

LLANCARFAN



LEGEND HAS IT THAT
ST CADOC WAS AIDED BY
A DEER WHEN HE BUILT
HIS MONASTERY IN
LLANCARFAN

SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 130

MAY 2006

Announce Announcements, Local Events,

Society:

- June 25th Local Petanque - Ruth Watts Shield
July 7th Mystery Coach Trip and Dinner
contact Gwyneth Plows 01446 781431
Sept. 2nd Village Show
Sept. 3rd Flower Festival in St Cadoc's Church
Sept. 30th Society Dinner for details please
contact Sheila Mace 01446 750691 or
Gwyneth Plows on 01446 781431

Ladies Tuesday Club

- June 20th Summer Outing - Gloucester with a
trip on the river
July 18th Supper Supper - and Bring an unusual item.
Sept. 19th Supper - to be announced

Births, Deaths, Weddings, etc.

Death: Elsie Muir.

Newsletter by e-mail - if you should elect to receive the Newsletter by E-mail, this would provide you with coloured photos where applicable, e.g. the fox in the willows was lovely in colour and really stood out well – it lost its appeal in black and white. It will save the Society money and members of the committee the time and energy of preparing the newsletter for the post. All it will take is an email to Alan Taylor on a.j.taylor@btconnect.com or a phone call.

Contributions to the Newsletter should be sent to: Ann Ferris, Fordings, Llanarf, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3AD,

Local Correspondent: Alan Taylor, Windrush, Llanarf, CF62 3AD or e-mail a.j.taylor@btconnect.com

Subscriptions/Membership Secretary and Mailing Enquiries: John Gardner, The Willows, Fonnon, CF62 3BJ. Tel. 01446 710054

Secretary: Sheila Mace, Pelydryn, Llanbethery, Barry, CF62 3AN. Tel. 01446 750691.

Llanarf Society Administrative and Web-site:

e-mail: llansoc@llanarf.f9.co.uk

Web-site: www.llanarf.com or
www.llanarf.f9.co.uk

On Friday 19th May, the year 6 pupils went to "Crucial Crew" Safety zone in Nantgarw. It is run by the South Wales police and was most enjoyable. When the pupils were there they learnt about what to do in a fire, how to take care of themselves by the railways and learnt about drugs and alcohol. They also learnt how to do first aid if somebody fell off their bike. There was a reconstructed shop where the pupils had a shopping list and had to say which things they were allowed to buy. There was also a reconstructed pub where we learned about the legal ages for buying alcohol and the affects that alcohol can have on your body. They were very well behaved and had a good time.

On Monday 22nd May the infants got to watch a play in the hall performed by Theatre Iolo called "Whose boots?" it went on for 1hr. It was about a lady who pretended that shoes were people and she told a story about a girl and she liked to dance. One day the queen said, "Can I see you dance?" and the queen steals the shoes and in the end, the girl gets the shoes back. The infants really enjoyed the performance.

The Years 4+5 played a rugby tournament at The Cardiff Arms Park for a rugby tournament. There were a lot of very good teams there but they weren't as good as us. We went through to the semi final and played All Saints from Barry, we beat them 5 tries to 4. The tries were scored by:
Joe Walsh
Josh Thomas
Harri Thomas
Logan Bibb and
Gabriel Shires
They won a very fair game!
The A team got through to the final and played a team from Cardiff. The Llancarfan team won that game 6 tries to 3 and so were champions of the whole tournament.

President and Vice President's Letter to the Newsletter - (Ruth and Phil Watts)

It is with great pleasure that Ruth and I have agreed to accept the posts of President and Vice President respectively, as decided at the Society's Annual General Meeting in March. We consider it to be a privilege and an honour to be asked.

We both attended the first society meeting in the Fox and Hounds in April 1987 when there were twelve people present. The first decision was to hold a dinner in the Fox and Hounds, little did we know that later we would have mailing addresses for 250 people. A one-page newsletter was produced outlining our intentions.

There has been a Society dinner every year since then and other functions organised have been Whist Drives, Craft Fairs, Barn Dances, Hog Roasts, Barbecues, Mystery Trips, Treasure Hunts and the ever popular May Day Walks.

A new venture this year is a village show in the village hall and a flower festival in the church, the show on the Saturday and the flower festival on the Sunday, the 2nd and 3rd of September. This is bound to widen our horizons and bring us into contact with neighbouring villages.

Two calendars, a pictorial book and 130 editions of the newsletter have been produced. We have been involved in all these things, so becoming President and Vice President of the Society, is a bit like moving from the House of Commons to the House of Lords, in the political world.

Now we have to consider what we do while holding these offices. We will do as little or as much as we are able according to what our health will allow.

We are pleased to say that Ruth is being well looked after in the nursing home. We would also like to thank the many visitors that have taken the time and effort to visit.

Ruth wishes to apologise for the delay in producing the second part of her story in the

newsletter. With the co-operation of Ann Ferris we now have the full story in 129 and 130 issues of the newsletter.

Last week while attending the funeral of Elsie Muir (formerly Harris of the Fox and Hounds), I was reminded that as school children how we used to ring a bell that hung on a string outside the wooden sweet shop that stood on a piece of ground opposite the Fox, in front of the Woodlands and out of the Fox would come one of the Harris family to serve us with our daily ration of sweets. Very often this would be Elsie. Also known as 'little Elsie', in the Harris family - there was another Elsie known as 'big Elsie'. Little Elsie was married to Ken Muir who was part of the Muir family that used The Nook (now called Morningside) as a summer residence before the 1939-45 war.

We will be writing a page for the newsletter in the future editions, reminders from the past, that's what we know most about.

Annual General Meeting

President & Vice President: Ruth & Phil Watts
Chairman: Mike Crosta
Vice Chairman: Alan Taylor
Secretary: Sheila Mace
Treasurer: Sue Taylor
Subscriptions / Membership
Secretary: John Gardener
Newsletter Co-ordinator: Ann Ferris
Committee:
Graham Brain, Phillip Gammon, Jean Hunt,
Graham Jenkins, Mick Mace, Gwyneth Plows,
Ann Radcliffe, Joy and Tony Rees.

Auditor: Robert Hutchings

Newsletter Committee: Jean Hunt, Phillip Gammon, Graham Jenkins, Phil Watt, Jackie Chugg.

Tractors by John Gardener

Further to David Evans' article on the Fordson Tractor, there were two models, a Fordson Standard and a Fordson Commercial.

I do not think you could fit a rear spiked wheel to the Commercial, as it was faster than the Standard model. They were painted in three colours, green, navy blue and orange; what was signified by the three colours, I do not know (come on you farm lads amongst the members of the Society let us have an answer).

Ted Williams of Llancadle Farm had a Commercial Model and it was very fast and was fitted with wide slick (smooth) tyres, in fact it was too fast for me I thought I could go through the gateway into the Cowbell field (opposite Cuba Cottage) from the Pool field without throttling down – result one gatepost down and one treble on the wagon broken.

The Fordson was known for poor brakes; the brake was operated through the clutch pedal and the brake operated a brake pad onto the flywheel (no pad on the wheels).

A very good restored model is operating at the Amelia Trust Farm, Five Mile Lane. What a difference to today's tractors with their power steering, everything hydraulically operated.

What about the Fordson Major your Dad had David?

--ooOoo--

Valediction –Mick Mace, OBE, CStJ, QFSM, Past President

Members who attended the recent Annual General Meeting will, I hope, be aware that I hold very strong views as to the dignity of the office of President and on the duties and responsibilities taken on upon acceptance. I feel no need to enlarge on this here and these few words are intended to convey my appreciation of your support to the Society during my period in office.

These words are not truly a farewell, since a proposition that I should rejoin the committee as an elected member was accepted, with some reservations and I am happy to serve in this capacity.

--ooOoo--

Coincidences given to me by Jean Davies

Abraham Lincoln was elected to Congress in 1846.

John F Kennedy was elected to Congress in 1946.

Abraham Lincoln was elected President in 1860.

John F Kennedy was elected President in 1960.

The names of Lincoln and Kennedy each have seven letters.

Both men were concerned with Civil Rights.

The wives of both of them lost children while living in the White House.

Both Presidents were shot on a Friday.

Both Presidents were shot in the head.

Lincoln's secretary was named Kennedy.

Kennedy's secretary was named Lincoln.

Both were assassinated by Southerners.

Both were succeeded by Southerners.

Both successors were named Johnson.

Andrew Johnson who succeeded Lincoln was born in 1808.

Lyndon Johnson who succeeded Kennedy was born in 1908.

John Wilkes Booth who assassinated Lincoln was born in 1839.

Lee Harvey Oswald who assassinated Kennedy was born in 1939.

Lincoln was shot in the 'Kennedy Theatre'.

Kennedy was shot in a Lincoln car.

Booth ran from the theatre and was caught in a Warehouse.

Oswald ran from a warehouse and was caught in a Theatre.

Both Booth and Oswald were assassinated before their trials.

Ruth Watts' Story – continued ...

It is now sixteen years and one hundred and four Llancarfan Society Newsletters since I said I

would finish my story. I only hope that it is found interesting enough for it to be worth waiting for.



Ruth Groves 1946

The Llancarfan part of my 21st birthday celebrations took place in the Church Hall as part of one of the Church Guild Monday evening meetings. I was stopped from entering the Church Hall - I had to wait in Hillside where Miss Owen a teacher at the school lodged. Tudor Liscombe played a big part in organising the evening. I was presented with a large card in the shape of a key, which many of those present signed. I remember there was Dilys Lewis, Gwynne Liscombe, Tom Bryer, Beatrice Griffiths, Dorothy Jenkins (later Bryer), Grace Morgan, Alice John, Heather and Joan Morgan, Ruth Jenkins, Doris and Kath Watts, about thirty people altogether.

The next part of my birthday celebrations took me home to Watford (there is another Watford girl in Llancarfan - Mary Gammon) where I was joined by Dilys, Phil and Gwynne to meet my sister in law Denise, brothers Jim and Eric and foster mother Marie. The boys stayed over night in the YMCA in Watford. We all went to London, had a meal in Lyons Corner House and

afterwards to a show to see Brigadoon, starring Edmond Hockridge, a Canadian who came over with the Canadian forces during the war and stayed in this country. I do not remember having a cake, perhaps that was because goods were still rationed, or maybe it was considered too 'posh'.

In 1950 the women's Land Army disbanded and my work with Mr & Mrs Date came to an end. I wanted to continue working on the land, so I asked Mr Vivian Thomas if he wanted a Land Girl - quote 'he didn't want a Land Girl on his farm'. It has been revealed by Joyce Neal that Vivian had a bad experience of employing a Land Girl working on his farm during the war (namely Joyce) so perhaps he did not want to repeat the experience. I found a temporary post working at a dock office in Cardiff for three months. I tried to join the police force, but at that time they would not take anyone who wore glasses. I moved to Cartref in Llanbethery to lodge with Mrs Jean Jones. I managed to gain admission to the Prison Service, trained at Wakefield and worked at the Borstal Institution for girls at Aylesbury where my post was Dairy Farm Officer supervising some of the more trusted girls. Phil was in the RAF and used to visit me on weekends.

Phil and I were married in St Cadoc's Church, Llancarfan on 30 August 1952. Our marriage certificate shows that my place of residence was Penylan, Llancarfan. To be married in the church you had to reside in the parish. This was not strictly true because I was working in Aylesbury, however, it did conform to the law. The night before the wedding Phil slept at The Woodlands in Llancarfan and I slept at Abernant. Phil called in on his way home from his 'stag night' at the Red Lion, Bonvilston, with a drink for me. On the morning of the wedding Trixie Phillips sent a Pimms with full decoration for me to Abernant from the Fox and Hounds. My wedding dress was made by Heather Lowe (nee Morgan) who at that time worked for The House of Anthony in St Mary Street, Cardiff; the bridesmaids dresses were made by Mrs Jenny Weight, Chapel House and the bridesmaids carried baskets of sweet peas supplied by Charlie Deere, of the Red Lion, Bonvilston. The vicar

was Leonard Payne. I was given away by my brother Jim, and the organist was our life long friend, Barbara Milhaisen (nee Jenkins) who had to be trained specially for the occasion. The reception was held in the church hall with catering by Phyllis and Mary Griffiths. No alcohol was allowed, only sherry for the toast. Best man was Gwynne Liscombe and the bridesmaids were Anne Thomas, Phil's niece, Daphne Watts, Phil's cousin and Claire Fry, Jim's daughter. Many of us adjourned to the Fox and Hounds where children were fed crisps through the windows of the pub. Trixie Phillips had just taken over the licence, she didn't want to risk allowing children in the pub. The honeymoon was spent in Southsea; the highlight of the week was to hear Harry Secombe sing at the Pier Pavilion. We arrived in Southsea without any luggage. Dilys and Gwynne's car carrying the luggage broke down on the way to Cardiff Railway Station and didn't arrive until after our train had left. We had asked Dilys and Gwynne to take care of our cases so that there would not be any interference by such 'pranksters' as Griff Williams.

We continued our separate ways, me at the Borstal and Phil in the R.A.F until 1953. When Phil came out of the R.A.F, I retrained as a telephone operator at the telephone exchange overlooking Cardiff Arms Park (excellent view on International Days). We had the loan of a home in Fox Street, Cardiff by Miss Watkins (Watty) a friend of mine in the Borstal Service. We spent Monday to Friday there and weekends at Abernant. Watty's parents had died two years previously and she could not face the task of dealing with their belongings and the house. Watty offered us the use of the house indefinitely. It was a very kind offer, which we could not refuse. We were responsible for all the bills and general upkeep and decoration. Watty gave the key to Phil to look the house over. He opened the door, cleared away two years' mail, lit a fire and generally tidied up. Later on that day he went off to play football and decided to call back to make sure that the fire and everything else was safe. Approaching the house he noticed there were a group of people talking to a policeman. Watty had omitted to give Phil a letter of

authority to enter and the neighbours had been keeping their own house vigil. The situation was sorted out amicably, we lived there for five years. We made many improvements but it wasn't our own.

Russell was born in 1956.

We continued to spend weekends at Abernant until 1958. At this time we obtained our first motorised transport – a Honda 50 cc moped which Phil used most of the time and sometimes all three of us rode on this little bike up and down the Abernant lane.

In 1958 we made a big decision. The call of the country was in our blood and we decided to give up our home in Cardiff and move in with Doris, Bill and Kathleen at Abernant. The house at this time was in a bad state of repair, with the front wall leaning out propped up by a Harry Hughes support (two tree trunks cut from Bassett's Wood). The roof leaked, there was no hot water system, no electricity, and cooking by a Valor oil stove, supplemented by coal fire ovens, no indoor toilets and a 'privy' at the bottom of the garden (male job to empty and bury in the garden, or could it be the river?) It was a brave decision to give up the comparative comfort of the Cardiff home! The aim was to provide new accommodation for two families (Ruth, Phil and Russell as well as Doris, Bill and Kathleen) at Abernant. At this time the only new properties in Llancafarn were the shop and post office and school master's house at Maes yr afon. Plans were drawn up for a four bedroom farmhouse, planning was passed, builder's estimates obtained for £3,250, £3,800 and £4,200. We chose the cheapest – Ray Vizard, Penmark. But we were unable to obtain a mortgage. The farm of twenty six acres was not a profitable concern and the only income that could be considered was Phil's, even though we owned a valuable amount of land. Ray Vizard said that he could build a bungalow for £2,000 so we did that and also repaired the cottage. By August 1961 we moved into a brand new bungalow, but unfortunately with no electricity! We had to wait another two months for the South Wales Electricity Board to

connect up. On that day Phil put all the lights on to welcome me home from work.

This was a very good arrangement with the young family supporting the older family on the same site, remembering that Kath had suffered epilepsy since the age of 13.

Bill had retired from work at St Athan Aerodrome. The old folk did the baby sitting and the young ones did the 'donkey' work. This arrangement allowed me to resume work as a telephonist with David Morgan, The Hayes, Cardiff. (Sad that 2005 saw the closing of David Morgan).

Phil worked for Cardiff Corporation as a rent collector by day, travelling to Cardiff on a Tiger Cub motor cycle and taking me with him to the Hayes or to the bus stop. I worked more hours than Phil in Cardiff so I came home by Western Welsh bus to the Red Lion, Bonvilston and he gave me another ride home. On one of these mornings we had an accident. Phil went over the handlebars and I went up in the air landing on the back of the bike facing the other way, having cracked a bone in my foot; it had to be placed in plaster. Phil was already in plaster suffering from a slipped disc. The plaster saved him from serious injury in the accident. The bed had to support a lot of extra weight!

Phil did the farming, rearing calves, making hay, hedging, gardening and anything else that needed doing. Together we constructed hay barns and sheds to accommodate the animals. For the calves we obtained six railway wagons at the princely price of £10 each.

In 1961 we bought a 1937 Morris 8 car which had a running board, for £12 in which we both learnt to drive. We kept it for twelve months and sold it again for £12 and purchased an almost new Ford Anglia van for £340 from the Old Post Garage, Bonvilston. Unfortunately, the garage had not cleared the outstanding money on the van and it was just about to be repossessed. A worrying time but fortunately it was settled. Other people were not so lucky with this garage.

In 1961 Kay Heath and I joined the St Hilary Women's Institute (I am still a member). This resulted in making many life long friends. At this time I also attended Social Service class which was held in the Baptist Vestry in Llancarfan, run by Mrs Ruth Jenkins and Mrs Sarah Sweet. This gave me more friends and kept me in touch with the residents of Llancarfan.

Vivian our daughter was born in December 1962 just before the heavy snow which cut us off from the outside world for many weeks. The new baby needed my loving care for a few years and I was not able to resume my work as a telephonist at David Morgan's. Russell started school in St Nicholas, taken by Phil in the morning on his way to work and in the afternoon I met him off the bus at the A48 and brought him home on the saddle of my bike!

When Vivienne started school in Llancarfan there was a need for lunchtime dinner supervisors in the school. Dilys and I did this for a while, until Dilys became school secretary at Pendoylan Church in Wales School and I was approached by Trixie Phillips and Edgar Balchin to be receptionist, booking clerk, telephonist and many other things, except cooking and serving beer in the Fox and Hounds. I did this until I retired in 1996 and Edgar had left the Fox and Hounds.

The sixties was a time of change in Llancarfan; the Fox had moved on from being just a pub to a pub with a restaurant and customers came from far and wide. New people moved into the village. John and Diana Atkin were the first of the new builders. Nancy and Dick Dobbie had moved from Brook Cottage to the Bakehouse. John and Jenny Morris lived through the fifties in Glan yr afon and then moved to The Rectory in Llantrithyd. Gwynne and Dilys Liscombe and Jehoiada Lewis developed Broadhayes field (an addition of seven houses to the village). Further building in orchards and the paddock at Broadhayes added another five properties and the Old Mill and cowshed (The Willows) were converted to dwelling houses, John and Sally Etherington built Ceffyl Ddu, Jim and Brenda Grove converted the Wesleyan Chapel, Blair and Cridwyn Evans took on TytoMaen Farm, after the

death of Frank Rowland. Penylan House reverted to two cottages for John and Ann Cann and Phil and Joan Quelch.

The influx of new people meant that we were able to have new friends, acquaintances and neighbours. There were many house warming parties and celebrations. We held a celebration party at Abernant when Llancarfan won The Best Kept Village Competition in 1963. Even Harry Hughes turned out for this one having played a significant part in the tidying up that went on in the village.

Although we lived out of the village we still managed to meet new friends and neighbours without becoming involved in things controversial (sometimes termed 'opting out'). The school, pub and restaurant flourished and made the village a desirable place to live. The brook burst its banks on a few occasions, flooding the Fox several times. Once after a hailstorm a helicopter landed on the car park to see if the residents were safe.

1972 saw the arrival in the village of my friends Derek and Audrey Porter with children Stephen, Simon and Timothy. More residents in the village saw the growth of Llancarfan Ladies Tuesday Club. The group of ladies of which I am still a member did many things that made the village an exceptional place to live in. Some of the things I enjoyed doing with them was the fancy dress tug of war on Boxing Day, always supported by Trixie Phillips and Edgar Balchin. The Fox provided the 'hot toddy' for the participants of the tug of war. Edgar also provided the turkey and vegetables for the Christmas Dinner that the Tuesday Club gave for Senior Citizens of the area. Unfortunately, we have all grown old together and are unable to have this enjoyable occasion. We also had many enjoyable times when British Rail ran mystery trips. I have enjoyed myself immensely with my friends from Tuesday Club raising money for Charity. (The Jumble Sale has always been a success).

As time went by our farming efforts dwindled, not able to compete without more input. Geof

and Sue Evans of Garnllwyd had the use of our land as did Maggie and Graham Levy of Llanvythin Mill.

In 1980 Phil bought me two donkeys for my birthday; Russell walked them from Ford Farm. It should have been a surprise but I passed Russell and the donkeys in the village. There was a lot of cursing and swearing going on. The donkeys were very stubborn – they weren't enjoying the walk! Phil only wanted to buy one donkey but Mrs Darby, the previous owner didn't want to part the mother and son (Fidgy and Gronow). Gronow still lives at Abernant under the care of Jane and Paul Eddings.

My father in law, Bill Watts died in 1972 (one of the first duties of Father Field as the new incumbent of St Cadoc's Church was his funeral). Doris Watts died in 1980 which left Kathleen living on her own in the cottage before moving into our bungalow for greater security. Russell rebuilt the cottage. Vivienne married Meurig Davies in 1985 in St Cadoc's Church with the reception at the Fox and Hounds. I am proud to have two grandsons Rhodri and Rhys living in Barry.



Ruth at Abernant 1990

Phil retired in 1992 and it was becoming a bigger struggle to keep Abernant to the standard that we would like. We began to think of moving nearer to the Doctor, Chemist and Supermarket, etc.

With these thoughts in mind I always wanted to live in Cowbridge. However, in 1997 we moved to Vivienne's house in Barry; she moved to the Knap and Debbie and Jonathan Pearce took on our bungalow. This was about the time that I retired and since then Phil and I have enjoyed playing bowls at Rhoose and Millwood in Barry and many other things in our retirement.



Ruth on her Golden Wedding Day

In 2002 we celebrated our Golden Wedding, the family arranged for us to be transported by a 'posh' car to Llancafán for a blessing of the marriage, conducted by the Rev. Malcolm Davies in St Cadoc's Church, the guests went through the ritual of tying the gates for money to be thrown, then a buffet in the Fox by Sue and John Millard. We had many presents and a holiday at Lake Garda, Italy.



Since the formation of the Llancafán Society in 1987, we have been able to be reunited with old friends as well as new by attending the various functions organised by the Society. I think that I have been very fortunate to have lived most of my life in and around the village of Llancafán, especially as it seems to have attracted so many nice people that it has been my pleasure to call my friends.

In retrospect it would probably have been worth while making some research into the circumstances of how I came to be left in a telephone box in Elm Grove, Cricklewood aged about two months (this is how I came to have the surname of Groves) in November 1929. Sad as this act was, if it had not taken place I would not have come to Llancafán, I would not have had a foster mother Marie, brothers Jim, Eric and Jack, a husband Phil and many other things would not have happened.

I have been happy the way my life has been. Many thanks to everyone.

--ooOoo--

Primroses: Spring Comes to Llancarfan

Primrose first born child of Ver means Spring-time's Harbinger"

After an interminable and weary Winter, the clusters of primroses in and around Llancarfan are a welcome harbinger of longed-for Spring. "Summer Time" of course, occurred two weeks ago, but, as a wit once observed, Winter in Britain is gradually followed by Winter!

Recently, I read that the wild primrose, or *primula vulgaris*, is traditionally the first wild flower of the year and a symbol of Spring. During a period of confused Seasons, the greyness of Winter has almost overnight been transformed by masses of golden daffodils, scarlet tulips, cerulean blue grape hyacinths and pale yellow primroses shining out from grassy lawns and banks, but not out shone by the brassier yellow of the lesser celandine, which is growing everywhere in and around the village. Mounds of celandine creep thickly on our gravelled drive, and somehow, "celandine" or 'ranunculus ficaria' sounds much more poetic than 'weed'! According to Chambers Dictionary, the celandine – both greater and lesser, was supposed to flower when the swallows came, and to perish when they went. The name itself is derived from the Greek 'chelidonium' or swallow. This afternoon (22nd April), the sun suddenly emerged from behind grey clouds and the temperature soared to a balmy summer's day.

The morning had been grey and wintry, so the sudden transformation seemed like magic. We strolled round the village admiring green willows, blossom and in neighbouring gardens some magnificent magnolias, the blooms just opening before our very eyes (or so it seemed). Along the riverbank the daffodils were beginning to fade, but everywhere there were primroses, and nestling under hedgerows they contrasted delicately with misty blue 'forget-me-nots'.



Wild primroses or 'prima rosa' (from the Latin "First Rose") were, according to one account (more imaginative than accurate, perhaps) used in ancient times to treat paralysis and gout, and it was also believed that the flowers originated in Paradise. The account added that the flowers can be made into jam and wine and that the five petals represent birth, initiation, consummation, repose and death, whereas the six – petalled brings luck in love and marriage!

I hasten to emphasise the fact that there is a stern warning to the reader **not** to experiment with jam and wine making or amateur treatment of paralysis and gout without seeking "the advice of a qualified herbalist"!! As for bringing luck in love and marriage – one has a nasty suspicion that rather more than a six petalled primrose is needed to ensure conjugal felicity!! I can well understand the association of primroses with Paradise, but why has so much been written by poets and playwrights (e.g. Shakespeare) about "primrose paths" leading to Hell?

There are, certainly, many other myths and legends relating to primroses. Apparently Germans believe that primroses would reveal the way to hidden treasure and called the plant "Schusselblume" or "Key Flower". The stories are endless – carry a primrose flower and peer over the petals to see fairies, or in Ireland, on May Day, primrose balls were hung on cows' tails to deter witches!

And on the subject of May Day, which will soon be with us, a one-time native of Llancarfan, told

me, at the end of a May Day walk where we ended up at St Cadoc's – a fascinating tale (which she had heard from her father and grandfather) of underground passages leading from the Church to the monastery! This fitted in beautifully with my fantasies of ghostly monks flitting through the fields which I can see from our bedroom window which looks towards Culverly and the Grange! Sadly, I haven't yet seen any ghostly figures – the nearest being a black and white shape, which could have been clerical, but turned out to be a wandering heifer!!

However, as I hung on the description of the aforementioned "underground passages" we were rudely disturbed by a loud snort and disapproving "Nonsense" from a gentleman who obviously did not believe in such stories!! Despite this disapproval, I shall continue to delight in legends, and to love the idea of Saint Cadoc who "was aided by a deer when he built his monastery in Llanccarfan". And the magic of this Easter's transformation from Winter to Spring reminds me of the Chronicles of Narnia by C S Lewis written for the very young, those of us old enough to have reached our "second childhood" and also those lucky mortals who delight in their inner child (but never in childishness!). In the Chronicles of Narnia, the Lion, Aslan, transform Winter into Eternal Spring and on another level Winter is transformed into Spring and the Resurrection by the Eternal Creator.

Happy Easter!

--ooOoo--

Obituaries

Mavis Coles : 1929- 2005 (written by Barbara Milhuesen)

In 2005 I lost two of my best friends, both had lived at various times at Ford Cross. My aunt Glenys Stonham (Evans) died early, in the year, a founder member of the Llanccarfan Society, then Mavis a few months later.

Mavis was a teenager when she arrived in Llanccarfan in 1941 and spent the war years with

us, these years were to influence her for the rest of her life. Her mother soon became Clerk to the Parish Council, then her twin sisters were born, the family only moved when her father's work took him to another area.

Mavis then married not a Llanccarfan boy, although never short of admirers and had three daughters. I lost close contact with her until the inception of the Llanccarfan Society.

Mavis was one of the first people to respond to Phil Watts' little notice in the GEM.

We owe a huge debt to her for all her office skills in the early production of the newsletters. There was this wonderful teamwork between the Editor, John Etherington, Phil Watts, Derek and Pam Higgs – me I just folded up the finished work and helped put it into envelopes, lick stamps and deliver where possible by hand. None of your e-mail and modern communication but still very effective and I felt it a privilege.

My friendship then with Mavis had very special repercussions, which were when I went to France to sign for my house, my husband couldn't come, but what better companion could I have but Mavis, she had never been abroad before, but this did not deter her, she came armed with her compass which broke, we got lost but once she bought a new one we were soon back on track. She came a few years later a second time, we had an extraordinary time visiting Lourdes, it was to be the last holiday with Peter my husband who died two weeks later in France. Mavis and I returned to Wales both to carry on working. Mavis by now had a taste for travel she enjoyed cruises and foreign holidays. She had confessed to me that she was still looking for 'Mr Wonderful' and in later years Len would come with her to the Dinners. She enjoyed going with him to the Jazz Festivals at Brecon.

Mavis by now had had retired and she and Len came to live in Rhoose, she had returned to the Vale and was content. Mavis never grew old, she brought lasting happiness to those she came in contact with, she is missed by her family, not

forgotten by her friends and we are all grateful for what she gave so willingly to our lives.

**Elsie Muir – nee Harris aged 85 years
(written by Graham Jenkins)**

Elsie Harris was the youngest child of David and Amelia Harris who were the landlord and lady of the Fox and Hounds, Llancarfan. Until the family retired Elsie helped her parents, serving in the bar and their small sweet shop opposite.

Later, she took a position in the Barry Post Office before marrying her husband Ken. The Muir family rented 'The Nook' as a holiday cottage and this is how Elsie and Ken met.

Following their marriage Elsie and Ken lived firstly in Cowbridge and latterly in Bridgend.

In recent years she was very much involved in her local Bridgend Community and was a dedicated bowls player.

Elsie is survived by her husband Ken and her daughters Elizabeth and Lorna, to whom we express our sincere condolences.

--ooOoo--

Fishweir by Jeff Alden

Introduction by John Etherington: - During the 1980s and 90s, Sheena and I often cycled out to the northwestern part of Llancarfan parish to Gigman Bridge crossing the river Thaw, continued round through Flemingston and back home via St Athan. I always felt that *Fishweir*, which is just outside our parish, deserved mention in a Newsletter but never collected together the necessary information. Jeff Alden has now done it for us and the following article is reproduced with his kind permission, from the Cowbridge and District Local History Society Newsletter 57 (April 2005). It was written following a visit to Fishweir by a party of Society members.

Fishweir is one of the minor gentry houses of the Vale, situated in the Thaw valley between St

Mary Church and Flemingston. Like the *Bush* [which the party had visited for lunch], it was built in the mid-sixteenth century, and was first noted as the home of Thomas Bowen who had married Anne Kemeys of Cefn Mably (and was related to the Llanblethian Kemeys family). Their daughter Catherine became the first wife of Richard Bassett of Beaupre in about 1586. Their son,

Edward Bassett lived at Fishweir and was described as being of Fishweir when he married Catherine Carne of Nash Manor. The Bassetts got into financial difficulties as a result of the Civil War, and were forced to sell up. The purchaser of the house and lands was Sir Edward Mansell of Margam. Neither he nor any member of his family resided at Fishweir; it became a tenanted farm - perhaps fortunately for us, for the house was not modernised. It was left to the Bevans,* when they took over more than 20 years ago, to preserve all the early features which remain in the house.

One of the rooms downstairs was in a sorry state with a vestigial stone staircase; the room and the staircase have been rebuilt. The two principal rooms were the kitchen and the hall; the kitchen has a great fireplace, about 14½ feet wide, as befitted a gentry house. The fireplace in the hall, though smaller, contained a hiding place, just big enough to conceal a man. The hall also had wide stone arches over what were termed dais seats.

Upstairs, the great chamber over the kitchen has the remains of probably the original plaster frieze on two walls, with fleur de lis and Tudor rose devices among others. The loft showed modern steelwork as well as the original oak beams - and the burns of tallow candles dating back to when these were the servants' quarters.

Outside, the large stone-built barn - reputedly the tallest in Glamorgan - indicates the importance of Fishweir as a farm.

Thanks are due to Mr and Mrs Bevan for their welcome, their hospitality and an informative tour of the house.

Tdu Ty Du (1840) (*Black House, more likely*)

house of Llewellyn Du from 15th Century)

Sources RCAHM *The Early Castles* CR21;
Parochalia (1696) *Arch. Camb.* July 1911

Maps GRO D/D L1 V3 Map 2 (1745); Yates 1799;
 O/S 1811, 1833, 1875; *Tithe Map* 1840;
 CCL M.S.4.12/3 (1842).

Manorial GRO D/D Xio 1/1 (1480s);
 PRO E36/158 (1540); NLW 1991/460 (1570);
 GRO D/D Xge 25/1 (1666)

More details of some dwellings are in Malthouse publications by J. M. Cann - Medieval Walterston, Walterstone House, Mary Morgan's Cottage, History of Upper House (also in Newsletters Nos 110, 111 & 112) & The Middlehills (also in Newsletter 120)

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Apologies to Fran Winterbottom – I missed a line from her poem by Unknown.

If there is light in the soul
 There is beauty in the person,
 If there is beauty in the person
 There will be harmony in the house,
 If there is harmony in the house
 There will be order in the nation,
 If there is order in the nation,
 There will be peace in the world.

--ooOoo—

The oldest living object in Europe is a 6,000-year-old tree in Perthshire, Scotland.

The British Isles is made up of more than 6,000 islands

Houses in Moulton - Lyn Price (written by Phil Watts)

Ty-Uchaf – First house on the right from Barry owned by Jesus College, Oxford, and used as a farm cottage from time to time. In 1914 Frank Marsh in occupation, with seven children, Willie, Tom, Ernie, Ottomy, Tygella, Jack and Cliff. Frank worked at Newhouse Farm.

Tenancies – In the 1930's a family by the name of Berrow (I knew these children at school).

In 1940's-1964 the Roberts family lived there.

Ian Lock lived here, killed on motor bike.

Used as a workman's cottage until sold to Hawkins Antiques for £142,000.

Highfields – built by Dilwyn Price on the site of a ruin. Dilwyn moved from the Rise post 1964.

Three Horse Shoes – burnt down on 14th July 1962. Len Vaughan was in occupation, and the property had been thatched until then. The owners were probably Hancocks Brewery.

Moulton Court – Tom and Phebey (or Phoebe?) Richards 1923-1950's. Daughter Megan son Owen. Owen took on the farm with Kay until Owen's sudden death in 1968?

Beechcroft - formerly Friars Cottage occupied by Tom Mortimer. Rhys son worked for Harbottle, Llancadle. Moved to Aberthaw. Kay and Owen in 1951. orisons until demolition and Beechcroft constructed by Kay Richards after the death of Owen.

--ooOoo—

Great Quotes by Great Ladies

I refuse to think of them as chin hairs. I think of them as stray eyebrows. Janette Barber

Whatever women must do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily, this is not difficult. Charlotte Whitton

