

# LLANCARFAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER 142

JULY 2010



***“At that moment the council mobile library pulled into the car park. No horn blowing announced its arrival, only the throaty rumble of its diesel engine before the driver/librarian choked it into silence. He had scarcely taken his seat behind the small desk in the vehicle’s doorway when as if from nowhere a dozen or more of the village bookworms appeared like magic for their weekly treat. I served the driver with a pint of ale and a ploughman’s plate, leaving him to enjoy the warmth of the new fire while I browsed for a book . . .”***

**From *Cuckoo Marans in the Taproom* : Derek Brock :  
Landlord of *The Six Bells*, Penmark : 1985**

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## BOOKWORMS OF THE WORLD UNITE

Thanks to the benevolence of Tony Lewis's library ticket, your editors have joined him in reading a poignant account of inn-keeping in the Vale. It's called *Cuckoo Marans in the Taproom*, which bird graces our front cover. For some reason Derek Brock's evocative book has been passed among us – perhaps a pale male attempt to keep up with the literary intake of *Llancarfan's Book Club* (not actually called *Ladies*, but a nod's as good as a wink to us chaps).

Much of Derek Brock's narrative of pub life in the late 50s & 60s conjures up the Vale's seasonal round, the characterful regulars, the assault of the breathalyser on the rural economy, and the skills needed to nurse a cask of Hancock's finest ale. But we've quoted the passage about the visiting library van because, even in these automobilious days, our villages still welcome their books on wheels.

According to the latest notice, Rachel the Portable Librarian arrives in our village every other Friday, parking by the village hall from 1.30 until 2.00. Only the other month, Rachel and the friendly 'Community Outreach Officer', Andy Griffiths, were in Llancarfan promoting these timetable changes. (*You'll find a list of visiting dates on page 11.*) Andy is diplomatic when describing the effect of our 'quaintly rural' potholed roads on the contents of their travelling bookshelves. Books have been known to fall off. One only trusts that the words don't get jumbled up too, spilling a torrid passage from Jilly Cooper into *Flower Arrangement for Gentlefolk*.

## A WALK IN THE WOODS

*Chairman Mike Crosta evokes a Maytime ramble to the banks of the Severn.*

**It has become** something of a tradition for the Llancarfan Society members to gather on May Day for a walk of hopefully local historical or natural interest. Sometimes it is close to the village – but this year not really very far away – and it does give participants the chance to abandon the house and meet up in the fresh air with people not often seen, or indeed never seen before, welcomed, as ever, by the same loyal faces.

It is always pre-walked to make sure it is suitable, not just for sturdy experienced walkers. So it was that back on a cold but clear day in March, President Phil Watts, Vice-Chairman Alan Taylor, myself and Ian Fell went to St. Donat's church in the dell beneath Atlantic College to check the area for booby traps, wild beasts and other such obstacles to a pleasant convivial stroll. (The route was Ian's idea – he'll have to go.) The trees were bare, the ground was firm underfoot, and there were good views of the castle – so it was deemed worthy of a May-time walk.

Barbara  
Melhuisen's  
proud  
descendants -  
Joshua, Rhys &  
Lewis - forge  
ahead on the  
May-time trail  
through the  
bluebell woods  
that grow around  
the St Donat's  
watchtower



**Our worries** about what to do if it rained on the day were unfounded; on 3 May 2010 it wasn't raining, being clear & sunny, with no problems under our feet. About 40 turned up, some even from Kent, and the valiant Barbara Melhuisen arrived from France, though sadly several couldn't make it from Llancarfan itself. Anyway – ask people – it proved a nice morning well spent. It was a pleasant un-taxing walk through trees green with leaves, the air hanging slightly with the smell of new growth. Malcolm Davies arranged for the tide to be up when we reached the shore, reflecting for us the kind sun.

**Once by the water** we were treated to a demonstration of the lifeboats, run by staff & students from the college. And very impressive they & the two students were. The boat had a towing tractor that itself could float, even upside down (though I didn't fancy having to get out through its escape hatch). The two students (children to some of us!) were a girl from Romania and a boy from Spain, and they were clearly committed to their tasks and studies. Our thanks to Adrian Disney for getting us on board.



Lifeboat supporters - the two Audreys – join in watching the adventurous kids. And the Stradlings consider eternity.



Then the walk back to the church & our cars was through the lower grounds, passing the renovated C16th or C17th barracks, and beneath the castle restored by Randolph Hearst ('Citizen Kane').

St. Donat's castle (home of Atlantic College) is of course very imposing, and I resolved once back home to learn more about its long history.

Finally, on to the fine old St. Donat's church, which is normally open to visitors, but John

Morgan, the Church Warden, came along specially to show us parts of the Lady Chapel that others rarely reach. Here there is an impressive tomb and monument erected for his ancestors by Sir Edward Stradling – one of several intriguing memorials to be seen in the church.

**Our May-time perambulation ended**, unfortunately there was then nothing left to do but repair to the popular *Plough & Harrow* at Monkash for vittles and beverages. And so it very soon proved a good end to a good day.

## AS ST. CADOC'S OPENS ITS DAILY DOORS A LOTTERY GRANT SPEEDS THE UNPEELING OF THE PAST

Unravelling the intricacies of our latest welcome Heritage Lottery Fund Development Grant for work at St. Cadoc's proves almost as perplexing as finding what lies beneath the centuries of church lime-wash. However – without going into too many details – the announcement of this development grant of £24,600 means that planning for damp exclusion & conservation work can now make further progress.

Meanwhile, a lively web presence, with an educational bent, is one of the things that the HLF guidelines have flagged up as desirable. So - for those readers who have not yet investigated the church's revitalised website - these images here give a glimpse of what villagers & visitors may find.

As you might expect, if you choose to pay a virtual 'visit' to <http://www.stcadocs.org.uk/> you can discover information of a practical, and also we trust, an enticing nature. But there are to one or two novel aspects that we hope will inform, educate & entertain. So, for instance, as seen here in **Picture 2**, visitors can now 'turn the pages' of the interpretive display panels. The originals of these sit (as you know) on Bob Hartery's fine protective desktops.

We've also enabled web users to mirror the excitement of discovery felt by conservators Jane & Ann when they tackled the walls two years' ago. So – as in **Pictures 3 & 4** – moving your cursor over a blank wall will reveal, say, St. George's foot. Clicking on this kicks up a page that suggests what the worthy knight is doing on the wall of a Welsh church!

As the discoveries emerge with further conservation, the evolving website hopes to whet new interest in these remarkable treasures. And as the church is **now open daily from 1000 to at least 1800**, real visits can now easily happen alongside the virtual ones.



## WHAT'S OCCURIN'? OR MAYBE EVEN OCCUR'D!

### CHURCH NEWS

St. Cadoc has been busy of late. On May the 8th fifteen candidates, with their sponsors, were presented to Assistant Bishop David for confirmation here in Llancarfan. Archdeacon Peggy Jackson and the Reverend David Treharne joined Bishop David to help celebrate on this special day.

Candidates came from the parishes of St Peter's Rhoose, St Mary's Penmark and our own St Cadoc's. It was in fact the first Confirmation Service to be held by Archdeacon Peggy since she joined the parishes. It was heartening to see St Cadoc's packed to capacity with over 130 supporters.



The expected light refreshments after the service in Llancarfan Community Hall turned out to be a veritable feast, supplied by the candidates' families and parishioners from the three churches. Every good wish goes out to these newly confirmed as they join a flourishing Christian community in this part of the Vale.

The church also saw four recent baptisms. Joining the community are Roberta Syndonia Uppington (known as 'Robbie'), Alice Elizabeth Davies (Wayne & Ruth Davies's baby), James Thomas Spencer (produced by Oliver & Meryl), and Anna Kate (Lee and Lea Mapham's daughter).

Fundraising is, as always, a vital issue. In the case of the ongoing Grant Applications, these are proceeding as anticipated, with a view to further work in the autumn [and please see the 'website' article above]. As we go to press, we know that the concert by the Cowbridge Male Voice Choir filled the church with choral riches on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, and had a fine turnout. Then there is a Harvest Supper planned for 7.30 pm in Saturday October 9<sup>th</sup>. However, without good local initiatives, we will remain far short of what is needed, and ideas or donations will be gratefully passed to the Parochial Church Council.



## **LLANCARFAN SOCIETY NEWS**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Yet again our invincible Membership Secretary, Audrey Porter, respectfully reminds members of the Llancarfan Society that many subs are still outstanding. Please cross her palm with silver (or an appropriate note) at your earliest opportunity. The Society's calendar promises quite an active time for all to join . . .

### **THE RUTH WATTS PETANQUE COMPETITION**

This was postponed from June 27<sup>th</sup> as it clashed with England 'playing' Germany in the World cup. It has been re-arranged for Sunday July 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **THE MYSTERY TOUR**

This takes place (or possibly took place, depending on when you receive your newsletter) on Friday July 9<sup>th</sup>. We will reveal all its secrets in the next issue.

### **THE VILLAGE SHOW : SATURDAY 21 AUGUST 2010**

Plans are now well advanced for the Summer Show. Ann Ferris and her Organising Committee are planning a bumper event for us all this year, taking what has now become a regular on the village calendar to a whole new level. All donations, help and support will be gratefully received, and the programme details are being circulated separately. Do ask if you are missing a copy.

### **THE ANNUAL DINNER**

Knives and forks will be in action at the *Fox & Hounds* on Saturday September 25<sup>th</sup>. Bookings may still be available from Gwyneth Plows.

### **TUESDAY CLUB**

The Tuesday Club held a successful Jumble Sale in April, raising around £400. In June they went to Aberglasney Gardens. The weather proved beautiful, the gardens delightful, and friends and visitors enjoyed both gardens and lunch at a suitably leisurely pace. The Autumn programme appears on the Llancarfan website – welcoming as ever new members and visitors.

*Chair* Audrey Porter  
781328

*Sect* Audrey Baldwin  
781416

*Treasurer* Ann Ferris  
781350

### **FLOWER ARRANGING**

After its first year, the roots of the Flower Arranging Club are now well established. The efforts of the members are sure to blossom at the Village Show. Classes start again in September, and all interested in joining should contact Mary Grey on 01446 781936 to make the appropriate 'arrangements'!

### **LLANCARFAN CRICKET CLUB : ROB JOHN REPORTS**

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of April the Cricket Club held its annual fundraising curry night at the *Fox & Hounds*. It was a hugely successful evening, enjoyed by a record turnout. We raised approximately £500, which will be put towards the Club's running costs. Our many thanks to John, Sue & the staff at the *Fox*, along with everyone who supported the evening.

Our season kicked off on 2<sup>nd</sup> June at the Cathedral School with a match against the *Mitres* - and records tumbled! We batted first, and thanks to Freddie John (96) and Mark Haines (42) enjoying an unbeaten 1<sup>st</sup> wicket record partnership of 165, we set a formidable total. The *Mitres* made a valiant attempt at chasing down the runs, but fortunately our bowlers & fielders were up to the job and the *Mitres* fell 10 runs short. Pick of the bowlers was Rich Williams (3 for 25), & Mark Haines took 3 splendid catches in the deep. James Millard, Max Evans & Rob Bilney took a wicket each.

This was in fact the first victory over the *Mitres* that anyone can recall! And a special mention must go to 13-year-old wicket keeper Will Haines, making his debut. It's good to see our youth policy bearing fruit!

Then on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June we played at Colwinston where, despite playing on through heavy drizzle, we managed another victory. Colwinston batted first, and some tight bowling & good fielding restricted them to 122 off 20 overs. Max Evans & Oli Spencer took two wickets apiece, with Rob Bilney, Mark Haines & Ralph Evans chipping in with one each. Mark's was a family affair with Will taking a good catch off his father's bowling.

Now it was down to the batsmen. Once again Mark Haines got us off to a solid start scoring 25. Excellent batting from Rich Williams (40 retired) & David Stevens (27\*) set the scene for our unlikely hero Max Evans. He smashed the winning runs with a lofted 6 into the tennis courts! We won with 3 balls to spare.

#### *Remaining fixtures:*

10 <sup>th</sup> August	Barry West End	Away
17 <sup>th</sup> August	Chartered Trust	Away (St. Fagans CC)
TBA:	Colwinston (H), Rhiwbina, Rob Johnson XI & Bonvilston	

Support is ever welcome & the bar will be open at our games at St. Fagans. Anyone interested in playing should contact Rob John on 07889 107795.



## **RUGBY**

Congratulations go to Will Harries, who came off the bench for Wales against New Zealand on June 26<sup>th</sup> to win his first cap for the country.

## **THE ITALIAN JOB**

I am not sure, *writes Rhodi Grey*, if those of us who attended the Italian Wine and Food Tasting event at the *Fox & Hounds* on June 17<sup>th</sup> could refer to ourselves as the 'Self-Preservation Society' – as I for one definitely over-indulged, and the only thing that felt like it was being preserved was my liver! And that, of course was all my own fault, because the temptation placed before us was delightful.

Havard Kynaston of Bay Tree Wines, in association with Liberty Wines, and in conjunction with John & Sue at the *Fox*, laid on a fascinating and most pleasant evening for us. There were in all twelve wines to 'sample', from an excellent Prosecco on arrival, Pinot Grigio, Sauvage and Chardonnay whites, through to a range of interesting reds. Bruce Kendrick of Liberty Wines told us all he knew about the wines, even their corks and caps, while John in the kitchen produced an excellent and most appropriate meal to compliment the theme of the evening.

We understand there are tentative plans for a similar Australian evening in the Autumn. Good on ya, Sports!

## **MORE PUB NEWS**

We were delighted to hear that John & Sue have a new grand-daughter, Taryn. Congratulations to Emma & Andy, and the happy grandparents.

We were also pleased to see the car-park resurfaced – some have asked when the white lines for tennis will be painted, and it is rumoured that a German lady staying in the village a few weeks ago got up early to lay her beach towel on it!

The new layout in the *Fox* is proving a great success and at last planning permission has been granted for the glass roof to cover the new patio. This will hopefully be ready in August for some al fresco dining. A new bar and terrace menu is promised soon.

Meanwhile, you may care to note that a new weekday £10 lunch menu, and a £15 dinner menu is now on offer – so please ring to reserve your table, and continue to support our village pub.

Finally, Sue's annual *Biggest Coffee Morning*, in aid of the *Macmillan Cancer Fund*, will be held in September. Please look out for the posters.

### **BABY STOP PRESS**

Squeezed in here, breaking news on Sat 12 July, of a baby girl to Lucy & Ralph, 9 stone 4 ounces, sister to Freya & Manon, grandchild to John, Sarah & Sue.

### **HONOURS & AWARDS**

In our last issue we mentioned that Robert Hutchings had been awarded an OBE, which he has now received. In June many more learnt that two more honours had come to the village, and we offer our warm congratulations and thanks to the self-effacing recipients on your behalf. Both Empire & Village are in good hands!

In addition there was an 'Oscar-style' award for our fellow-villager Dilwyn Owen, at the Welsh National Teaching Awards Ceremony, held at Cardiff City Hall. Dilwyn, the IT Subject Leader at Ysgol Bro Morgannwg, who has guided the school's use of IT ever since it opened, won the *BECTA Award for Next Generation Learning*. This is a prestigious category of the teaching awards founded by Lord Puttnam in 1998 which pays tribute to inspired professionals across Britain. Well done, Dilwyn – now perhaps you can help us with our PC at home? – we don't half struggle at times!

### **IT WAS ALL DOWN TO HITLER**

Breaking with our new tradition of being cautious about mentioning birthdays (in case we miss anyone out), we *have* noticed how many villagers reached the distinguished age of 70 in this last year, having been born in 1939-40.

Was it something to do with the blackouts, we wondered, or did people ignore the government warning to Be Prepared! Whatever the reason, we have been and will be celebrating birthdays with Philip Quelch, Bob Hutchings, Trevor Winterbottom, Arwyn Rhys, Tony Lewis – and last but not least, Gwyneth Plows.

And - if we may be allowed to throw the searchlight on just one of those war-babies - what a special day her birthday proved for Gwyneth!

Sue Taylor & Fran Winterbottom conjured up a surprise party in the village hall, with food, flowers and presents contributed from friends around the village. This was what village life is truly all about, and Gwyneth shared her appreciation in a moving, and tearful, speech, thanking everyone who had helped to make it such a lovely day, and especially for their support and friendship over the years.

### **A SAD FAREWELL**

The family of Eunice Bodenham (née Llewellyn) have asked us to record her death, on Sunday June 20<sup>th</sup>, aged 87. Mrs. Bodenham lived previously in the Corner House, Llancarfan.

## ***THE COMMUNITY HALL EXTENSION PROGRAMME***

**At last** (*writes Sue Taylor*) after many years of frustration, disappointment and hard work, grants from Creative Rural Communities and the Vale of Glamorgan Council have been successfully obtained.

The Extension was first proposed way back in the 1990's when it was realised (after the very successful Village Pantomimes) that the 1912 Hall was no longer large enough to meet modern demands. At that time we hoped for a permanent staging area, changing room & storage facilities. It soon also became clear that laws required the installation of a disabled toilet.

Plans were drawn up and planning permission investigated. The outcome was a sad tale of ever increasing building costs, which (together with local flooding, Archaeological & Bat Survey requirements) amounted to a massive estimate of £260,000.

In 2009 a new and less bold refurbishment plan was prepared. The proposed stage area was abandoned and plans drawn up for increased storage space, a disabled toilet and complete double-glazing of the existing windows. A local architect was nominated to prepare detailed drawings and achieve planning permission. A fund raising exercise followed approval.

Mrs Jane Williams of Creative Rural Communities gave great help with the necessary forms, resulting in a £40,000 grant. As the Vale of Glamorgan Council own the Hall and are responsible for the provision of disabled toilet facilities, they then provided a matching grant of £44,000. Many thanks are due to Mrs Sian Vaughan, and our two local councillors, Jeff James and Gordon Kemp, for their considerable help and input in this complex exercise.

Tenders went out to six Contractors. Then further complications arose with the need to transfer a small amount of land from Llancarfan Community Council to the Vale of Glamorgan by Land Registry, to encompass the extended building area. Unbelievably, the 1922 transfer of the initial ground from the Church in Wales to the Community Council left no documentation. Finally however this problem has been successfully resolved, and work is due to begin soon, with a completion date estimate of six to eight weeks.

## ***THE MOBILE LIBRARY***

Please note that this calls from 1.30 – 2.00, outside the Village Hall, on alternate Fridays. Next appearances at 16 & 30 July, 13 & 27 August, 10 & 24 September, 8 & 22 October, 5 & 19 November, and 3 & 17 December.



## A LLANCARFAN SUMMER



### FROM STRADLING TO PADDLING

As the *Fox & Hounds* kindly developed their riverside beach, and Ben Stradling (Rob Gretton's co-pub-transformer) sensitively adjusted the patio wall, Summer knew it was called for and blossomed with a vengeance. Flowers in a neighbouring garden rose to celebrate Fran's cunning orchestration, and visiting toddlers became splashing paddlers in the sun-drenched ford (anxiously monitored by picnicking parents).



## **GRAHAM & AUDREY JENKINS : FAR-REACHING BRANCHES & LLANCARFAN ROOTS**

*The fact that Graham Jenkins, a stalwart of the Llanccarfân Society for many years, has (for reasons of mobility) resigned from the society's committee is a sad one. (Mind you, he's probably suffered more committee meetings than we've had hot dinners, so at 82 he deserves time off for good behaviour.) But Graham's moving on gives us the excuse to record for our readers some of his and Audrey's personal memories and contributions to life in the Vale . . .*

**Graham Jenkins** was born at The Green in Llanccarfân 82 years ago. While he was still a toddler the family moved to Cross Green, later buying Flaxland too. Graham was a farmer until he was 26, but the early death of his fiancée Audrey's father brought a change of direction. The newly weds moved to Barry, taking over Audrey's family-run business at the Savoy Bakery in Holton Road.



Graham didn't however stick in the dough. In 1967 he became a mature student (aged 39), gained a Sociology degree at Bristol University, and by the early 1970s he had become the Vale's Senior Probation Officer. It was a post of critical importance to the neighbourhood, and a job he filled until retirement.

**Meanwhile, Audrey** – having grown up in the bakery business – began to set their lives to music, gaining herself a BA at Cardiff University. She established her reputation as a music teacher, first at Lady Margaret High School in Cardiff, then at the Barry Grammar School. Two daughters arrived. Then, after taking early retirement, Audrey regularly disappeared under piles of music exam papers – 'Marking more than 400 in 3 weeks' – as a pillar of the WJEC system.

18 years into Graham's retirement, their sunny house in Barry welcomed us over the doorstep. Here the couple remembered their quest for a new church to go to, which proved the reconnection with the village of Graham's birth . . .

**GRAHAM** 'Well, I was a Baptist – I went to Llanccarfân Baptist Chapel until we got married. And later on, having been to various chapels in Barry, I said 'I want to be buried in Llanccarfân'. So we said 'We'll go to Llanccarfân church.'

**AUDREY** 'It was a Palm Sunday.'

**GRAHAM** 'Then one Sunday morning we were going to church, and there was no organist, and somebody said they knew Audrey could play – so she played that morning – and has ever since!'

**AUDREY** 'Well, there were four of us playing then. And I couldn't compete with Paul, who was a real organ scholar!'

Audrey may be modest about her role in the musical heart of our village, but Graham is proud that his wife provides the theme music to his ancestral village.

**GRAHAM** 'My family lived in Llancarfan for generations. I can trace my ancestry – well, back to William the Conqueror! You see my mother was a Lewis, and I could trace our Lewises back to the Lewises of the Vann. Well, once you got that far back, you get Clarke's book on the old families of Glamorgan, and it's all there for you.'

'It was my mother who instilled local and family history into me. She had taught in Llancarfan school, and six of her family became school teachers. And all those houses – Penylan, Broadhayes, Cross Green, and The Hollies – they were all my mother's sisters and brothers. In fact, four sisters taught in Llancarfan school at one time or another – but of course in those days, once they got married they had to give it up. So their teaching careers were very short.'

'Anyway, I was always questioning the information – and sometimes the myths – that had come down the generations. As I put in the letter I wrote recently about 'The Conjunction', I was always interested – because everybody says there was a tunnel running underneath it. And field names. If you go down Broomwell lane, there were fields along there belonging to Penylan, that were called 'The Bellways'. Why? And that field with the houses behind the *Fox & Hounds*, that belonged to Broadhayes – it was always known as the 'Petayes' or 'Petighs'. My grandmother would say 'Go up the Petighs and take the cows' –and I don't even know how to spell it!'

**Spelling apart**, Graham has long been a major source of local lore, often archived in earlier issues of this newsletter. Pull Graham's 'History' handle and countless stories come spilling out. And our particular go on Graham's Fruit Machine of Village History happened to stop on 'Wartime' . . .

**GRAHAM** 'I was living in Cross Green at the time – so my father excavated into the garden, and made a Nissen Hut type of corrugated iron thing. He put bunks in

there because – did you know Dilys Liscombe, she’s my first cousin? – well she lived across the road. And so if the air raid siren went, we couldn’t be up half the night, so we used to go and sleep in there. But then after a bit you got a bit blasé. So I can remember being in bed in Cross Green, and nobody took a blind bit of notice of the sirens – and all of a sudden there was this terrific bang. The next thing I knew the electric globe above my head shattered and all the glass came down on top of me. There was a large land mine that had landed and exploded just up by the Bakery, near where the Cattery is. Just in the brook there it landed, and shattered the windows in White Chapel and the Baptists. And at Cross Green, in the cowsheds, we used to pump water from the well, which trickled down the milk cooler. Well, the next morning a piece of rock from the mine had cut into the tank. Someone could have been killed.’

‘But you know, during the war it wasn’t the rationing that people were concentrating on, but the bartering. And there was a NAAFI down on the RAF camp at St. Athan, and my mother used to acquire a gallon tin of golden syrup – which would be shared with relatives and neighbours. All terribly illegal. But somebody would make a bit of cheese, somebody a bit of butter, and that was bartered. And there would be eggs. And you were allowed to kill a pig, twice a year – so you would arrange that everybody wouldn’t kill a pig at the same time. You’d make faggots and black pudding and spare ribs, and people would have little parcels of this and that. And then when they killed their pig, you would get your share back.’

**Back in the present day**, we asked Graham to confess a pride in his contribution the Vale. As Chief Probation Officer, he had often made life-saving decisions for children of divorced parents, threatened suicides, & drug addicts. Audrey and he too raised funds for a drug rehabilitation unit in the Vale, but the costs rose beyond what their charity and professionalism could reach.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Audrey’s proudest moments have been presentations conjured from little black notes – Alun Hodinott’s *Cardiff Festival*, Grace Williams’ *Choral works*, a *Shakespearean Suite* by John Gardner, and an *Alice In Wonderland* opera by Mervyn Burtch. Audrey directed them all.

**So that was our chat.** Long may the Jenkins continue to relate and create the history of our little village, hopefully setting it to Audrey’s tuneful music. And as for more of Graham’s Llancarfan tales, rich with history – well, we’ve wrapped some of the juicier bits in little parcels, hoping to barter them later!



## THE FORD FIESTA

*In response to our request for more readers' contributions, Kay Brain has shared quite recent memories - not of the classic motorcar, but of the watery ford that makes our village special.*

I've been promising myself for ages to do a 'Ford' piece . . . of which I have many happy memories. So eventually I dug out this relevant photo, conjuring up the time when in 2001 our daughter Lucy and her Llancarfan Primary School friends decided to do a sponsored 'Riverwalk' in Nant Carfan, to raise money for the NSPCC. With Lucy were Angharad Hunt, Lewis Shires from Llanbethery, Philicity Richards who lived in Rhoose, and Jordan Davies from near Barry – The Infamous Five!

They were incredibly excited about the prospect of wading up the river, and set about getting sponsors weeks ahead. The set date in July turned out very warm and sunny, ideal conditions for this Llancarfan Ford Adventure. Myself and Angharad's mum Liz were the 'backup team', porters of drinks, towels and a change of clothes.

When they all started out, I remember them all running from the Ford upstream towards Delta Cottage and towards the old Ford and Waterford House, then on around the bend up to Wild Rose House. From here the river walkers ducked and dived, waded and swam their way towards the Old Bake House and Little Mill Cattery . . . ending up at Garnllwyd House.

When we picked them up they were very wet, very hot, and very delighted & excited with their adventure. And once all the money had been collected, we arranged for them to present a cheque to the NSPCC at St Hilary Village Hall – for the grand sum of £240.00.



It was such a lovely event, and one that they will surely remember forever.



## GLOWING TAILS FROM POETRY CORNER

*There, we warned you that you should have sent more contributions. Look what's happened now, writes Ian Fell. The threat of poetic outbursts!*

**The sad fact is**, some of us are sniffy about poetry. Or we've decided it's not for the likes of us, perhaps an inheritance of over-exposure and rote-learning at school. On the other hand, hands up who hasn't had a Tourette's urge to recite galloping stanzas of *The Highwayman*, excavate Victorian ballads from the deepest recesses of their brain, or even exhibited pride at mastering the words of *Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau*?

When enriched (or otherwise) by music, verse surely comes into its own & satisfies a need, often at the emotionally heightened moments in our lives. We sing hymns in church, chant anthems at rugby matches, recite poems at christenings & weddings, and instinctively reach out for poetry when we bury a dear one. In short, when we need to respond to a painful, joyful, or a heightened turning point in our lives, verse comes to our aid, and is sometimes to our comfort.

Now – though not wishing to hold a session of Anthologies Anonymous, I confess that on occasions I have written verse. Often it reads like a product of the Distance Learning Course in Vagon Poetry, ear-bleedingly unlistenable. Sometimes it emerges as a jolly jesting rhyme, essentially harmless. Just very occasionally it transmutes itself into something resembling poetry.

**Here's a candidate.** I found a nostalgic memory from the poetic Dr. Etherington in *Newsletter 14, 1988, p.3*. He wrote 'My most vivid memories are of midsummer evenings with a sunset afterglow in the sky above the wood, and the churchyard dotted with the shining lanterns of glow-worms.'

It must have been lovely. But then Dr. Etherington said he hadn't seen a glow-worm in the village for almost ten years. Things lit up again though in the next issue. Phil Quelch affirmed that he *had* seen their star-spangled tails still glowing that summer in his Penylan garden and on the road to the school.

Well, we're here to confirm that at least last summer they were still around. As late-night dog walkers, Penny & I have celebrated the glow-worms' presence ever since first glimpsing them in about 2000, near the school, & up Pancross Hill.

**They can have power-cuts though.** Three years ago (I think) they seemed to vanish once more, maybe in the wake of the summer floods, or the close barbering of the verges. It was only last year (in the summer of 2009) that we

spotted them again - three lady glow-worms, broadcasting their neon invitations to eagle-eyed males, just over & inside the school railings. (Apparently these insects have a two-year life cycle, so the glow-worm generations of the odd years never meet the glow-worms of the even ones.)

Anyway, fast forward to last year, the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2009, the Longest Day, and coincidentally, Father's Day too. Yet again the village glow-worms, three pin-pricks of luminosity, had suddenly disappeared entirely. Where had they flown?

A quick *Google* taught us that lady glow-worms in fact have no wings, so they couldn't have flown anywhere. Their strategy it seems is to flag down a hovering male, put out the light (before or after mating?), and then produce between 50 and 150 'small round faintly-glowing eggs'. Father's Day indeed!

**The big question then for this 2010** – did this year's glow-worms come into the limelight? If so, we didn't spot them. Did they perhaps disappear, somewhere under the school's recycling pile? Or then again - is there a chance that, somewhere in the fringe world of the playground, Mrs. Brereton and her scholars were hosting unseen the latest generation? Do send us sightings and glowing reports to Newsletter Towers.

Anyway, back in Poetry Corner (and whatever the current fortune of Llancarfan's glow-worms) last year I felt a poetic tribute was called for.

Which is why the Longest Day 2009 inspired this shortest of verses:

This Father's Day stretched farther than the rest.  
Midsummer made elastic of the light,  
And sunshine picnicked by the motorway,  
Dawdling the day as if to cancel night.

Meanwhile, our glow-worms, mimickers of moon,  
Bemused by day's refusal to withdraw,  
Threw in the towel, tucked up their tails, and fled –  
And blackness, when it came, was blacker more.

Alright then. You write a better one! This Newsletter must glow with your own contributions. Otherwise, the Vogon Poetry may have to strike again.

*Ian Fell.*

*Hot from the presses of Llancafarn Primary School, the latest challenge to the dubious outpourings of the Murdoch press empire . . .*

### Yellow pages competition

This year Llancafarn Primary School came 2nd in the Vale of Glamorgan Yellow Pages recycling competition. On average we collected 3 yellow pages per pupil. Lewys, Tom and Cerys visited the mayor's parlour for lunch and to collect our prize of £100 Argos vouchers. The eco committee decided to spend the vouchers on new recycling boxes, outdoor clocks and outdoor decorations. A big thank you to everyone for donating.



### Crucial Crew

Crucial crew is a place that teaches you how to stay safe and what your allowed to buy. Inside the building it is set up like a street, there is: a pub, shop, police station, power station, road safety, recycling area, forest, first aid and a house for a fire. All year 6s went and had a really good time.



### School Council Presentation.



On Monday the 14th June, the School Council went to a self-evaluation conference to discuss the school improvement plan and what we have achieved this year. Seven members of the school council went to the conference, they were molly, Mali, Penny, Freya, Alice, Elliot and Gruff, who were also joined by some of the governors and members of staff. The school council talked a lot about charities we have help such as Wear it Pink, Comic Relief and Cowbridge rotary charities such as Pinkie-purple day, Shelter box and more.

### P.G.L

All the pupils of class 5 Llancafarn school went on a school trip adventure holiday, to P.G.L in the Breacon Beacons. The journey took two hours because we got lost. We stayed in P.G.L for five days, were we did activities.

Like abseiling, canoeing, raft building, archery, fencing, zip wire, trapeze, and Jacobs ladder. It was really fun and we had a good

time. The food was delicious! They had a range of food and you never got hungry!

### Evening entertainment.

You were never bored in the evening at P.G.L there was a lot of things to do like the great egg race, 50,50 quiz, Cluedo and finally the disco. In the evening if you wanted to relax you could watch a film.



### HOCKEY

On Thursday 10th June Llancafarn Primary School took part in a hockey tournament at Sophia Gardens in Cardiff, it was the regional final. We came 4th overall and we were very pleased with our achievement. Unfortunately we did not get through to the National final in West Wales but well done to the whole squad.

## AND FINALLY – A THOUGHT ABOUT THOSE BIG BIRTHDAYS

Thinking a bit more about the public uses of verse, and then too the pros & cons of publicly marking the arrival of a villager's significant birthday – see p.10 *It Was All Down to Hitler* – yet more rhymes have dared to offer a little philosophy . . .

As we achieve antiquity  
With years too dense to mention  
We budding geriatrics  
Must face an inner tension –  
Will we announce our huddled years  
With summit-scaling pride,  
Or shun our ancient wisdom  
And run away & hide?

But Lo! A remedy is nigh,  
A humble panacea,  
To riddle the dilemma  
And banish ancient fear.  
Think not in years or months or days  
Antiquity to shoulder,  
But with each passing moment say  
'I'm just a second older.'



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