

# LLANCARFAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER 148 DECEMBER 2011



`East is North and  
North is West,  
And the wrong one  
I have chose . . . `

And then we wonder  
why folk lose their  
way on the journey  
to Llanccarfán?



## CONTENTS

3 - 4	OUTNUMBERED
5	REWORKING THE WORKHOUSE
6-9	WHAT'S OCCURIN'? OR MAYBE EVEN OCCUR'D!
10-12	OF PAINTED LADIES, DEADLY SINS & A GHOSTLY GEORGE
13	GEEZERS, PLEASERS & TEASERS
14-15	LEAVING NO STONES UNTURNED
15	BIOGAS : HOW THINGS ARE PROGRESSING
16	NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL

## EDITORIAL

An octogenarian friend Allen Saddler (an unassuming playwright & novelist) is an authority on Pantomime. Pantomime always meant Christmas to me (Ian), and so Allen and I often exchange the occasional 'He's behind yer!' anecdote.

His latest festive offering was about a lady called Gertie Gitana – a lady of (I quote) 'magnificent thighs', but who could neither sing nor dance. She was however brilliant at playing the saxophone – perhaps not the first talent you look for when casting Cinderella. However, this proved no impediment. When the Ugly Sisters went off to the ball, Gertie Gitana's Cinderella would stride boldly to the painted fireside. "Now they've left me all alone, I think I'll play my saxophone." With which words she found a sax in the chimney!

Which brings me to an expression of thanks and an awful warning. Really grateful thanks to all those of you who continue to submit enlightening articles and anecdotes about the history of our village. The future will be grateful – not least our future issues! Equal thanks to those who bring us investigative trails to follow, the trigger for intriguing research. Our knowledge will grow.

But the awful warning. Should this stimulus of history sharing and quest for knowledge dry up, I may have to do what I'm best at – reach into the grate, and whip out my metaphorical saxophone! And I can be awfully tedious about the things I'm interested in! You have been warned. Happy Christmas!

## OUTNUMBERED

### ***Penny Fell* discovers the new kids on the block**

Here in Llancarfan, we may look back on 2011 as the baby boom year. Since Spring, at least five young families have moved to the village, adding a total of some twelve children to the population. For the first time in some years, peals of giggles and the sound of bicycle bells have reverberated across the ford all summer long.

What better time then than this Christmas to encourage the honourable histories of a biking, ford-frolicking childhood in Llancarfan? Ralph Evans, for instance - he grew up at Garnllwyd, in the 70s and 80s when there was, according to his mother Sue, a great gang of boys who roamed the village, just like today's budding mafia.

Ralph and Lucy Angell, Llancarfians both, have returned to the area, to give their three little girls a similar childhood. And have things changed? "Well, the village is more or less the same to look at," says Ralph. "But goodness, it's the attitudes that have changed."

Ralph was a child in the days when PC stood for Police Constable and seatbelts were confined to the Big Dipper. "I used to hitch a ride through the village to school on the milk tanker – it'd horrify the teachers now. Then Max (Evans') mother Ray would pick us up at the end of the day in her Spitfire with the hood down, and we'd sit on the boot, facing the tail, legs dangling and drive home, eating apples."

At this time, of course, Blair Evans whipped the lads into line for rugby practice; the gang was known as *Blair's Militia*, and rushed about in Action Man costumes, camping in the fields in the summer.



Of course, the ford played a central role as a place to hang out, as it still does today. And – children, look away now! - Ralph recalls that 'when the river was in flood, and cars got stuck in the middle, we used to pelt them with apples and then run.' On one occasion, a driver *did* manage to chase Max Evans home after such an occurrence, to discuss the matter further!

We're pretty sure, of course, that this year's intake are much more decorous! And so – just to help identify who's who under the biking helmets, or doing wheelies through the water - we've got an introductory chart overleaf.

**OUT  
NUMBERED**

*WHO'S  
THE NEW  
WHO  
FOR THE  
YEAR 2011*



Martyn & Hayley Hughes  
Eve (10) Thomas & Ffion (3 months),  
Brookside



Gordon & Clare Emerson and  
Annie (11), Oakfield House



Jim & Catherine Barratt  
Dylan (8), Tudor (6), Arianne (4),  
Longwood House



Paul & Kate Jenkins  
Helen (10) Sam (8), Bluestones

*"I like living here  
because of all my  
friends and the  
great surroundings,  
and playing out on  
our bikes"*

Sam Jenkins, 8

*"I fall down in the  
Ford and get wet,  
even in my school  
uniform!"*

Dylan Barratt (8)

**STOP PRESS**  
As we go to  
print, Paul and  
Caroline  
Clancey arrive  
at Crynallt,  
with Isla (8)  
and Oscar (4).

**Well and truly  
outnumbered!**



Paul & Julia Rebhan  
Matthew (8) Amelie (5) Christopher (4),  
The Hollies



And returned to the fold  
Ralph Evans, and offspring,  
Manon and Bronwen

## LANCARFAN COMMUNITY HALL REFURBISHMENT

At last (*writes Alan Taylor*) after many years of effort, we can announce the successful completion of the major extension to Llanccarfann Community Hall. Local groups and individuals can now take full advantage of this truly modern facility for parties, meetings and classes – and other inventive activities.

The hall now boasts a large storeroom, a new disabled toilet, and a modern fitted kitchen. This includes a new cooker, wine cooler, microwave oven & a large heated trolley. Importantly, we now have full double-glazing throughout, which - coupled with a log fire - makes the Hall very warm and comfortable.

Sports equipment includes exercise mats, a table tennis table, & 10 card tables. Several classes are already taking advantage of the facilities, ranging from martial arts to flower arranging. The main hall has 18 large tables, 105 chairs & a piano. Upstairs, the meeting room can seat 20.

Work was enabled by generous funding and encouragement from the *Vale of Glamorgan Council*, *Creative Rural Communities* and *Npower plc*. Thanks are also due to Mr Richard Powell for beneficently installing new tables upstairs, storage cupboards and shelving. The Community Association chair, Nigel Booth, offers his thanks to them, and to his hard working Committee.



Nigel discovers the code to the new main door, which was funded by the Society, friends & villagers, in fond memory of Ernie Babcock, a pioneer of the Community Council.

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

### CHURCH NEWS

*The services & events for this December are :*

4 <sup>th</sup> December	Confirmation service, St. Mary, Colwinston at 6.00pm
8 <sup>th</sup> December	HLF decision on Church Wall-paintings funding
12 <sup>th</sup> December	HLF Chairman's farewell gathering in St. Cadoc's, 11.30 am
14 <sup>th</sup> December	Llancarfan School Christmas service at 10.30am
21 <sup>st</sup> December	Nine Lessons and Carols Service at 7.00pm
24 <sup>th</sup> December	Crib Service and Christingle at 4.00pm
24 <sup>th</sup> December	Midnight Mass at 11.30pm
25 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Family Eucharist at 11.00am
26 <sup>th</sup> December	St. Stephen's Day Sunday Service at 11.00am
6 <sup>th</sup> January	Epiphany : Joint Parishes Service then Rectory hospitality

### LLANCARFAN SOCIETY DIARY DATES & EVENTS 2011/2012

7 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Social evening with carols 7.30 for 8.00pm in Village Hall
1 <sup>ST</sup> January	Petanque at 12.30am
1 <sup>st</sup> April	Subscriptions due
28 <sup>th</sup> April	Seedy Saturday
7 <sup>th</sup> May	May Day Walk
11 <sup>th</sup> May	Annual General Meeting
24 <sup>th</sup> June	Ruth Watts Petanque Cup 2.00pm
6 <sup>th</sup> July	Mystery Trip
14 <sup>th</sup> September	Annual Dinner
4 <sup>th</sup> December	Social Evening

**Please note** that the date for the **Village Show** has still to confirmed. Our best wishes for a sound recovery go to **Ann Ferris**, a powerhouse behind Llancarfan's popular Summer gathering.

**Whist Drives** will be held on the last Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm in the village hall. Admission is £1.00.

**Committee Meetings for 2012** are at 7.30 in the Village hall on 10 Jan, 6 March, 11 May, 3 July, 4 Sept, & 6 Nov. Then **2013** : 8 Jan & 5 March.

**'GEORGE WAS THE BEST OF PILOTS - BEST I EVER FLEW WITH.'** Such comments from a professional pilots' website illuminate the career of *Captain George Edward Keeble*, who died (aged 87) on September 9<sup>th</sup>. As his 20<sup>th</sup> September funeral in St. Cadoc's confirmed, George Keeble was high

in the affections of many Llancarfan villagers. Fifty years as a steadfast member of the St. Cadoc's congregation included a period as church warden. Captain Keeble's professional flying career grew from *Seafire* training (the naval version of the 'Spitfire') into a move via the Fleet Air Arm to the Cambrian Air Services (later Cambrian Airways). By then he was married - to Helen, who he discovered when she was a WREN based on *HMS Victory*.

George became Chief Operations Manager with Cambrian at Rhoose, and (following Cambrian's merger with British Airways) he ended his distinguished career flying BAC1-11s out of Birmingham. His long retirement began in May 1981. A fuller tribute will be archived on the *Llancarfan Society Website*.

**DUCK EGG RACE & TUG OF WAR** The annual Boxing Day Duck Egg Race will take place on Monday December 26<sup>th</sup>. This will happen sometime after noon, timing determined by how long it takes for Llancarfan to defeat all challengers in the traditional Tug of War across the turbulent waters of the Carfan ford. *Please see Page 13 for dress inspiration!* Entries for the Duck Egg Race at £1 each may be had from the *Fox & Hounds*, from members of the PCC, or the Llancarfan Society Committee.

### **SEEDY SATURDAY**

The trial planting last April of a *Seedy Saturday* has taken root. **Next year's seed swap is on 28<sup>th</sup> of April.** Sara Tickner reminds us that there's still time to harvest the last seeds from your garden before the first frosts - to bring along on the day with any other unwanted seeds, spare seedlings or plants to swap with your neighbours. Further details nearer the time.

### **HELP TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF LLANCARFAN TENNIS**

A request that you show your support for the revitalised *Llancarfan Tennis Club* by turning up for their AGM on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012. This will be from 8pm to 10pm in the Llancarfan Village Hall. Wine and Cheese will be provided. If you might be interested in holding a committee position, please contact [gary.dunsford@gmail.com](mailto:gary.dunsford@gmail.com) prior to the meeting. Alternatively, Gary's contact number is 01446 754378.

### **LLANCARFAN POTHOLING SOCIETY**

Councillor Jeff James kindly informs us that repair of the highway around the Middlecross junction of the Pancross to Llancadle road is a task now officially added to the Highway Maintenance Schedule of Works. Meanwhile, by the time this edition is printed, the resurfacing of School Road, Llancarfan should be near completion, and its potholes banished to history. Watch that space.

***NEXT EVENTS COPY DEADLINE PLEASE 27 FEBRUARY***



## WHEELS IN WALES

The Welsh Mills Society spent all of October 22<sup>nd</sup> measuring up the rich treasury of the Llancafán water mills. More news later about their discoveries.



## TINKINSWOOD, ST. LYTHANS, & THEIR TUMBLING TOMBS

Community digs up to the 5<sup>th</sup> of December at Tinkins-Wood & St. Lythans are finding new evidence from over 5000 years ago. Near to Tinkinswood tomb burial another fallen cyst has revealed evidence of our ancestral bones. Reports on these finds, and any at St. Lythans, will be shaped over the coming months, and a 'Schools Outreach' project is planned to share these findings with schools from 19 March 2012.

*Above 2011 / Below 1914*







### CREATIVITY AT ST. CADOC'S

As reported in *The Gem*, Church Open Day on 17<sup>th</sup> Sept buzzed with folk re-creating its past art. And TV historian Michael Wood was there to film for his 2012 BBC history series.



### A CHOIR OF ANGELLS

The Angell / Evans clan welcomed villagers to the 6<sup>th</sup> of November christening of Bronwen Lily Evans, brilliantly timed to enrich granny Sarah's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday festivities.



### SPOOKY SATURDAY

Any mixed feelings about the modern distortion of Hallowe'en (it wasn't to do with witches) were put on the back-burner on October the 30<sup>th</sup>. Sue & John Millard promoted a very successful fancy dress gathering of witches, weirdos and zombies around a *Fox & Hounds* barbeque. It brought village generations together for a great evening of jittery jollity.

## OF PAINTED LADIES, DEADLY SINS & A GHOSTLY GEORGE

With the approach of Christmas, and in hope of good company around the Yule log fire – alright, wood-burning stove – one's thoughts inevitably turn (like Hallowe'en) to ghostly tales. Even the most pragmatic of us enjoys a well-told supernatural story, sending shivers down the spine of our inner child.

My problem though, when I think about our little village, is that the historical reality (not to mention present reality) creates quite enough spinal shivers to be going on with. And I know I get a bit obsessed with the remarkable discoveries on our church walls, but I now realise that these paintings represent a very real ghost in our midst.

Those astonishing paintings are the ghosts of worship past. I don't just mean the spooky skeleton, or the deadly sins which have just emerged from spectral veils of limewash. I mean in fact those ghosts of terrible repression - of people's right to believe what they wish, and to celebrate through whatever harmless rituals & culture they feel enrich their lives.

It's all to do with graven images of course (protestant radicals were keen to get rid of them, and royalty-approved asset-strippers were happy to oblige). Ever since Henry VIII found himself short of cash for fighting wars with France & Scotland (and short of a new wife to boot), the writing was on the wall for St. Cadoc's. Almost literally of course – because following the royal orders to destroy images came the ascendancy of the written word, telling us (rather than showing us) what we should and shouldn't do.

As you will recall, it was young Edward VI (Henry's precocious 10-year-old successor) who put out a 1547 injunction to destroy shrines, pictures, paintings, and 'all other monuments of feigned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry, and superstition'. So began a blitz on our cultural history. Throughout Britain, fearful congregations began to remove and obliterate the visual delights of our churches.

Sadly, no local records seem to have survived about who reduced our Llancarfan folk art to ghosts of worship past. Nevertheless, not too far from here, over in the other Marches at Ludlow, the churchwarden's accounts make fascinating reading.

It cost the Ludlow team of (reluctant?) iconoclasts 6/8d to take down the rood – the large cross above the chancel arch – and its carved images. Probably we can assume a similar cost in Llancarfan, as we also destroyed our rood and rood loft, traces of which great elevated platform still remain in the stone

supports jutting from St. Cadoc's walls. (Do seek out Patricio church, in its secret valley east of Abergavenny, to discover a lovely one that survived.)

It cost Ludlow only 4d (a groat) for the nails to hang cloths to cover the bareness where 'the images was pullede downe'. William Marteyne had 6d for 'makyng the rode loft playne'. And it cost a Mr. Coke 15d to buy a bushel and a whop of lime - with which over two days he white-limed the church.

As it happened, Ludlow had a St. George too, a sculpted or carved figure 'that stode in the chapelle'. But he was sold off to Thomas Hony for 18 pence. The dragon went for a song; Walter Rosse paid 6d for 'the dragon that the image of saynt George stode upon'.

And what, one wonders, did the buyers do with them (for people were banned from keeping such objects of idolatrous abuse in their homes)? Well, in some cases they certainly crossed their fingers and hid the images – meaning that *some* church property did survive to restore to the churches, following the short-lived return to the old practices under Mary & Philip.

Little though was rescued in Llancarfan. St. Cadoc's lost a chalice, a double gilt copper cross, a red velvet vestment, a suit of blue satin, a silken red cope, and two brass candlesticks. But all that an investigation managed to re-discover was 'one blue crewell sette with yolowe wyre of golde'.<sup>1</sup> (Presumably that 1558 investigative commission was not briefed to search for the vanished church organ, a gift of Jasper Tudor - uncle of Henry Tudor - to Llancarfan church at about the same time our paintings were created<sup>2</sup>.)

Least of all, clearly no one could face the task of rescuing our wall-paintings, to all intents forgotten under ever-increasing layers of Glamorgan limewash.



Of course, our particular losses were par for the course. It was the same throughout the Vale, throughout Wales, throughout Britain. Surely too, while resolute Roman Catholics like (for example) Stradling of St. Donat's might have hidden church artefacts for safe keeping, there were many other church goods that 'fell off the back of a lorry'. The commission noted that Robert Lloyd of Landoghe had taken into his care a silver chalice of 6 ounces 'upon pretence to bryng the same to mendyng, butt never broghte it ageyn.'

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<sup>1</sup> Was this 'crewel-work' embroidery, or a mis-transcribed description of a communion 'cruet' or flask, decorated with golden wire?

<sup>2</sup> When Henry seized the throne at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, his Uncle, Jasper Tudor was restored to his title of Earl of Pembroke and began to make gifts to churches in Glamorgan, including an organ to St Cadoc's (*Matthews : Cardiff Records, v.4, p.40. 1903*). The date is not known exactly, but must have been between 1485 and 1495 when Jasper died. (*Archaeology Wales report for St. Cadoc's, 2011.*)

Thus was denuded our local ‘paradise on earth’ – or at the very least, stripped of the talented art and craftwork that must have brought delight to those ‘peasants who trudged from dusky thatch and muddy floors into the great stone habitations of the saints’<sup>3</sup>.

‘Alas, gossip, what shall we now do at church, since all the saints are taken away, since all the goodly sights we were wont to have are gone . . . ?’

This response was satirised in a sermon of 1547, which held that we ‘ought greatly to rejoice, and give God thanks, that our churches are delivered out of all those things.’

Some of us, though, are a little less austere. We can delight in the rediscovery of these works of art, images that remain a tribute to the creative drive of our ancestral imaginations. We will probably not be seduced into worshipping false gods by their presence (we leave that job to commerce & the banks). On the other hand we will certainly admire, and perhaps even be humbled by, the faith, passion and creativity that our ghostly forebears exercised & celebrated in enriching the culture of this little village church.



Our Lady restored : children’s artwork in original pigments : September 2011

*Ian Fell.*



A devil encourages a spot of lust

Another devil tempts an unseen glutton

*Over 100 villagers & visitors assembled on 25 Nov for the church ‘thank you’ party marking Phase 1 completion of conservation. More news to follow.*

<sup>3</sup> *England’s Iconoclasts.* Margaret Aston, p.27.

## DIAMOND GEEZERS



Many congratulations to Sheila & Mick Mace, who by Sheila's birthday on December 14<sup>th</sup> will have enjoyed 60 diamond years of marriage together. As recounted in *Newsletter 143*, Sheila & Mick (he being a former Society president and a pillar of the Fire Service) began their marriage living in the fire-station with a bell in their bedroom. If the alarm bell rang in the small hours, Mick would sometimes run straight into the wardrobe instead of out of the door! Sheila assures us that after 60 years, Mick now has a handle on his exits.

## FRUITFUL PLEASERS

Who needs the South of France when we can grow delicacies like this on our very own Costa Del Carvan?



The Mrs, Evanses, both Sue and Margaret, produced lovely walnuts on their trees this 2011.

## TUG-O-WAR TEASERS!

Back in the 1970s, when this delightful portrait was taken, people knew the correct manner in which to dress for the Boxing Day Tug of War. ***Pullers of 2011 will please take note.*** Setting the style are [L to R] Ray Evans, Audrey Porter & the much missed Ruth Watts.



## LEAVING NO STONES UNTURNED

**John Cann**

The recent work on the village hall has re-discovered two gravestones, face down and used for hard standing. These have been reverently laid outside the church's east end, and now again their dedications can be read. True, parts of the inscriptions are missing, but I do know something of the names revealed as they've turned up in my digging into the history of Walterston.

One of the (already damaged) stones was cracked down the middle by the machine that turned it up, but the remaining inscription reads :



**who died Nov 1812  
Aged 61 Years  
Here also lieth the Body  
of Ann Daughter of  
William and Jane Jenkins  
of this Parish and Grand  
daughter of the above named  
William and Ann Lloyd  
who died Nov 24th 1822  
Aged 8 Years**

Ann is without doubt the daughter of William Jenkins, who owned and farmed Flaxland. Her burial appears in the Parish Register. Her mother Jane was the daughter of William Lloyd of Moulton Farm (recently renamed Newhouse). The Parish Register records the burial of an Ann Llwyd on 13 Dec 1812, and a host of documents show that William outlived his granddaughter.

The Parish Register has William Loyd from Moulton buried 14 Sept. 1831, aged 81. So the missing part of the Memorial Inscription is likely to be:-

**Here lieth the body of Ann  
wife of William Lloyd of Moulton**

In that there is no transcript in the FHS records, doubtless this stone was already upside down & walked on in the 1950s. Nor was it recorded by David Jones of Wallington in 1880, though he *was* rather picky about what he noted. He did however record the other discovered gravestone - complete but with the upper inscription missing due to the flaking stone. This seems also the case with David Jones, but he unfortunately missed out the first crucial words of the surviving inscription. What can be decyphered is:-



**of  
Francis William  
of  
the Parish of Wenvoe  
who died April 17th 1796 aged  
63 Years**

In 1748 Jane William, *Francis William of Wenvoe's widow*, had the freehold of Middlehill, Walterston (ie. Middlehill Minor, now Old Middlehill). William Thomas's diary records the death of Jane in 1780 at the age of 80; she was then living with her son David by Llandaff Bridge. So David became freeholder and, from the Manorial records, was also a resident by 1790. However by 1800 he had apparently sold it to William Jenkins of Walterston House and he disappears from the records by 1803.

This David William could not be the person beneath the gravestone though, as he was still a resident in 1800. However the Parish Register has a *Jennet William* buried on the 20 April 1796. There seems to be no other evidence of a relative of David William called Jennet. So surely this is her gravestone.

Who was she? Well - when the sun is bright and low, you can *just make out* the remnant of an 'rgh' in the line above the 'OF' on the stone. So Jennet was doubtless the "*daughter* of Francis William . . ." and consequently David's sister, who must also have been living in Middlehill, Walterston.

***Please note that you can find a less brutally edited version of John's paper on the Society website - <http://www.llancarfansociety.org.uk/>.***

## **BIOGAS : HOW THINGS ARE PROGRESSING**

**Chris Hanks, the Project Manager of Vale Bio-Energy**, has kept us in the picture re work on the Biogas plant, which he hopes has not impacted on any residents. He won't be burning electricity at both ends either, so to speak, because with early darkness, they've no wish to make late evening noises.

The crane is expected to be visible until mid-December. By late September, work on excavating the base of the tank, and on levelling the site, had been completed. Readers may recall questions as to how deep 'the tank' could be sunk, this affecting the height of the digester on the skyline. Chris's team now know that a layer of extremely dense bedrock at 2.5 metres has determined the tank base. The concrete base was poured back in October, before the site crane arrived. This crane is needed to install the shuttering, steel work and to help with pouring concrete on the interior and exterior walls.

Work might then be suspended for the winter months. Chris is crossing his fingers in hopes of avoiding 'another record breaking chilly winter.' And, winter or not, we are invited to inspect the adjacent public footpath. 'We have tried,' says Chris, 'To make the passage along this footpath as safe and as smooth as possible, even improving it in places with an all weather surface.' His email for queries is *hanks.greenmeadow@googlemail.com*.

# Llancarfan Primary School page!!!

## Summer and Christmas fair

Last year at the summer fair Class 4 made up some games to play at the fair. Here are a few- "The Glory Jar" where you had to guess how many sweets were in the jar which raised £17 and the "Treasure hunt" which raised £23.00 and "Splat the Rat" and a "Coconut Shy". We splattered the Y6s with soapy wet sponges, it was brilliant. You could have your face painted and buy jewellery and books. There was also toys for sale that went down a treat with the little children. There was supposed to be a bouncy castle but unfortunately it was raining so we had our fair in the school hall. We raised a total in excess of £700. The Christmas fair is coming up soon, on the 3rd December at 1pm, hopefully it will be brilliant.

## The rugby tournament

On the 20th October the Llancarfan rugby team went to a rugby tournament at Wick village green. The rugby team of Llancarfan Primary School won 3, lost 2 and drew 1. There is another tournament coming up so lets hope they win them all!

## King Arthur

On Friday 28th September 2011, Llancarfan juniors saw an interesting monologue about King Arthur. It was acted by a man named Stephen Attwell. It was very good and everyone enjoyed it. It was a very successful performance.



by Francesca,  
Helen,  
Rebecca and  
Charlotte.

## Wear it Pink

This year we supported Wear it Pink cancer research. We wore pink for a pound and sold pink cakes, kindly donated by parents. Altogether we raised £131.10. We are very grateful for all of the donations.



## New school year

Pencils and rulers were back in school! House captains for this year are Holly and Connor for Dyfan, Jack and Louis for Cadoc and Freya and Ashton for Baruc. The new Year 6s have buddies. The reception children have started mini rugby. We also have a new Eco and school Council they are off to a flying start. There are two new JRSOs in year five, Gabriella Hooley and Georgia Hale. Everyone has settled well and are enjoying themselves.



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