whose gold-lettered personal pint glass still survived the hazards of washing-up.

Brinley was an interesting man - a bit difficult to talk to, as he had a slight speech impediment coupled with the quickfire Vale style of speech, but it was worth getting used to, as he was full of wonderful snippets of local lore (much, unrepeatable!).

He told remarkable stories about his work. He was a specialist crane driver, operating the biggest road going cranes in the country and as you might imagine had tales of disasters and near-disasters which made one's hair stand on end! Possibly the most impressive was the bus driver who had completely "tin-opened" his upper deck by impaling it on the jib of Brinley's crane - miraculously it seems without a single injury.

One evening in the *Fox*, probably about 1970, Brinley recalled a quite horrific schooldays bicycle crash he experienced at the bottom of Pancross Hill and then suddenly switched to a memory of running through Coed Crynallt during the school lunchtime chasing game of "fox and hounds".

I expect he was reminded of this because the kids would have used the gate by *Hillside* garden to reach the wood. This was where the bicycle and Brinley had come to rest! He then told us a bit more about those lunchtime chases, and the immediate thought is that there were few overweight children in those days and not much TV!

So John, when you told your story of the school, 50 years ago, you took me back 30 years to a memory of Brinley, who sadly died too young, not so many years ago.

Funny thing, memory because I now remember, with some guilt, that we let Brinley's departure from the world go without a mention in the Newsletter. You are still there in memory, Brin.

Llancarfan Society Pictorial Book 2002 by Phil Watts

The Committee of the Society beavers away in the background organising all of those events, which make our Society such a success. Some things seem to creep up on us almost unannounced and I think the Pictorial Book is one of these, in the sense that it has not been mentioned before in the Newsletter. Now it is almost a *fait accompli*, as you will see from Phil Watt's note below. A great "thank you" is due to the subcommittee of Phil Watt's, Graham Jenkins, Marilyn Cann, Philip and Mary Gammon.

Llancarfan: A Century of Pictures is now with the printers and should reach the members before Christmas. It is always dangerous to put these things into print, but unless there are many snags we should be able to meet this date. Perhaps we should follow it up with: - "We did not say which Christmas"! Wait and see! At the worst it will not be long.

When the idea of a Pictorial Book was first conceived, things we had to consider were: "What should we put in it?" and "How many pages could we have?" How many copies would we print? And the most important item of all, "How many could we sell?" We had to consider our markets and would it appeal to many people?

Then we had the idea of applying to the Heritage Lottery Fund and Vale Council for a grant. We have been successful in obtaining £4530 and £500 respectively. We aim to provide a book for every Society member, every household in the Community Council areas of Llancarfan and Llantrithyd, each child in the village school who have not received a copy covered by the first two conditions.

We hope that recipients of the book will make donations to cover our distribution costs i.e. postage, stationary, etc. The title of the book is *A Century of Pictures 2002*.

The title tells us that the period of time is a long one with plenty of scope for photographs. We had too many for a book, many for some periods and none for others, we also had to consider the restrictions and cost. It has not been easy to produce a balanced book of interest. The first page will show a document dating from the Coronation of Edward VII, 1902 and the last will be a photograph taken in the Jubilee Year of the reign of Elizabeth II. There will be 96 pages with two photographs per page. We have tried to produce a book of amusement and nostalgia of events in Llancarfan relating to historic occasions.

If the reader has much pleasure as our sub-committee had in its production, then we know we have been successful.

Errata Sharp-eyed Tony Thomas, *Pancross Farm*, noted an error of the keyboard in the last Newsletter - DEFRA instead of DARA as a heading on the front page. As I often write about DEFRA (Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs) elsewhere, and never about DARA (Defence Aviation Repair Agency), I know how it happened, but that's no excuse is it? Sorry - I'm a bad proof reader.

Tony also pointed out that his father's name was spelled Vivian not Vivienne. No excuses because I'm fairly sure this was an action replay and that I have made the same mistake, and been in trouble before.

Must try harder!

On a more serious note, it's lovely to know that the Newsletters are read with such close attention. Please let me know if you find other errors - they can always be corrected in the archived files and on the web-site Newsletters.

Programme for 2003

January: 7th Committee Meeting/Social time. Membership Renewal.

February: 4th Committee Meeting/Social time. 28th Whist Drive.

March: 14th AGM, (no Committee Meeting).

April: 1st Committee Meeting/Social time. 25th Whist Drive.

May: 5th May Day Walk, 6th Committee Meeting/Social time.

June: 3rd Committee Meeting/Social time. 22nd Local Petanque(t.b.confirmed).

July: 1st Committee Meeting/Social time. 13th Roast.

August: No meeting.

September: 2nd Committee Meeting. 27th Annual Dinner.

October: 7th Committee Meeting.

November: 4th Committee Meeting/Social time. 14th Whist Drive.

December: 2nd Social Evening.

NB Committee Meetings end at approximately 9.15 pm.

An Editorial note At the last AGM I warned that there must come an end to my Editorship of the Newsletter. Fifteen years is a long time in anyone's life! Not only that but I have now been away from Llancafán for some 11 years and begin to lose day to day contact as some of you arrive whilst others go.

I'm not suggesting departure tomorrow, but it is time for the Society to think about a new hand on the wheel and perhaps the first step toward this might be two-tier: a local editor resident in Llancafán and I, for an interim period, continuing the historical work?

Many of you will realise that *Llancafán: a Vale Village* is very behindhand and if nothing else I could do with some free time to get on with it!

Llantrithyd Deer Park - mid-November by Adrienne Leijerstam

INSERT PIC

The rutting season is an intriguing but rather dangerous time in the Park and brings an abrupt end to our summer meanderings on foot. That wonderful feeling of freedom is curtailed for almost a month and most of the Park is only accessible by vehicle.

By the end of September the stags who have been gorging themselves on the summer grass turn their attention to the ladies. As often happens in the animal kingdom it is the males who take on the task of making themselves appealing to the females. This is done by liberally coating themselves in mud, beating their antlers against the ground, and displaying a rather pungent odour.

In the early stages the stags are roaring frequently but there seems to be little aggression in fact I could even detect a caring attitude as stags and hinds sniff and lick and even kiss! But not for long!

Things start to get more serious when the stags begin to thrash their antlers from side to side on the ground or against the nearest tree trunk, as if toughening up for battle. The new decking we have erected around the lodge became a favourite antler sharpening point, so we had to forsake our prime viewing and shut them out of the lodge field before they totally demolished Anders' hard work.

Though a little further away, there was still plenty of activity to witness. The frequency and volume of the roaring increases and a strong stag smell lingers in the damp dew.

The stags are constantly on the move each trying to pinch hinds from each other. From the beginning it is apparent that there is only one real boss. He has the largest harem and constantly paces around his territory, breaking into an extended trot, head held high as he chases off any male trespasser. Gradually he appears to commandeer almost all the females, though the unsuccessful stags continue to pace around his territory waiting for an opportunity to syphon off a few females for themselves.

The dominant stag lurches aggressively towards any challenger who generally beats a hasty retreat. On occasions they stand their ground and engage in battle. Heads down, noses to the ground, they appear to be locked together as their rear ends spin round and they move their heads vigorously from side to side. After a series of spins they stand quietly for a breath rest and then the antler clanking begins again. The gyrating becomes more violent and you wonder how on earth they will disentangle themselves. Finally the challenger gives up the fight, they disentangle and the poacher bids a hasty retreat.

The most distressing part of the rut this year was when we found our young yearling stag dead on the bank. He had antler wounds in the side of his body and had obviously tried to take on the big boys, without success.

Towards the end of the rut the stags start to look quite weary which is not surprising considering they are constantly on the move as well as covering all the hinds a number of times. Their agitated pace at the beginning of the rut calms to a drunken-like lollop.

Just when we thought peace was once again descending on the Park the Fallow start their rutting. This is far less intrusive as the activity seems to be confined to the wooded areas of the valley and the roaring of the two bucks is a deeper, less audible sound than that of the Red stags.

By the end of October the passion of the rut finishes. Stags, hinds, calves, bucks, does and fawn graze happily together and peace returns to the Park.

Mary Thomas in Llancarfan recounted by Phil Watts

On July 14th Mary Thomas (née Watts) made a sentimental journey to Llancarfan to see again the church, pub, school, and the river. Mary was born in the village in 1920, lived at *Monastery Mill* and *New Mill*, spent a lot of time with her Aunt May and Uncle Tudor at the *Woodlands*. She married Ron Thomas, a Portsmouth Naval man, in 1945 and set up home in Portsmouth and has lived there ever since. Every year she returned to Llancarfan to visit her mother and father, sister Kath and brother Phil at *Abernant*.

Due to illness she has not been able to make the trip to Wales for five or six years. Mary has Parkinson's Disease, and not able to attend Kath's funeral in August 2000. Drawing on all her reserves of strength, she arranged for Nigel her son-in-law and daughter Anne to transport her to Llancarfan to see again the river, church, school and Pub. She accomplished more than this, she travelled in Nigel's car to Barry, had lunch with Phil and Ruth then to Llancarfan back to Vivienne and Meurig's in Barry to have tea with the rest of the family, Russ, Sue and the children Rhodri and Rhys. Then returned to Portsmouth by 9 o'clock - 12 hour sentimental journey.

When Phil and Ruth were celebrating their Golden Wedding Mary was taken into hospital. A second celebration had been planned for the Portsmouth side of the family on Sept. 14th, this has

now been postponed until Mary is well enough to join in. However I decided to make the visit as originally arranged, visited Mary in hospital where she reminded me of some of the customs and events that used to take place in Llancarfan.

If the school had good attendance the children would be rewarded with a half-day holiday. This was difficult to obtain in the hunting season because some of the older boys would miss school and follow the hounds Particularly if the meet was at *Pancross Barn* or the *Fox and Hounds*. Boys who would do this were Roy Howells, Illyd Morgan, Glyn Morgan and Arthur Howells.

Traditionally youngsters were encouraged to open farm gates for the riders on hunting day. The reward could be as much as a shilling. I have had a few shillings from the Boothbys, Corys and Williams families.

Mary recalls seeing scented violets growing in the churchyard at the foot of the tower on the south side. Other fauna could be seen flourishing in the churchyard. This was at the time when Tommy Griffiths and Billo Griffiths were caretakers of the churchyard. The non-grave area used to be allowed to grow to hay, cut with a scythe and a small hay mow made in the corner by the river. Today short grass is popular. One would often see grass snakes and blind worms when walking through the churchyard.

Mary walked to school from *Monastery Mill*. The walk home would be accompanied by a paddle in the river. Forks would be borrowed from home to stab eels, the forks hidden on the river bank and used the next night. The young children would have to be carried through the deep pools. The children involved in these adventures were George Wright, Eva and Edith Durham, Mary and Kath Watts.

Mary recalls calves at *Abenant* being fed hay tea, hay placed in an army field boiler, covered with water and boiled, mixed with milk and fed to the bigger calves. Chickens fed on boiled potato peelings mixed with meal. This was deemed to be a good fattener. Of course there was always plenty of stale bread from the bakery round.

Mary finally reminded me of the first day she took me to school. To start with -a half day. She had to sit by my side while I sat in the desk with my eyes closed not daring to open them. I have heard this story so many times ! One more time does no harm.

Gwâl-y-Filiart by John Etherington

Llancarfan has the one great treasure of its pre-historic past: Castle Ditches, the Iron Age hill-fort which looks down over the valley above *Ford*. However, there are no substantial earlier remains in the parish and yet, just to the north, near Welsh St Donat's there are several Bronze Age burial mounds and to the east, two spectacular Neolithic chambered long barrows at Tinkinswood and St Lythan's.

We have mentioned Tinkinswood before. William Thomas visited the "Druid's cell" in 1765 (Newsletter 90) and suspected that the giant capstone had been erected by supernatural "Art" - hardly surprising as it is the largest such stone in Britain - 40 tons and more.

The stones of St Lythan's are visible from the road down to Dyffryn. Coming home from Cardiff, I always thought them an imposing sight at dusk, silhouetted against the darkening sky. It is the best view, in fact. They are a disappointment if you walk over to them, seeming little more than twice the height of the nettles that surround them!

According to the *Shell Guide to Wales*, the Welsh name of the St Lythan's megalith is *Gwâl-y-Filiart*: the Greyhound Bitch's Kennel.

The moment I read this it reminded me of that wonderful description of greyhounds in *Culhwch and Olwen* in which Culhwch, rode out on horseback, surrounded by his dogs, to seek Arthur. Anyone who loves dogs will instantly picture the cavorting hounds: -

- ...two greyhounds, whitebreasted, brindled, in front of him, with a collar of red gold about the neck of either, from shoulder swell to ear. The one that was on the left side would be on the right, and the one that was on the right side would be on the left, like two sea-swallows sporting around him.

Does *Gwâl-y-Filiart* preserve the similar thoughts of a long dead farmer, immersed in the re-kindled literary traditions of the 18th century Vale?

So much for whimsy - does anyone have a real derivation for the name? Is the translation even correct? - *filiart* does not appear in *Y Geiriadur Mawr* so it is an uncommon or archaic word, and too close to *ffwlbart* (polecat) for comfort? The English “fulmart”, for polecat, is even closer. The word element “-mart” appears also in Pine marten.

Obituary note by Phil Watts

We have received the sad news that Mrs. Elsa Lewis died, on the 30th of October. The funeral was private, with no flowers by Elsa’s request. We have respected this, but the committee asked me to write to Elizabeth, Elsa and Enoch’s daughter.

So many people from Llancarfan past and present will have known Elsa as the ever supportive wife of Enoch Lewis. They came to the village when it was thought important for the headteacher to live the area, and how well they fitted in to this situation. Village life and school lives were much enriched by their presence.

I have written to Elizabeth: - “I believe your mother was our oldest member, she kept in touch with many of the Llancarfan folk past and present. We hope that you will be able to keep up the contact with the many friends that you and your mother have in the village. The Committee look forward to seeing you on happier times and hope that Llancarfan will still have a special place in your life.”

60th Birthdays by Phil Watts Today we attended a celebration of Joann Scott-Quelch and Sam Smith's 60th birthday described as a diamond occasion. It was one of those notable occasions that Llancarfan is capable of putting on, attended by over, a hundred friends and relatives.

We were given a curry lunch by John and Sue Millard at the *Fox and Hounds*, to their usual high standard. We wish Joan and Sam happiness and good health for many-more years.

As usual on these occasions somebody has something to say about Llancarfan Society. This time it was Tony Thomas and Malcolm Davies. Tony pointed out couple of spelling errors in the last newsletter so I congratulated him on still reading it. He agreed that if you do nothing you make less mistakes!

Malcolm's point was with regard to the War Memorial. Some while ago I showed him a photograph of the unveiling of the War Memorial in 1920, together with a programme of the event. He felt that we should have covered this in the Newsletter, I thought this had been done but cannot find anything. PW

[**Editorial** note - no this has not been done - I shall put it together as another of our WW1 series for Newsletter 116 or 117. Thank’s Malcolm for the suggestion. See page 8 for a response to Tony].

Remembrance Sunday was again marked by the laying of a wreath on the Monument by the Chairperson of the Community Council Marith Williams. A large number of people braved

adverse conditions in joining Rev. Malcolm Davies in a short service of remembrance before the two minutes silence. Every one of all denominations were invited into church for communion, which resulted in a full church again. The A.T.C. Cadets were in attendance, something that we have associated with our retiring vicar who will be greatly missed in the two parishes. Many thanks Malcolm we hope you have a long and happy retirement. The smiles, shown in the photograph in Newsletter 114 have spread to many faces.

Statements, made in 1879, of two members of the family of Thomas Davies of Llanbethery

Jeff Alden, Editor of the Cowbridge and District Local History Society Newsletter, came across the following notes, made by a Cowbridge Solicitor in the late 19th C. I reproduce them here as a fragment of history which will otherwise remain unpublished. Many thanks to Jeff for thinking of us.

Mrs Sephora Kemp - formerly Sephora Thomas - 39 last April

My mother was the daughter of the late Thomas Davies senr of *Little Mill*, and sister of Thomas Davies formerly of Lambathery. My mother lived with my grandfather and grandmother at *Little Mill* at the time of her death. I was then about 2 years old. I was brought up from my birth with my grandfather and grandmother. I was born at *Little Mill*. They moved from *Little Mill* to Kenson near Penmark when I was nine years old; they took me with them.

They lived at Kenson 7 ½ years - I was with them the whole while. From Kenson they moved to Bonvilstone - they lived there two years - I was with them there. From Bonvilstone they moved to Lambathery. My grandmother was there a short time before my uncle Thomas died - she went backwards and forwards there during his illness. Directly after his death my grandfather and grandmother moved to Lambathery; they took me with them there. My grandmother died about 12 months after she got to Lambathery. My grandfather lived 5 years and 7 months after grandmother. My grandfather moved to St Athan about 2 ½ years after my grandmother's death. He took me with him there and we lived with my aunt and uncle Mr and Mrs Norman. After my grandmother's death, my grandfather told me he would allow me £5 a year. I considered it a gift from him himself. My uncle Edmund never paid me anything. I considered myself my grandfather and grandmother's child - I always called them father and mother; I never lived with my father and mother.... After my grandfather's death my uncle Edmund paid for my place at St Athan to my aunt Mrs Norman (4/- a week). I was with Uncle and Aunt Norman for 10 years.

Mrs Thomas Penllyne, 22 May 1879

I was 33 years old last January - I was at home when my father and mother lived at Lambathery - my mother died before my father about 15 months. My father made his will on 13th June 1859 and he died a few months afterwards.

When my mother died there was a person of the name of Peggy Thomas nursing her and she remained as housekeeper for my father after my mother's death. Peggy Thomas now lives at St Hilary. After my father's death, my grandfather and grandmother (my father's father and mother) came to live at our home - my grandmother (Gwenilian David) lived there about 13 months when she died and was buried from Lambathery. When my grandfather and grandmother came to live with us they brought a grandchild that they had brought up, Sephora Thomas, a cousin of mine. This young woman had an illegitimate child soon after. My grandfather and aunt Mrs Norman took her to Cardiff to be examined by a doctor and when they found she was in the f. w. she left our place, and soon afterwards we left Lambathery. Our home was broken up and everything was sold by my uncle Edmund - there was no regular sale - my grandfather paid 10/- a week for his place.

When my father died, the following children were living: -

- Jenkin, who was apprenticed before my father's death
- John, he was taken to my aunt at Penkirn
- myself - I went to Penkirn after the home was broken up
- Thomas - he went to my uncle Edmund at Penarth

- Mary Anne - went to Penkirn. After that she went to Penarth to my uncle and did a servant's work - she was never put in school by him
- Morris - went to John Morgan of Aberthaw as a servant. He was at last apprenticed to John Norman, my aunt Cathy's husband, but got drowned at Pontypridd.
- Edmund. He went as a servant to Mr Jenkins, Lambathery. After this he was put in school in Cardiff, then apprenticed to Mr Evan Thomas, Drapers, Cardiff. - - - Margaret - she went with grandfather to live with his daughter Mrs Norman at St Athan; stopped there till she went into service.

Editorial notes 1. Do we have anyone in the Society with links to the families mentioned in these documents? 2. We have previously devoted space to idiosyncratic spellings of Llanvithyn, Broomwell, Bonvilston and others. Lambathery is yet another of these, presumably related to transcription of Vale "dialect". 3. "Family way" (or euphemistically, f.w.) meaning pregnant. I had not realised this was so old an expression, but OED gives a quotation from 1796.

Patricia Moore, who was Glamorgan Archivist for almost 20 years, died earlier this year. Many members will remember Patricia speaking to us at Annual General Meetings. She was a wonderfully kind and helpful person who gave a great deal to South Wales. She will be missed.