

LLANCARFAN

SOCIETY



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A DEER WHEN HE BUILT
HIS MONASTERY IN
LLANCARFAN

NEWSLETTER 132

NOVEMBER 2006

Announce Announcements, Local Events,

Society:

Dec. 5th Social Evening 7.30pm all welcome

Programme for 2007 will be issued with the next Newsletter.

Please do not forget subscriptions are due for 2007 in January - payment slip is attached.

Ladies Tuesday Club

Dec. 10th Our Party

Jan. 16? New Year Lunch

for other activities in the village over the Christmas period please see the back page.

Births, Deaths, Weddings, etc.

Deaths:

Ruth Watts - 23rd August 2006

David Owen - September 2006

Helen Keeble - 14th October 2006

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 to: Ann Ferris, Fordings, Llanccarfann, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3AD,

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

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

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

Llanccarfann Society Administrative and Web-site:

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

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

News from Llancarfan Primary School

The infants from Llancarfan Primary School took a step back in time recently when they took part in a history workshop with local historian Nicola Bumett. The children are currently studying the topic of Homes and have been looking at how life at home was different in the past. At the history workshop they had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience of using a washing dolly and tub, using a smoothing iron, cleaning carpets with a carpet beater, grating soap flakes for washing clothes and using wet tea leaves and a broom to sweep the floor! The children all thoroughly enjoyed the experience, though appreciated that their mums and dads may well prefer the labour saving devices available today! !

by Mrs Lee-Jones



Harvest

Festival

Harvest is a time to celebrate the food God has given to us. This year we went down to the church and the school performed in front of the parents. Each class did something different like poems, songs and lots more. Janet Young read a story from the Bible, it was about God feeding the 5,000-one of the most famous stories in the Bible. Around the church there were lots of tins and packages of food that we brought in for the people that live on the streets. At the end the choir sang a song called " All things bright and beautiful" as the parents left with smiles.

by Lauren Evans and Hannah

Llancarfan - We are the Champions

On the 4/10/06 Llancarfan Primary went to "We are the Champions". This is a competition where year 5/6 pupils from schools in the Vale of Glamorgan get together and compete against each other in three challenges: swimming, tug of war and obstacle. In the swimming we had to jump into a rubber ring and swim a length of the pool with a cord of string attached to us. Once we reached the end we had to jump out and touch the wall then the people at the other end would pull back the rubber ring so the next person could go. In the tug of war if you got through the first round then you would go through to the final. If you won then you would get more points. We got through to the second round but we lost to y Bontfaen. In the obstacle we came joint first in the first heat and we came third in the final.

In the end we came third overall. Well done to all who were there.



Our new extension

Our new extension is coming along very well with high expectations of being finished well before the Christmas holidays. There is going to be a new staff room, Mrs. Morgan's office will be moved to the upstairs of the new extension, and downstairs there'll be a kitchen- where we will be having school dinners. Mrs Lee-Jones will be having a new classroom for her Y2's. They have also been work- ing on a meeting room for the school council.

by Logan and Lewis



by Joe and Harri

A sad farewell to our President – Mike Crosta, OBE, Chairman

We are very sad to report that our President, Ruth Watts, passed away on the 23rd August 2006 and was buried at Llancarfan church on the 1st September 2006 in the presence of a very large number of her family and friends who had travelled from far and wide.

St Cadoc's Church was bursting at its seams and the singing was enough "to raise the roof", as Ruth would have wished.

Ruth will be sadly missed by so many who have known and loved her for many years in this community and the Society. Not only will we feel her loss but we will also take great courage ourselves from the brave and cheerful way in which she coped with a long and painful illness.

President's Letter October 2006 – by Phil Watts : Life after President Ruth

Now that I have become President in succession to Ruth I have to make decisions without guidance. She always told me if I was right or wrong in one word or often a look of yes or no.

I have barriers to go through, many things to do to conform to her wishes. We had fifty-four years of happily married life. The last eighteen months I became almost a full time nurse. I have now moved into a vacuum, sometimes lonely. This has happened to many people before, they have come through it, so will I. We must move on. I wish to thank all those that sent messages, cards, letters, visits to hospitals and nursing home, attendance at the celebration of her life, and to remember her birthday at College Fields Nursing Home.

I am grateful that my health has allowed me to do all the things that I have been called upon to do. Ruth was an inspiration to us all. Using this inspiration I will face the future with confidence and remember the happy times.

The Society Dinner held at Cotterill Park Golf Club on the 30th September was a successful occasion allowing friends from far and wide to meet again. Barbara Milhuisen never misses a dinner, took a photograph of former pupils of Llancarfan School. We can look forward to seeing the photograph in a future edition of the newsletter.

I recently attended the funeral of Griff Martin, husband of Betty (ex Fox and Hounds). He was 93. What is the secret of long life? I think I know. It is to be born in Llancarfan or live with a person born in Llancarfan or having strong connection with the village. As well as Betty aged 90 and over, the following come to mind Lyn Price, Trixie Phillips, Marjorie Hobbs, and David Harris. Who are the others? Perhaps being a member of Llancarfan Society helps you to live longer! I have renewed my membership, have you renewed yours?

Prompted by these thoughts I went along to Bridgend to see Betty, accompanied by John Gardner. We found her with a very active mind, her body not so able but very adaptable with a zimmer frame. She is well cared for by family, friends and neighbours. What is remarkable is that at the age of 93 she does not need glasses to read.

I will try to recall some of the things she told us of the people of Llancarfan when she lived there and what life was like in those times. Betty delivered milk to the homes in the village by the means of a yoke over the shoulders and a pail either side before she went to school when Mr Rees Davies was the headmaster.

Betty's father, David Harris, was a stone mason and built a number of houses in the Llancarfan area with the help of his brother Alban who lived at the Whitehall Pub near Fonmon. Some examples are Flaxland House, the dairy at Walterston Fach, house opposite The Vines in Llanbethery. The Woodlands in Llancarfan and the river wall, the wall at the top of Llanvyithin Hill, and the river wall at Whitewell. His apprentice was Harry Hughes for some of these

jobs. Before he took on the Fox and Hounds, from Daniel Gibbon, David lived at Middle Hill now known as Talbots.

While the Harris family lived at the Fox and Hounds, Betty recalls the pub being flooded on a number of occasions. Once the water was so powerful that it flung an iron gate against the churchyard wall. Heavy rain had caused the pool behind the wood to overflow and rush through the space between The Woodlands and Cefyl Ddu (Black Horse).

On another flood occasion Betty remembers eels wriggling over the pews in the church when the water came up as high as the keyboard on the organ. For a number of years Betty was organist in the church.

At this time there was a sweet shop opposite the Fox and Hounds. To be served you had to ring a bell hanging on string by the door, and somebody would come out of the pub, either Betty or Elsie.

Many of the people living in the village kept chickens and to make the eggs fertile they also had cockerels. A well known village prankster was Dilwyn Griffiths. He was a good imitator of a cockerel crowing. A favourite trick of his was to start the cockerels in the village crowing in the middle of the night. This annoyed the villagers. Ruth was able to crow like a cockerel!

The Harris brother David and Alban went to visit relatives in Dublin. They brought back with them a little girl by the name of Frances Mary Boardman. They took her to the Fox and Hounds and she lived with Mr and Mrs Gibbon and did not return to Ireland. She stayed and married Alfred Lougher of Cliff Farm.

Life at the Fox and Hounds was not easy. Betty recalls how her brother David started his engineering apprenticeship at Aberthaw Cement Works. He had to cycle to Aberthaw in the morning, return home at teatime then ride into Holton Road, Barry for evening classes to

complete his qualifications. Thirty two years later he became the manager of the works.

After leaving school Betty lived at the Fox with her parents, helping with the pub as well as tending the needs of the cows and calves. She remembers milking five or six cows in the pub open yard. There was no need for them to be tethered. The cows stood still enough for them to be milked by hand. At this time the pub car park was surrounded by a wall enclosing a stone barn.

When the Harris family left the Fox they went to live at Hillside. When David died they went to live in Cowbridge. Betty became manageress of the Dunraven Hotel, Bridgend, a favourite calling place for local farmers. Tom Shanklyn was spotted in the vicinity one day.

When Oenwen Price got married the reception was at Bindles in Barry. A spinster by the name of Betty Harris and a bachelor by the name of Griff Martin were guests. Either by good fortune or a deliberate ploy they were placed opposite one another. Later they married and farmed in Corntown for many years.

--ooOoo--

Library – books owned by the Society

The following books are available for Society members to borrow:

1. 'I Could Have Told You' 50 years of trains – Penarth
2. 'We Remember It Well' – Penarth
3. 'Penmark Past'
4. 'Secrets of Glamorgan'
5. 'Llancarfan – A Century of Pictures'
6. 'County Treasures Survey'
7. 'Aspects of Cowbridge'
8. 'The Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey of Llantrithyd c. 1565-1641'.

If you wish to borrow any of these books, please contact Sheila Mace, Secretary.

Llancarfan Village Show by Marilyn Cann

When I first heard about the “Village Show”, I was a bit dubious. People have busy lives, would they have time to join in; show vegetables, flowers, stitch work, paintings, etc.

I walked round to the hall on the Friday evening to see if there was anything I could do to help. Well, I spent the whole evening and following morning accepting hundreds of entries and filling in exhibition cards. Most importantly though was seeing the general goodwill and enthusiasm of all involved. I had whole families coming to exhibit in all sections of the show. This was really heart warming and so encouraging especially seeing all the children wanting to join in. After the closing time for entries the judges arrived. They too were happy to be involved and I was interested to observe their judgements and constructive advice they offered.

I left the hall at Saturday lunchtime fully aware that the new ‘old event’ was a total success and hopefully will be repeated in future years.



A Grand time was had by all by Mary Neary

On Saturday the 2nd September, Llancarfan saw it’s first Village Show. It is hoped this will be the beginning of many more to come. Judging by its success, it will without a doubt, become an annual event in the Village Hall. The

organisers gained a new experience in planning and arranging for this years show. This experience will lead to even greater shows in the future.

The aim was to return to the days when shows were the ‘norm’ of village life. There were many and varied entries of fine quality arts and crafts, delicious jams and cakes, skilfully arranged vegetables and flowers.

The standard of needlework was stunning and the experience gained this year should enable the organisers to create more space for exhibitions, so that the displays can be viewed more effectively in future shows.

The photos depicting ‘Summer’ were very creative, however, there could have been other categories, for example, wild life, fun holidays, etc. This would have given the competitors a better chance of gaining a prize, which were well deserved. It would also make the judge’s life easier, as some of the photos, particularly of wild life were outstanding.

Hopefully, next year we will see even more top quality entries, we need to have stronger competition to make the show worth doing and heighten the excitement. So, Members and Villagers be ready for next year!

A lot of hard work went into making the day successful. Sue Taylor, Ann Ferris and their helpers are to be congratulated for what was a great day. The buzz of the competitors arranging their flowers in the church and the excitement of the children ensuring that their entries were ‘just right’ and finally the thrill of looking to see if their entries had won.

Yes, a grand day was had by all!

We are looking forward to next year. Good luck.

--ooOoo--

A hangover is the wrath of grapes
Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a peach.

Please Help by Mike Crosta

It will cost you nothing and it will help a great deal.

Following our successful appeal last year, we need your old Christmas cards to help a severely disabled girl who lives on the outskirts of Cardiff.

If you are willing to help, please give the Christmas cards (plus any other greetings cards you receive during the year) to Mike and Jan Crosta, Pepperland, Llancarfan.

Please telephone 01446 781227 if you need the cards collected.

Many thanks for your help.

--ooOoo--

Society Annual Dinner by Diana Atkin

Those of us who attended the Annual Dinner enjoyed a very pleasant evening at Cottrell Park on Saturday 30th September.



It was a most suitable venue, with plenty of space to mingle with old friends. The seating at large tables made it possible to meet new acquaintances; in some cases member had travelled a fair distance to be present.

Good service and food added up to a memorable evening.

--ooOoo--

Obituaries

David Owen by John Etherington

Many will remember Mary Owen who came to live at the Old Mill with her husband, but he died soon afterwards, and was never really known by the people of the village.

Mary's son, David was a boy at the time.

Over the succeeding years we came to know Mary very well and as David got older, he, Mary, Sheena and I would quite often share a drink in the Fox and Hounds.

When Mary left Llancarfan, she lived in Cowbridge for a while, but after David married and moved to the Isle of Wight (near Bembridge) she followed them and lived nearby until her death in the summer of 1998.

We have always kept in contact with David and his wife Clare – Christmas cards and emails – and they always kept up with the web-site Newsletters (I remember David complaining once when one was late! My fault I think).

David was happy on the island and became involved in sailing and was an officer of the local sailing club.

On the 15th September I spoke to Clare and was shocked when she told me that David had died recently after fighting cancer for some time. He was only 51.

Helen Keeble aged 90 years died on the 14 October 2006.

Helen worshipped at St Cadoc's church for over fifty years. She started coming to the church when George was posted to Rhoose as an airline pilot in the 1950's Her sons have all served as alter boys and also sung in the choir

Helen has bravely attended church during her illness. She will be missed sitting at the front of the church. A position she was asked to take

by Canon Soans 40 years ago, to keep an eye on the youngsters in the choir.

--ooOoo--

Bridge Drive/Afternoon Tea - by Pam Higgs and Sam Smith

A truly sparkling bridge afternoon took place in the village hall on the 14 August 2006.

In aid of the Noah's Ark Appeal for the Children's Hospital of Wales, it was attended by nine full tables of players and raised the splendid sum of £238.00.

The ladies of Llancarfan Tuesday Club provided the afternoon tea with tea or coffee, and were supported by many other friends who freely gave their time (and energies) to ensuring the afternoon was a resounding success.

Prize winners – too numerous to detail – were headed by Mearl Owen with a magnificent score of almost 5,000 points.

We would like to thank everyone who attended for making it such a special event.

Llancarfan Bridge Club by Robert Hutchings

After 15 enjoyable and successful years it seems, sadly, that the Llancarfan Bridge Club is about to say 'No Bid' for the future. Over the years we've had in excess of 40 members but now, due to the ravages of time, we're down to less than half that number. To remain viable we need at least 6 new members and since all the present players are loathe to see the club wound up, we're hoping we might yet find some new blood.

The club meets on the first Monday evening of each month at 7.15pm in the Llancarfan Village Hall. A casual observer would probably describe our club standard as 'variable' and so it is. Put another way, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is a beginner and 10 a County player,

we possibly sit in the 3 to 6 range. But whatever our standard, never could the Club be described as anything but friendly and welcoming. Could we welcome you?

If you might be interested in joining our convivial monthly Bridge meeting, why not call Pam on 01446 775892 or Robert on 01446 781295 for a chat?

--ooOoo--

(Co-ordinator: The following item was received from John Etherington, by a member of our committee. It was originally prepared for the Society Book).

Llancarfan Board School: the first Decade by Mary Gammon and Jean Hunt

Llancarfan Board School was opened on April 3rd 1876 by Mr G. Gordon, with 28 children subdivided into five classes. On the 21st of the same month there was a half-holiday - the first of many - on account of the Penmark Fair. On May 1st there was a "Very small attendance" because of a "great meeting" in the *Baptist Chapel* but by now up to 63 children were attending the school. On May 2nd the school closed for two whole weeks due to the death of the teacher's mother, and then in June the attendance collapsed completely, a consequence of the hay harvest.

On Wednesday July 26th the children had yet another holiday to attend the Baptist Sunday School party and on August 3rd the school broke up for the harvest vacation of four months. In the first term then, the school seems to have got off to a fairly rocky start, as attendance was limited by many external factors - bereavement, Sunday School outings, fairs, and most important of all for a farming community, the harvest.

School resumed on September 8th with very small numbers - 34 children. It was noted that discipline was "very loose" after the long harvest break. On September 27th the Reverend Hughes, Chairman of the School Board, visited the school for the first time. M. J. Griffiths, (presumably the school cleaner) received an admonitory letter for "not sweeping the schoolroom properly". It seems that an

attempt was being made, now officially, to impose greater discipline and routine in the running of the school!

On Wednesday Oct 11th, most of the children had taken themselves off to a ploughing match in the village, resulting in such a small attendance that a holiday was given in the afternoon. On November 17th the fire was lit for the first time. Had it been an unusually mild autumn or was this part of the Spartan regime at that time? The long-awaited school clock arrived on November 24th, and was said to be of great service". It must have been a godsend in the attempt to impose some sense of time on the unwilling pupils who would have greatly preferred to have spent a "normal" life of nutting, fishing for sticklebacks and generally running freely in the open-air or roaming the countryside.

The school was closed for the teacher to attend his sister's funeral on December 5th, and there was no back-up in the teacher's absence. On December 22nd the school closed for Christmas and the attendance was "very low". In particular, an Elizabeth Collie "left the school without permission." We can probably assume that staff morale was fairly low at this time, in fact Mr Gordon, who had opened the school, now resigned and another seven weeks elapsed before a Mr David Bowen re-opened the school on February 16th 1877. The Reverend Hughes, Chairman of the School Board and W. Jenkins, member of the Board, noted that the desks had been vandalised and, not surprisingly, perhaps, "reading and arithmetic were very bad". In an attempt to impose some sort of organisation, papers entitled *Information to Parents* were distributed.

Mary Joan Griffiths had attended only twice in three weeks and her mother was cautioned. Perhaps the same Mrs Griffiths who had failed to sweep the schoolroom properly? Elizabeth Davies had attended only 24 times out of 40 with no excuse offered! On March 14th the teacher's own illness forced the closure of the school for six months. Teaching was not conducive to good health!

When the school reopened on August 31st the attendance was down to 24 children. The Reverend Hughes and other members of the Board started to make more frequent visits, as progress had been so severely impeded, and they pronounced the scholars "very backward". Again there was no improvement of school attendance during September, because of the harvest. Presumably the *Information to Parents*

had fallen on deaf ears and the six-month closure had undone any previous progress. On September 28th the importance of the harvest, in the life of Llancarfan people, was acknowledged in a Service of Thanksgiving at St Cadoc's, and the pupils were given yet another holiday so they could attend!

A holiday was also recorded on November 7th for the annual meeting of the Wesleyans and on November 9th it is noted that Mr R Lougher, a member of the Board, visited the school. In the following month the Relieving Officer was notified of the "Poor attendance of Pauper children" (December 14th). Mr E. Thomas, another Board member visited the school on the same day and it seems that a pattern of visits was emerging in an attempt to regularise attendance and discipline. The school was closed for Christmas from December 21st to January 4th 1878.

Reverend Hughes heard the children sing on February 15th in preparation for a visit from Mr Mostyn Price, H.M. Inspector of Schools, on March 22nd, marking the beginning of more official regulation of schools. "Spelling and Arithmetic" were pronounced "fairly well taught", Handwriting was "credible" (*sic!*), Singing was "pleasing" but "books are badly needed". Mr David Bowen's certificate, under Article 59 "would soon be issued." Mr Bowen, duly certificated, was to leave for another appointment at the end of the term. His log book entries end on August 2nd 1878 and the school was closed for two months! The length of holidays seem to have depended on the vagaries of the weather, the harvest and the availability of teachers.

The school was reopened on October 21st by the School Board and committee to the charge of the new master, Arthur Augustus Wall. It was noted that two boys of eleven and thirteen were "unable to say the alphabet". A month later, a monitor (i.e. a good scholar) was put in charge of the infants and two slates arrived.

In January 1879, two members of the Board found only 16 children in attendance because of snow, which was one foot thick. During the same month there are signs of both parents and children expressing their dissatisfaction when a few of the biggest boys had left for another school because "they had not received the attention due to them."

Mr Wall who, by now, was feeling very stressed by having to cope with infants and Standards 1, 2, 3 and

4 on his own, had obviously expressed desire for Mrs Wall to help him in the school. This came about by February when Mrs Wall had taken charge of infants and Standard 1. By March, thanks to Mrs Wall, new children had arrived and in the same month, Robert Lougher of the Board, visited the school and expressed satisfaction with Standards 3 and 4. After a period of uncertainty, the school was running smoothly once more.

In November, the cleaning lady had to stop coming to the school because of infectious disease in her home and sickness and bad weather kept many children away throughout the winter. A concert was held in the schoolroom on February 16th 1880, so obviously an attempt was being made to involve parents and make them aware of their children's achievements. However "gardening operations", as the logbook euphemistically describes them, still devastated attendances, and then Easter week was given as a holiday.

Leave continued to be granted to attend Baptist, Wesleyan and Church Sunday School outings, and frequent holidays, many of them unofficial, punctuated the school year. However, in October 1880, Mostyn Price made an unexpected visit and was gratified to find "children diligently at work and all classes occupied according to the timetable." Yet, disappointingly, his general report was unfavourable due to "very poor attendance" and he goes on to say that "the attainments in the school are backward, especially spelling and arithmetic. Order is good, sewing fair, but there should be a better show prepared by the infants. Infants have not been taught the folk songs required, or taught in form, colour or objects, and are generally backward. It is advisable to provide a paid monitor." The final, dispiriting rider to the report is that "no Grant is earned." A shortage of books had obviously impeded progress and refusal of a grant must have had a demoralising effect on all concerned.

At this period, teachers were paid according to the attendance of their pupils, the grant allotted to the school depended on the standard achieved. Normally, parents paid between a penny and threepence on Mondays and even this small fee must have been a considerable deterrent to a struggling family. Although legislation in 1876 stated that all children should receive elementary education, attendance did not become compulsory until 1880 and then only to the age of ten, rising to 11 in 1893 and 14 in 1918.

In 1880, Byelaws were passed, regarding school attendance but no Attendance Officer had been appointed to deal with the general lack of commitment on the part of parents and pupils. Children came from long distances and were often not present when registers were called, thus compounding poor attendance figures. By June 1881 an Attendance Officer had been appointed. He visited regularly and a list of absentees was kept. Even so, many children were still kept at home to do housework and one child "was taken to work by her father in contravention of the Education Acts." A month later it is noted that, out of 65 children only 15 still attend on a regular basis and one can only conclude that the efforts of the Attendance Officer had not been beneficial.

By the end of the school year only half of the children had made 250 out of 462 attendances. In September, the logbook notes that "most of the children were away gleaning the fields and nutting." Nuts were sold to supplement income and bowing to widespread opinion or priorities perhaps, a week's holiday was given on September 17th. In October, a "great storm caused low attendance" and so yet another week's holiday was given and the Board charged no fee. There was a general tendency to Friday absenteeism!

The yearly inspection by Mr Mostyn Price gave mixed results. While recognising that a pupil teacher was needed a grant was again refused. The master (now Mr Richards) received his certificate but with some reservations. On February 7th 1882 the master had to attend at the Union Workhouse to hear his books audited. In the same month most children were absent from school to attend the funeral attending the funeral of another child. In April 1882, Mr Thomas Price, the new member of the Board visited the school. This was to be the first of many visits he was to make until his death 40 years later, many of them in his capacity as Chairman and Secretary of the School Board. His interest in Llancafarn school was strengthened when his daughter Jane Baker Price was enrolled as a scholar there on May 1st 1882, where she remained for the next seven years. The Vice-Chairman at this time was the Reverend Owen Jones, and both members of the Board were frequent visitors to the school.

The numerous "holidays" for Sunday School outings and "treats" were always on weekdays and one wonders why. Perhaps hard-pressed parents were

unwilling to release their little helpers at the weekend. Scant attention was probably paid to them, but home lessons were set and many children were kept in for neglecting these. Lack of punctuality by teachers themselves are noted acidly in the log books and the sewing mistress is observed as "having been 15 minutes late, twice in August."

The first day of the term was recorded as September 1st but the holidays, dependent on the harvest, were still to come. On September 29th Mr Holliday inspected the school, the children were given tea and the school closed for three weeks. It re-opened with only 40 children and obviously the confines of the schoolroom held little attraction after the joys of freedom out-of-doors. The Inspector's report for 1882 found infants "very backward and the grant, which as we have seen was dependent on percentage of attendance and passes in the three-Rs, was not awarded.

In April "New Object lessons were given [and?] throughout the summer on lion, whale, mole, Newfoundland dog, tea, soap, slate etc. "In September, a pupil teacher, Miss A. M. Thomas, was found for the infants and the staff roll reads as follows: Mr G. Phillips (Certificated Master), Miss A. Thomas and Miss A. Lougher. After the annual inspection in September a Grant of £47-16-0 was awarded on an average attendance of 60 children and 89% passes in the three Rs. The first decade of the school draws to a close with Grants being consistently awarded, mention of corporal punishment being inflicted for "stubbornness and disobedience" and poetry being given as home lessons. Poems selected for recitation in 1885 were *All Things Bright and Beautiful*; *We Are Seven*; *Lord Ullin's Daughter*; *He Never Smiled Again* and passages from *Richard II*.

During these years, epidemic disease was a problem. Between January and April 1883 the school was closed several times because of a measles epidemic "raging in the neighbourhood." One little girl, Mary John, died on January 11th 1883. In 1884 scarlet fever outbreaks closed the school on several occasions, and a scholar, Maggie Thomas died on October 30th 1885. She was buried four days later, the school being closed for that day.

In 1886 the head teacher, Mr G. Phillips, resigned and he was to be replaced by Mr Rees Davies who was to usher in a new era in the life of the school

and the his influence along with that of his numerous family was to be long and memorable.

Rees Davies' first ten years

As Rees Davies embarked on his first decade with a school, still trying to establish itself as a valid part of village life, the main problem he had to overcome was the low attendance arising from many causes. In wet weather the roads became impassable, muddy tracks and snow lay where it fell. Epidemics of measles, scarlet fever and whooping cough closed the school for weeks at a time and the long-established unofficial holidays, such as the Sunday school outings of all denominations, weddings, funerals, tea meetings and the famous Oddfellows' Feast eroded the school timetable.

One cannot imagine pupils, today, being given time off to attend the funeral of a "respectable old inhabitant of this locality" as they were in 1894. There were, of course, some easily recognised reasons for holidays during the 1890s such as the Royal Marriage celebrations in 1893 (George and Mary), Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 and the opening of Barry Dock in 1898.

Many staff changes meant lack of continuity and left the headmaster at times with only a pupil teacher or monitor to assist him. The Sewing Mistress, Ann Thomas, "resigned charge" of the class on Thursday morning - perhaps grown tired of the dreary patching she was charged to teach - the standards of which had failed to satisfy the Inspectors that year.

One pupil teacher, Catherine Lougher, daughter of Robert, *Garnllwyd*, attended in 1891, the Queen's Scholarship examinations at Southlands College, Battersea - the first mention that we have of such external examinations. Obviously successful in these, she was appointed as mistress in charge of infants and sewing, late that year.

From 1890 onward, perhaps reflecting a more coherent approach to English teaching, frequent mention is made of lessons on parsing and analysis, the classification of pronouns, the analysis of subject and predicate - would children today understand these terms? Spelling was a constant worry, and in this area, scholars were often described as backward by the inspectors.

Emphasis on maths and technical drawing for the boys was no doubt in response to the need for them

to find jobs in an increasingly industrial age. A Mr Walter Hogg, organiser of technical instruction with Glamorgan County Council visited the school and from 1893 a certain Colonel Clancy, a local inspector, came to examine the boys in "drawing". It is noted, rather acerbically, that he "turned up twice on the wrong day owing to an error on his part."

There was a slow but steady improvement. Yearly grants were awarded on the basis of results in the three Rs and bi-monthly examinations were given by 1897 when, incidentally, attendance plummeted to 55%!

So, by the turn of the century, a more structured pattern in the life of Llancarfan School was slowly emerging.

Llancarfan school: 1900 to 1920s

Under the imaginative and sympathetic leadership of Mr Rees Davies, Llancarfan School continued to develop. H. M. Inspector's report of 1901 states that "the general work of the school is creditable" but suggests that "in this neighbourhood, outdoor instruction would be of advantage to the elder boys." Indeed this view fits in perfectly with the ethos of educating children in ways which were relevant to their rural lives, adopted by Rees Davies for the rest of his headship.

The visit to *Llancarfan Flour Mill* on Thursday, February 6th 1902 was typical of this approach. The resident miller and his wife were William and Jane Liscombe, many of whose descendants live in this area today. Their daughter, Doris Jane, who must have been ten years old at this time, would probably have been among the group of young visitors from the school. The visit was described as "both interesting and edifying". Other outings in the locality were to *Penonn Farm* to see the threshing machinery working and, again to *Penonn*, to see "two beautiful lime trees which had just flowered and seed forming" while the little ones visited *Cross Green Hill* and picked "a selection of grasses." Spring rambles to view local trees with buds breaking forth and flowers, had the children returning "loaded with cowslips and bluebells" whilst autumn walks were made "to see the tints and berries." So, y?? 1909, the report of that year describes teaching as "being animated by a progressive spirit while the discipline is of a genial character." Indeed the entries in the logbook by Rees Davies indicate that this was so. Frequent mention is

made of his ambition to start a school garden until finally in April 1918, a triumphant entry in red reveals that "gardening operations" were under way.

All this went hand in hand with academic development. September 14th 1905 records one of the earliest successes for Llancarfan, when Rees Davies wrote "Received a telegram from Major Edgar Jones, M.A., headmaster of Barry County School that Hannah Lewis, a pupil from this school came out top girl at the recent County Scholarship Examination." Major Edgar Jones has sometimes been described as the Thomas Arnold of Wales and became known for his progressive approach to education in the Barry area.

By this time Barry Education Authority had established a bursary system and District Council Scholarships. Moore (1984) observes that "The whole town developed a keen interest in the list of 90 boys and girls who had gained admission to the County School - competition for Scholarships and Bursaries was keen." Largely because of Edgar Jones the achievements of Barry County Schools became a matter for great pride and produced many distinguished men and women. From being something to be tolerated reluctantly, education was now seen as a means of getting on in the world.

Hannah Lewis, herself, from being "top girl" was to return to Llancarfan school in 1911 as a student teacher, where she remained until some months after her marriage in 1916. Doubtless, Rees Davies' ambitions for his school and for his pupils to make full use of the educational opportunities available in the Barry area, spurred on by his ambitions as a father for his numerous family, for as we have already noted in the course [??] of Rees Davies' career, he and his wife, Margaret, did much to solve the school staffing problem!

The moral, physical and spiritual health of the children were also on the agenda, as can be seen by the frequent visits of the Temperance Societies and the Band of Hope who lectured them on the evils of alcohol, particularly its terrible affect on the brain and blood! Visits by clergymen of all denominations (with, no doubt, an element of rivalry here, deepening the division between church and chapel) occurred frequently in the school calendar. The school was closed on May 7th 1902 for a singing festival with the local Calvinistic Methodist Churches and, on January 26th 1906. The Reverend

and Mrs Hughes gave "a treat" to the children on the occasion of their Golden Wedding.

Regular medical visits by a Dr Thomas started in 1908 and Miss Vaughan, the County Nurse, gave lectures in hygiene and on the care and feeding of infants, to the older girls. A new syllabus of physical exercise was introduced in May 1909 and in 1915, Gwynne Jones B.A. gave lectures on the Laws of Health and the prevention of TB.

In 1903 a piano was acquired by the school and was much appreciated, coinciding, as it did, with the resurgence of the singing of Welsh songs. On August 30th 1905, lessons in Welsh were given to the whole school for the first time. Rees Davies' enthusiasm for this task is shown by a comment in the logbook [date? - bit of photocopy missing??] 1909 "The Master is making a valiant attempt to take his senior scholars through a Welsh Reading Book which seemed to be somewhat too advanced for their proficiency." The Rev. Eiler Evans brought a visitor from Seattle, USA to hear reciting and singing in Welsh by the upper standards. [date?].

In July 1907 the school closed for the National Pageant in Cardiff. In 1914 the St David's Day celebrations consisted of a programme of Welsh Folk Songs, recitation and an address on the patron saint and patriotism. In June 1919 the proclamation of the 1920 National Eisteddfod in Barry was yet another excuse for a school holiday. A huge crowd attended and the local press detected a "deep interest" notwithstanding the fact that "the proceedings were conducted in Welsh."

Royal occasions were observed with celebrations and holidays. Lessons were given in 1902 on the forthcoming coronation of Edward VII. The National Anthem and other patriotic songs were learned, and a whole week's holiday was given from June 23rd to 27th. The investiture of the Prince of Wales in 1911 and the wedding of Princess Mary in 1922 were also marked by days off school.

It seems that the outside world was creeping into this rural backwater when Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show came to Barry, and the whole school was given time off to attend these attractions in 1904.

An ex-pupil, Mrs David Forbes, now resident in the Sandwich Isles, sent a cheque of £8.7s.7d. to the school. The money was used toward "working up a Christmas tree for the pupils and their younger

siblings." Mrs Forbes of the Sandwich Isles is mentioned more than once in the logbook, doubtless adding a touch of glamour to the everyday account of village school life.

Editor's notes (John Etherington).

Mrs David Forbes was the Catherine Lougher who passed her exams in 1891. She was the daughter of Robert Lougher, *Garnllwyd*, who featured in earlier parts of the history as a frequent visitor to the school as Guardian. I am not certain yet but I think Ann Lougher, who also appears, as a teacher, was the daughter of William Lougher of *Llanvithyn* (if so, she was David Lougher's aunt).

Sandwich Islands (also known as Hawaiian Islands) became the republic of Hawaii in 1893.

Nutting is referred-to several times. It would not be possible to gather such large quantities today? Hedges cut-back or grey squirrels?

Reverend David Morgan was 1837-18?? and Alfred Hughes 1870-13, so setting a time-bracket for Daniel the Tinker. The record is not clear whether there was an incumbent between Morgan and Hughes – Clark names Morgan in the mid-1860s but I can't find documentation for 1865-70. The presence of "Mr Lougher, one of the Guardians" does not help as Robert Lougher's father (another Robert) was at *Garnllwyd* and in any case there were the *Llanvithyn* and *Treguff*

(to be continued in the next issued)

--ooOoo--

Letter from America – No. 1 by Matthew Valencia

Stay too long at one of Keith Thomas' legendary parties, and you are likely to pick up a thumping hangover. And as I was to discover at his latest bash in September, you might also pick up a new job. I arrived there sober as a judge – well some judges – with only a few days to go before I was due to take up a new job in New York. By the time I shuffled home several hours (and too many glasses of bubbly) later, I had somehow or other, agreed to be the Llancarfan Society's very own Alistair Cooke.

The village, I was assured by an equally well-oiled Mike Crosta, would welcome my thoughts from abroad.

And so it was that I bade farewell to friends and family on September 27th, suddenly employed not only an international news magazine but by a Welsh village journal too. That morning I left behind a stone cottage in an idyllic cluster of dwellings with a population of perhaps a hundred; by ten that evening I was a temporary resident of a high-rise apartment on Manhattan's bustling West 58th Street, a mere couple of blocks from Central Park, a stone's throw from Tiffany's, a hop and a skip from Carnegie Hall, in the heart of a city of 15 million.

They say New York is the town of the talk, the city that never sleeps. It didn't take me long to realise why no one gets any shuteye: it's too damn noisy. SUVs, Hummers and giant garbage trucks prowl the streets at nights, rumbling so loudly that the windows shake ten floors up. Police and ambulance sirens scream at all hours. The ear-splitting air-conditioning unit does not help. Switch it on and it roars like a Merlin engine; turn it off and you are soon gasping for fresh air. By day, building work is going on everywhere. Open the windows and you are besieged by the thud-thud-thud of jackhammers. And when they fall silent, they are replaced by the none-too dulcet tones of New Yorkers "talking" on the street below. Even several floors up, the din of these voices can be astonishing. If they are really just chatting, why does it always sound like a mass argument?

And yet New York is, in fact, a decidedly harmonious place these days, certainly when compared to the crime-ridden, racially tense city it was in the 1970s and 1980s. My first visit was in 1988, with a friend from college. We were young and cocky but still felt queasy riding the subway late at night. No such fears these days. In the three weeks since arriving, I haven't felt threatened once, whether at eleven in the morning or eleven at night, whether in swanky midtown Manhattan or rough-edged Queens. For that, thanks should go largely to

the "zero tolerance" policing policies of the 1990s introduced by the then Mayor, Rudy Giuliani (one of the heroes of the 9/11 attacks). They were opposed by many liberal New Yorkers at the time, but they did the trick.

In that respect, the Big Apple has become a lot more like the big European cities. But one area in which it differs from British cities is public drunkenness – or rather the lack of it. Take a stroll down to Times Square after dinner, and you will doubtless see the odd junkie among the teeming crowds – indeed, I had to help one who had had a seizure in my first week here. But what you won't see is groups of sozzled blokes shouting, taking their tops off, or trying to rip them off any girls unlucky enough to be passing by. It's just not done, for reasons that are still not clear to me. But what is clear is that I'd feel a lot more threatened on Cardiff's St Mary Street at midnight on a Saturday than I would anywhere in Manhattan, except perhaps for the odd notorious pocket of Harlem (the Bronx is a separate borough, in case you're wondering).

Another nice thing about New York is that, since almost everyone seems to have come from somewhere else, it's hard to feel like an outsider. It's the ultimate melting pot. Even those second, third and fourth generation "New Yoikers" who melted in many years ago are only partly local. That's because you're never just a New Yorker, you're an Irish New Yorker, or a Polish one, or an Italian one, or Puerto Rican, and so on. And if – like many Americans – you're patriotic, you're likely to be as proud of your original heritage as you are of the stars and stripes. When the city's Polish community held a spectacular parade along Fifth Avenue a couple of weeks ago, there were far more red-and white Polish flags than American ones.

It will take time to get used to a city where such spectacles are an almost weekly occurrence. It will also take time to get used to the setting in which they take place. Even if you've been here several times before, the scale of the buildings never ceases to amaze. It's not just

their height, though that is undeniably awesome; it's that there are so many of them, so crammed together, and they are varied. Next to every modern glass and steel tower will be an art deco apartment block, or one of the ornate gargoyle-topped stone office blocks that were the inspiration for the Gotham City of Batman comics. (Indeed, the local papers sometimes simply refer to the city as Gotham when they get bored of calling it by its proper name.)

It's not just the buildings that are outsized. The pavement (sorry, sidewalks) are so very wide, the fire hydrants so chunky and ubiquitous. The cars (bar the odd Japanese-made saloon) are unnecessarily hefty. And as for the portions of food served in delis and diners, if I wasn't so convinced that capitalism was the best (or rather least bad) economic system, I might describe them in a world so full of want as obscene. In less reflective moments, they merely strike me as fantastic value for money.

New Yorkers will tell you that everything is cheaper here than in Europe. That's true of most foods and clothing and very true of petrol (a mere 35p a litre – read it and weep). But some things seem strangely expensive, such as bread and wine, even the local plonk. As for the grotesque size of the portions, most New Yorkers will explain that we on the other side of the Atlantic have had to put up with meagre helpings for so long that we now erroneously consider them normal. A few, however, seem genuinely worried about the ballooning of the national waistline.

If New Yorkers are quick to jump to their own defence, it is mainly because they're a congenitally feisty bunch, and forever will be. But 9/11 also made them a bit touchier. No city can undergo such a horrific tragedy without incurring some lasting scars. New York bounced back from the terrorist attacks impressively quickly. But to some extent, it still feels under attack. It certainly feels vulnerable.

This was all too evident a few days after I arrived here, when, one afternoon, a news flash

announced that a plane had thumped into a Manhattan apartment block. For at least an hour after the collision, no one was sure whether it was another deadly attack by religious fundamentalists or just an accident; nor was it clear how big an incident we had on our hands. I won't forget the looks on the faces of my American colleagues when a secretary first shouted "Turn on the TV". A plane's hit a building." Through they said nothing, their expressions made it clear what was going through their minds: "Oh God, please, not again".

Mercifully, their worst fears were not realised. It was indeed an accident; a small, single-engined plane – piloted by a pitcher for the New York Yankees baseball team – had lost power, or its tail-fin, veered off its course along the Hudson river, and smashed into a flat on the 20th floor of the building (which, fortunately, was empty at the time). The city mourned the pitcher, but the sadness was nothing compared with the sense of relief that the perpetrator was Cory Lidle, not Al Qaeda.

This incident prompted me to make a pilgrimage to Ground Zero, the site of the horror on September 11th 2001. The twisted wreckage – several thousand lorries worth – is long gone, and all that can be seen today is a giant, square, subterranean building site, pockmarked with JCBs, rolls of wire and port-a-cabins, and surrounded by a giant steel fence. The only reminder of that terrible day is a memorial in one corner of the site, which includes a list of all those who died and moving pictures of people fleeing the fall of rubble and dust clouds, or looking up in disbelief as the towers crumbled.

New York is about nothing if not reinvention, and big plans are in the works for a new-look World Trade Centre site. From the ashes of the twin towers will rise an octagonal structure of similar height, the Freedom Tower, if politicians and developers can stop their squabbling. Their disagreements are, as ever, about money. This leaves a bad taste in the mouths of the victims' families, as did the recent discovery of human bones in a manhole at the site, months after

workers said there were no more remains to be found. The laid-back, “these things happen” response of the mayor, media tycoon Michael Bloomberg, only increased the families’ anger.

I’m already finding myself becoming entwined in such local issues – and being expected to have an opinion on them (after all, everyone here has an opinion on everything). But large blocks of my time are still being taken up with the mundane tasks that can’t be avoided if you want to get a house, car and a monthly salary.

One of my first tasks after arriving was to open a local bank account. I strolled the few blocks to my nearest branch of Citibank (motto – you guessed it – “The Citi never sleeps”). The manager, an expatriate Londoner, was friendly but firm: as a new arrival, I could open a current account but a credit card was out of the question, he explained. Foreigners can only earn one of those by building up a credit history over a couple of years. I could only have a US credit card if I paid collateral in first. In other words, it wouldn’t be credit at all, but more like pay-as-you-go. For the first time in years, I felt like a second-class citizen. To add insult to injury, the manager wrote down my previous address as “Bridge Cottage”, Llancarfan, Wales, England”. Wales is not in England, I pointed out. I know, he replied, but no one here can get their head round that. Oh dear.

My next task in shedding my status as a non-person was to apply for Social Security number. This is America’s version of the National Insurance number, but it is taken much more seriously here. Without it, you can’t buy or rent a house, get any sort of credit, insure your car, or even register your kids with a local school. After a wait of several hours at the Department for Social Security’s local office, during which I witnessed three people separately ejected for losing their cool, I finally got to hand in my FORMS. All looked to be in order, they informed me, but they would have to run a few checks with the agency that issued my visa. And how long will that take, I asked timidly? Oh, about six weeks, maybe more.

Several weeks on, I still don’t have that number, and nor is there any sign of it coming any time soon. So I’m still essentially a non-person, with the same status as the Mexicans who slip over the border in their thousands every week, looking for work. At least, unlike them, I already have a job, and a bank account of sorts. I guess the rest will just have to wait. Manhattan wasn’t built in a day.

--ooOoo--

Queens Victoria’s Stir-up Day from Mary Neary

In 1887 in connection with Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee as a Monarch, it was suggested that the following recipe be prepared by her subjects on a *Stir-up Day*, also known as the first Sunday in Advent, which was the day the traditional plum pudding was made (stir by each member in the family).

Fifty sweet almonds, number equal to years of her Majesty’s reign.

Five ounces of bread crumbs, number of daughters.

Four ounces of flour, the number of sons.

Three ounces of coconut, cut into thirty-two pieces, the number of her grand children.

Two ounces of sugar, the number of great grandchildren.

Five ounces of suet, chopped into as many pieces as Her Majesty has subjects in every town.

Five eggs, well beaten, representing England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland and the colonies.

Mix well together with *4,980 drops of milk* (half a pint) representing the ages in months of Her Majesty and her children

Boil for two hours and sixteen minutes, or *twice sixty-eighth minutes*. Her Majesty was sixty-eight in Jubilee Year.

--ooOoo--

Punny Phases

A will is a dead giveaway

Acupuncture is a jab well done

Events in December

St Cadoc's Church December 2006

- Sunday. 10th 11.00 Holy Eucharist
15.30 Christingle
- Wed. 13th Llanarfarn primary school
Christingle
- Sunday, 17th 11.00 Holy Eucharist
19.30 Service of Nine Lessons
and Carols
- Wed. 20th 14.00 and 18.00 School Carol
Concert – children & Parents of
Llanarfarn school.
- Sunday 24th No morning service
15.30 Crib Service
23.30 Midnight Mass
- Monday 25th Holy Eucharist – early morning
service – time to be confirmed

St Illtyd's, Llantrithyd December services

- Thurs. 21st 19.00 Carol Service
- Monday, 25th 09.15 Holy Eucharist

Llanarfarn Primary School

- 6th Dec. Choir performing in St David's
Hall

Other events mentioned in St Cadoc's services.

The Fox and Hounds

4th – 23rd December 2006 (excluding Sundays)

Christmas Lunch- 3 course meal -
£15.95 per person, coffee and mints
£1.95.

Christmas Dinner – 3 course meal -
£22.95 per person, coffee and mints
£1.95.

Extensive menus available.

For opening hours see the Notice at the Pub.

Village Christmas Tree

On The 9th December at 6.30pm the winner of the painting competition, being held at Llanarfarn Primary School, will switch on the Christmas tree lights.

This year instead of singing carols around the Christmas tree, it is intended that we adjoin to the Village Hall where the school choir will sing.

Refreshments will be served.

--ooOoo--

FOR SALE:

One chapel Pew, from the Baptist Chapel, when it was sold.

The above is now surplus to requirements, perhaps there is someone in Llanarfarn or with Llanarfarn connections, who would like it to return home to the area.

Offers: to Phil Watts – 01446 411249
Or Viv Davies - 01446 738534

--ooOoo—

If anyone else has any items, which they wish to sell – I will be happy to advertise them for you, if you let me have the details in writing.

Also will be happy to receive items for the news letter, we are running low and it would be a shame if we could not fill sixteen pages

--ooOoo—

The President, Phil Watts, Chairman, Mike Crosta and all the Committee Wish you all a very happy Christmas and a merry and prosperous New Year.