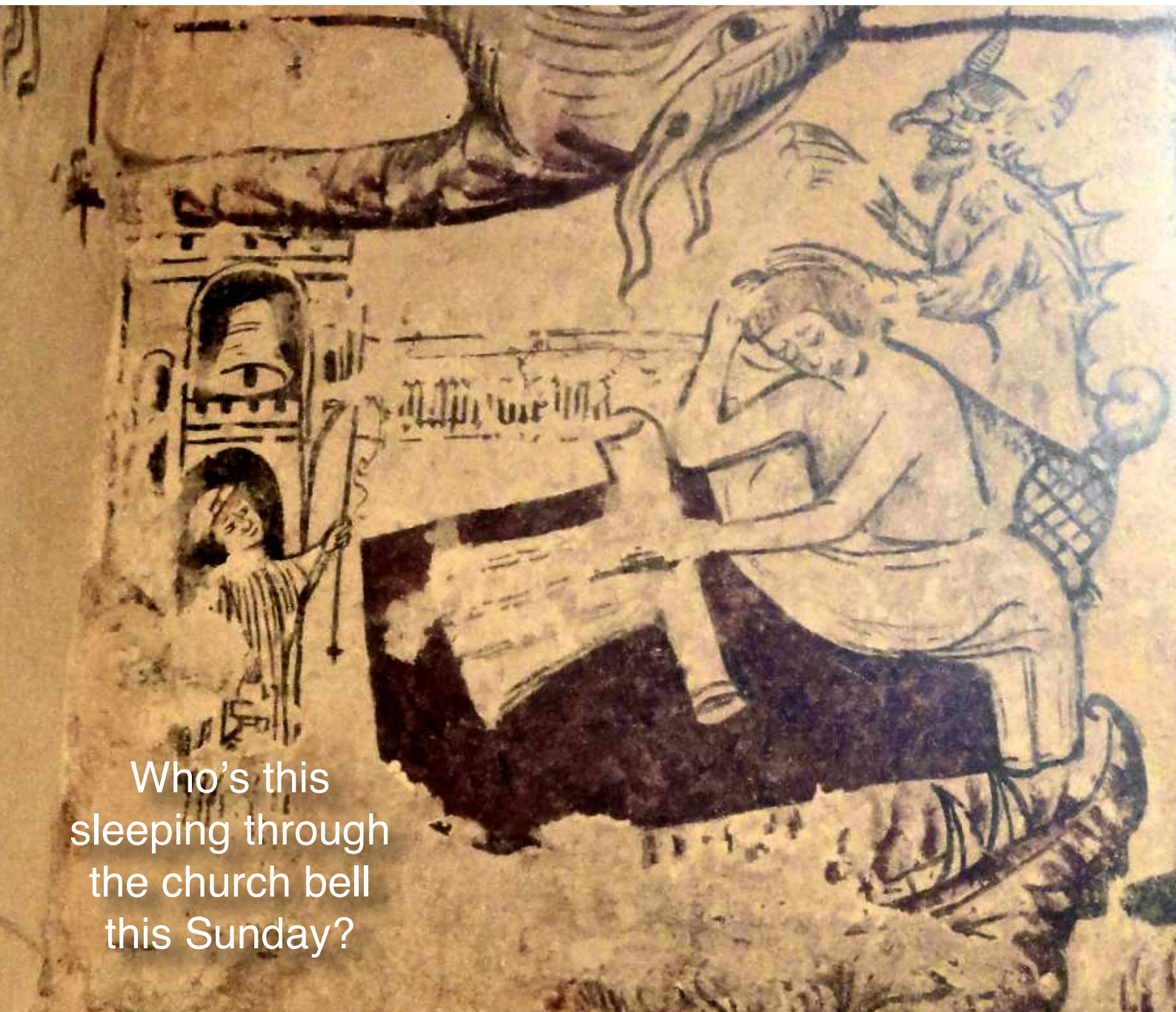
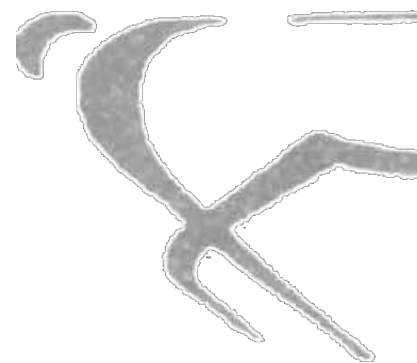


# LLANCARFAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER 161 MARCH 2015



Who's this  
sleeping through  
the church bell  
this Sunday?

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## EDITORIAL

Another remarkable new image has emerged on the St. Cadoc walls, seen on our cover. This is the last, we assume, of the Seven Deadly Sins, each of them sent to tempt Llanccarfán into the sin of pride in our heritage. Our back page explores this latest evidence from our village history, and we might further understand the international importance of St. Cadoc's wall paintings.

The deadly sin of *Somnolencia* is not the only new revelation. Thanks to a digitisation project carried out by Wales's National Museum, undiscovered photographs have also emerged. Then too Canon Belcher is arriving, which makes this issue very church-oriented. But while many of us imitate the front-cover gentleman beneath the blankets when we hear the summons of the church bell, all hopefully cherish St. Cadoc's importance to the community.

Finally we offer Society congratulations to one of our strongest mentors & supporters, Professor Madeleine Gray. On 10 February, hundreds enjoyed Maddy's *inaugural* Professorial Lecture for the University of South Wales. Its title was 'In Defence of Welsh Ecclesiastical History'. Aux armes, citoyens!

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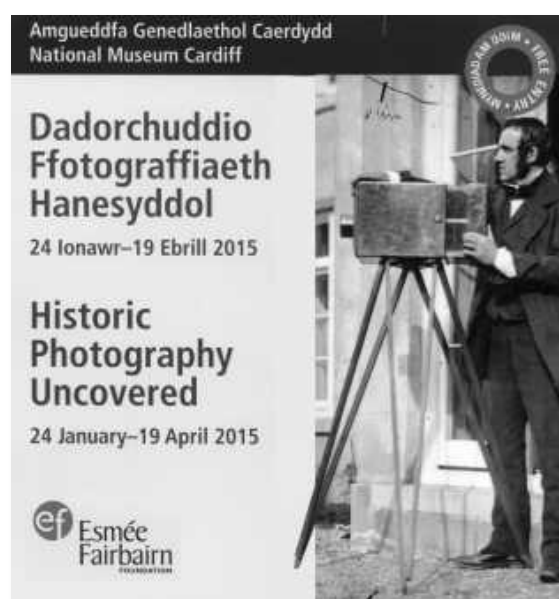
For many of the past issues & more details please see the (still to be updated) website at <http://www.llanccarfansociety.org.uk/>

The publication of this newsletter has now been subsidised by a greatly appreciated grant from The Vale of Glamorgan Community Fund

## THE PENCIL OF NATURE REVEALS A LOST LLANCARFAN

Around fifteen years ago your Llancarfan Society held a day on which people brought along their village & family photographs to the community hall, where Graham Brain, Phil Watts and others pioneered digitising them for posterity. This virtual collection still exists, but colleagues have agreed that it would be no bad thing to repeat the exercise in archiving our visual history. Every community should do it - quite recently for instance Bonvilston, and notably the Llantwit Major History Society (well housed in its splendid Old Schoolroom HQ), have set an excellent example.

However, a new exhibition & initiative at the National Museum Wales has taken a similar 'photo opportunity' to new heights. A remarkable grant of £600,000 from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation has enabled the Cathays Park museum to digitise some ten thousand images from its voluminous (and almost certainly under-appreciated) collection of about half a million photographs. There are now great plans for the archive to be available online from the early Summer. The exhibition itself runs until the 19<sup>th</sup> of April.



It is particularly exciting to know that the exhibition, which I urge people to visit, is only the tip of the iceberg. The images displayed, often poignant & beautiful in themselves, offer many tantalizing starting points for future research. The photographs introduce visitors to a talented group of Welsh photographers, some of whose images were made back in the 1850s, the time when William Fox Talbot, the 'inventor' of photography, was capturing his very first pictures at Laycock Abbey in Wiltshire. The range of these early photographers proves truly surprising, men and women who seized 'the pencil of nature' to record their vanishing present in pioneering photography.

It was often a family affair. Swansea's John Dillwyn Llewelyn was a cousin of Fox Talbot, and *one* descendant of *his* photographic family tree was Sir Thomas Mansel Franklen (1840-1928), who for 56 years lived in St. Hilary.

The relevance to Llancarfan is this : research triggered by the museum's digitisation programme has brought to light Franklen's unknown or forgotten images of St. Cadoc's church in the 1890's. These can now see the light of day overleaf by courtesy of Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales . . .





**Reproduced here** rather smaller than they deserve, these pictures from the 1890s captured views of St. Cadoc's only (it seems) around twenty years after Vicar Hughes's appeal for restoration funds in 1875. The ironwork seen here in the churchyard will have disappeared much later, presumably during World War Two. Note the open fields, & clear views of Ty Uchaf (left of the tower) & the school (right).



**At first glance**, not too much seems to have changed in this view from the south west door. However, the church clearly hasn't been dramatically tidied up for Thomas Franklen's photographic visit. It could be rewarding were some of our native villagers to take a closer look at bigger versions of these photographs, spotting items & triggering memories – which of course they will be more than welcome to do.



**Looking down** the north aisle, one of several generations of tapestries hangs across the 'problem' lower woodwork of the reredos – today though much improved, we believe, by the application of traditional paint colour washes. Around the pulpit seen here is a clutter of furniture and artefacts which surely deserve identification. And note the rather elegant oil lamps. What and when was their fate?

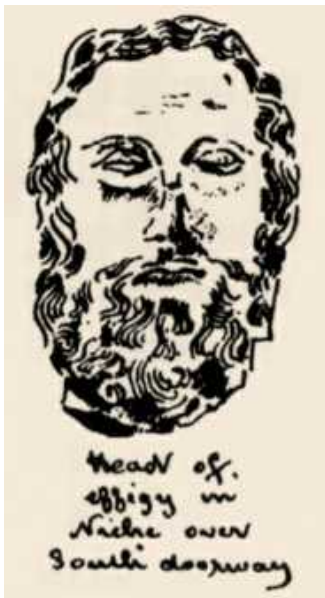
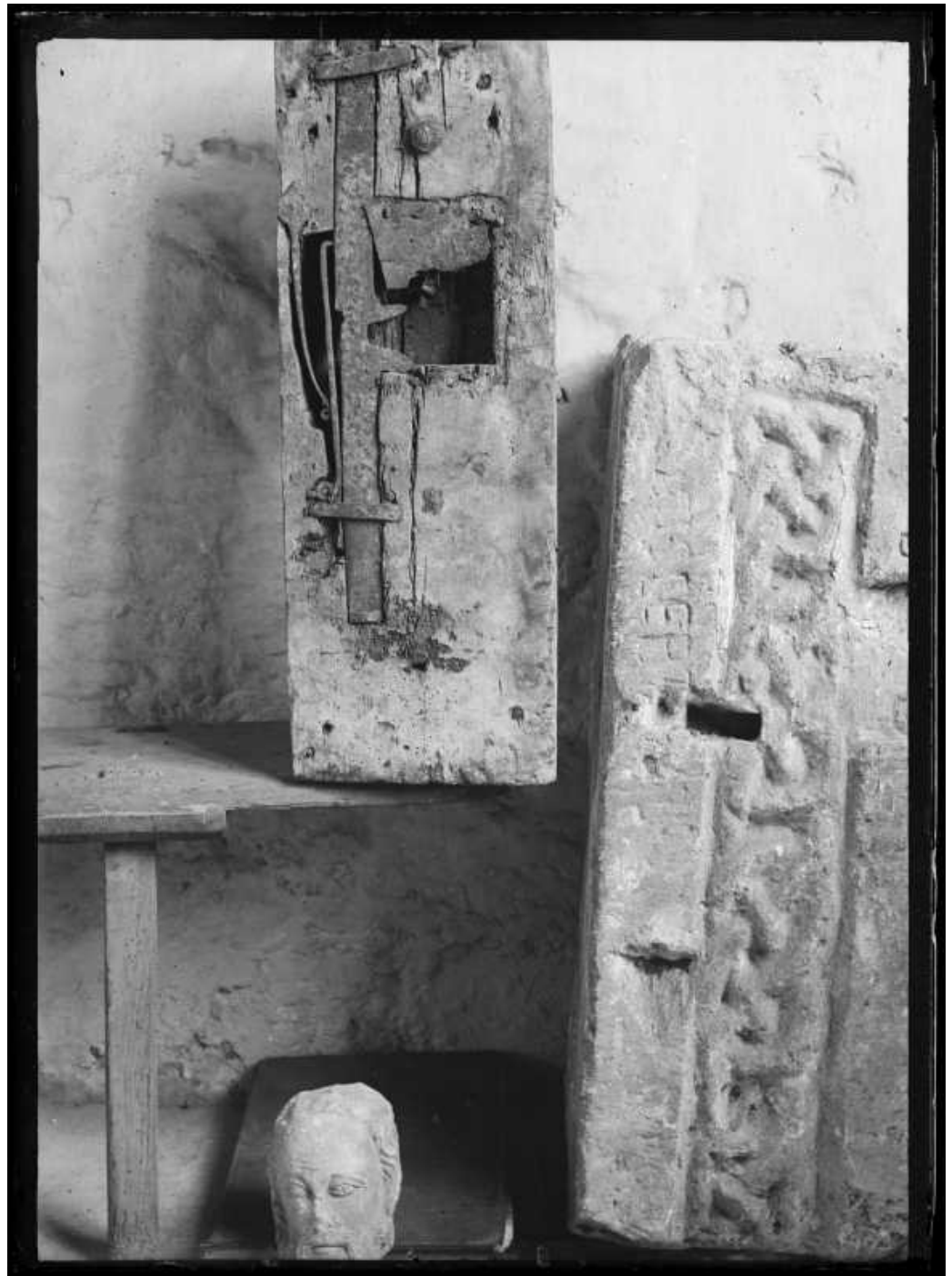
### This Franklen image

is perhaps the most revealing discovery. It shows at least three relics which appear to have been casually stored, but are clearly historically important.

**On the far right** is the oldest stone in the church – an 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century survival.

**The metal & wood** device in the middle *could* prove to be the triple lock of the church chest. This presently sits (without its locks) to the left of the porch.

**The most notable find** might well be this only surviving photograph of an ancient stone head of St. Cadoc. Until this image emerged, the head seems only recorded in this sketch – published in 1896.



**Charles Fowler's note to the sketch**, from *Rambling Sketches from the Old Churches in the Diocese of Llandaff*, reads 'Head of effigy in Niche over South doorway'. Clearly however by the time of Franklen's visit, Cadoc's stone head had been removed from the niche (which is still there) for 'safe-keeping' with the other ancient artefacts. But how safe was that keeping? Where is the head now? Did the Rev. Hughes (incumbent for 43 years until his death in 1918), or his successors, take Cadoc into protective custody? Marianne Spencer's tale (1913) of the Rev. Hughes having painted out a briefly revealed 'blessed virgin Mary' as 'too Roman Catholic' surely cannot suggest a similar disposal of St. Cadoc's treasurable head? 'Dead images', said a Tudor sermon, 'be but great puppets . . . and wicked idolatry to dally and play with . . .' Surely though the Cadoc head has somewhere resisted such late iconoclasm!





**This is the last** church photograph tracked down to date from the National Museum's rediscovered images. It shows the font in a much earlier position.

Readers may be aware that the font was moved to its present site in response to the memorial aspirations of Mrs. Elizabeth Evans, wife of Thomas Evans, the Vicar of Llancafán from 1937 to 1946. Mrs. Evans funded the redesign of 'the Raglan Chapel', which is the then 'modernistic' chapel at the east end of the south aisle. To achieve this, a new vestry was needed, because the old one was where the Raglan chapel now is (perhaps that is the masked off area seen on the right in Picture 2). The famous architect George Pace was commissioned to do the work, and the vestry rose in the south-west corner (unwittingly destroying the lower portion of the 'Seven Deadly Sins' wall-painting). We demolished this 'new' vestry in 2012.

So think of this. The font is 'of Twelfth Century character.' The south aisle is dated between 1280 and about 1310. This font then could have stood in the church for centuries before the wall paintings were created. Then, if the font was sited as above, that means that the Seven Deadly Sins and the sinuous dragon necks would virtually plunge into the font itself. Can you conceive of a more frightening vision of the original sins purged at the baby's baptism?

## WHILE LOOKING FOR LOST THINGS

Tony Lewis reports a Community Council project is in hand to refurbish the inscribed names on the war memorial. Tony says CADW (Welsh Heritage) can draw on a fund for a timely refreshing of this tribute to the lost men.

If we were to strictly trace the centenaries of the stages in World War One, then we would have to wait until our June 2020 edition to record the dedication of the memorial. Doubtless our successors will do just that, guided by the surviving papers that record the Memorial Service. This happened on Wednesday 16 June, 1920, at six o'clock on that warm summer's evening.

Newsletters 30 and 116 (both readable online but missing the images) document the Parish Council plans to distribute 'War Trophies' and to take the War Memorial Fund to conclusion. The memorial was duly dedicated, and – again the subject of Tony Lewis's message – a Roll of Honour was created. It is this document which remains to be re-discovered.

Is it significant, Tony wonders, that the Memorial Service leaflet records the 'Unveiling of the Roll of Honour *At the Schoolroom*' [our italics]? Might a thorough search of the school attics restore to light perhaps this tribute to those who served? It would be moving to find it again a hundred years on.

## LOST THROUGH LACK OF INTEREST?

Because of its content, it was disappointing to receive a 'Letter to the Editor' from Mrs. Valerie Lovering of Rhoose (though good to feel of use in the community).

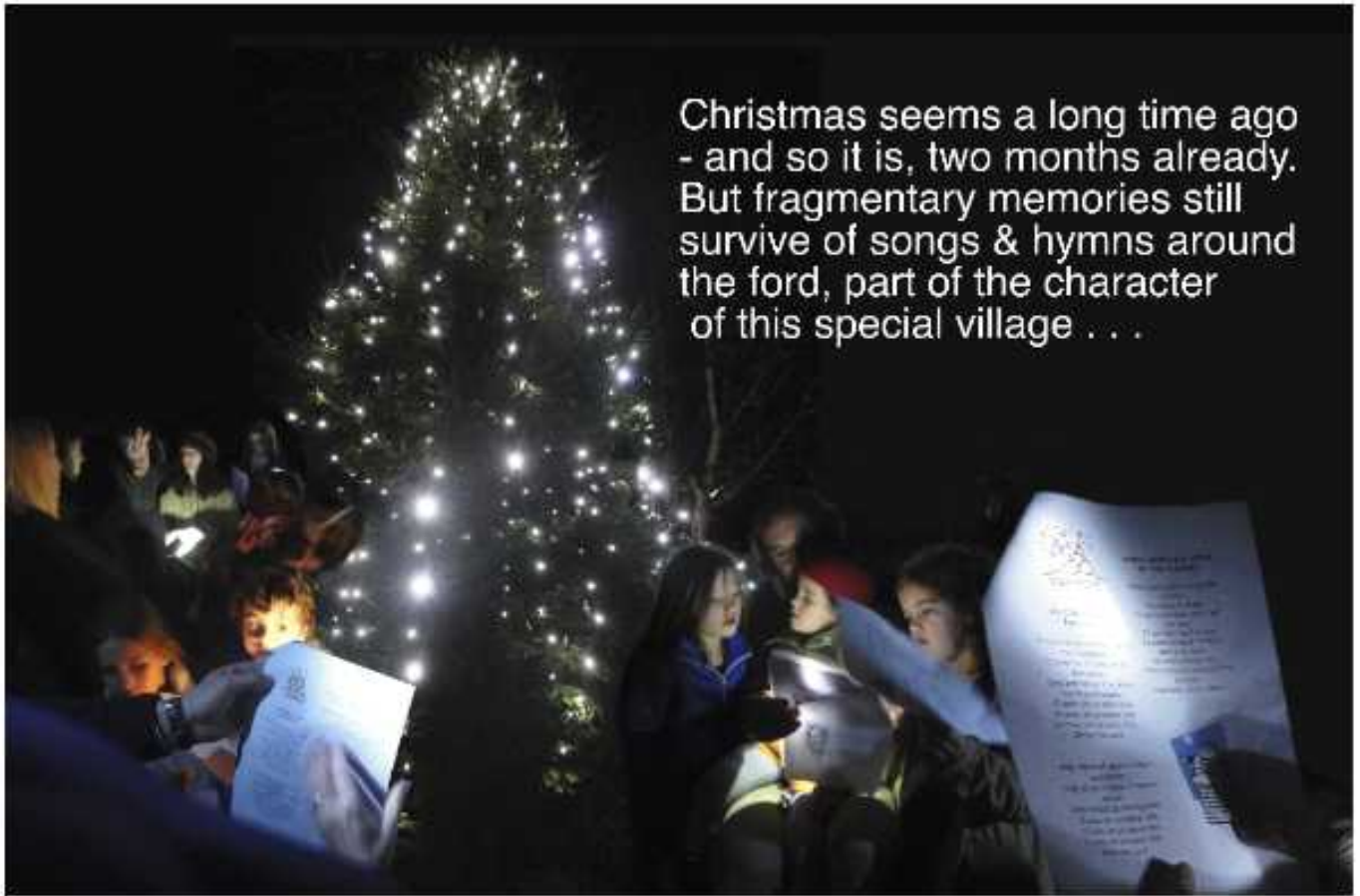
Mrs. Lovering writes : "What a shame that the Llancarfan Whist Drive has had to finish through lack of support. We enjoyed coming to the Whist Drive from Rhoose, Barry & Sully. Where were the players from Llancarfan?"

Mrs. Lovering adds her thanks to Ann (Ferris) and Sue (Taylor) for their hard work, "and the two ladies who came to make the tea for us." Sue happily adds her own thanks to these ladies, Audrey Porter & Audrey Baldwin.

What can your society say? It *is* a shame, and the Village Hall is there to be used - even by those of us who find *Woodland Snap* a sufficient challenge to our games ability. And then there's the *petanque* – use it or lose it.

## AND FOUND FOR A LIFETIME

Just enough space to add Society congratulations to Betty & Brian Pullen who are about to celebrate their Diamond Wedding this March.



Christmas seems a long time ago - and so it is, two months already. But fragmentary memories still survive of songs & hymns around the ford, part of the character of this special village . . .



**THE DUCK RACE** : Oli collates the data before the big launch

Martin helps some reluctant ducks off to a fair & flying start



Gary, John & Martin carry the ducks to the launch pad

Gary grabs the winning duck under Oli & Martin's vigilant eyes



A cascade of colour as 'the ducks' begin their voyage down the Carfan

Aftermath : a blurry John thwarts a red ball's break for the sea







**BOXING DAY  
TUG OF WAR**

Umbrellas tell the tale on a wet & chilly day, when the tug on the rope's end had to compete with the pull of John's beefburgers.



**ANIMATED GEORGE** - on view until 7 March, our youngsters' film joins new interpretation displays



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

### LLANCARFAN SOCIETY EVENTS OUTLINE

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> May      | Four Just Men : musical evening             |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> May      | Petanque Match at 2.00 p.m.                 |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> May      | May Day Walk                                |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> May      | AGM at the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.        |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> June    | Ruth Watts Petanque Cup at 2.00 p.m.        |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> July    | Mystery Trip                                |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> Sept    | Llancarfan Society Annual Dinner            |
| Oct/Nov                  | Fundraising event (possibly a film evening) |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> December | Christmas Social Evening                    |

### VILLAGE SHOW

Following the buzzing, but back-breaking success of last year's village show, and its subsequent evening feast, a date has been settled : **22 August 2015**. (It couldn't be on 8 August, because President Barbara is called upon for similar village cavortings at her present home in France!). Please note that committee volunteers are still needed. If anyone would like to help us deliver this year's event please contact Sue Taylor 781453 / or Ann Ferris 781350 / [sue.e.taylor@btconnect.com](mailto:sue.e.taylor@btconnect.com)) [kannferris@btinternet.com](mailto:kannferris@btinternet.com)).

### CHURCHES' LENT LUNCHESES

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> March  | 1200 St. Illtyd's Lent Lunch in Llancarfan Village Hall |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> March | 1200 Lent Lunch at St. Peter's, Rhoose for the Foodbank |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> March | 1200 Lent Lunch at Penmark Village Hall (St. Mary's)    |

**LLANCARFAN**  
COMMUNITY CINEMA

**FRIDAY 13 MARCH 2015**

#### *The Imitation Game*

A quality movie, nominated for no fewer than 8 Oscars, and Oscar winner for the best Adapted Screenplay. Bletchley Park, which housed the German code-breaking team of Alan Turing and colleagues, is perhaps the reason why many of us survived to watch this inspirational movie. Discuss!

### VAL WATTS

Phil Watts takes on the sad task of recording the death of Valerie Watts, who died on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2014. Valerie was 86, and probably better known as Valerie Harris, formally of Llantrithyd and latterly Barry. The funeral service & the internment were at Llantrithyd Church on January the 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

Phil writes that Val was one of the first to join the Llancarfan Society in 1987, and (for instance) could readily name all the final pupils at Llantrithyd School in this photograph [right] which she gave for the Society's *Millennial* calendar. Llantrithyd school closed in 1932.



Phil says that Val was noteworthy for her determination in selling raffle tickets! She & her mother were lifelong worshippers at Llantrithyd Church, and did everything needed to keep the Church in good shape. Her good deeds, says Phil, are remembered by all.

#### **‘HAPPY VILLAGER’ WRITES (FROM HER IPAD)**

“I have just celebrated my 90th Birthday ,and I received beautiful cards, lovely gifts, good wishes, AND some wonderful surprises. I do so wish to thank all involved. Thank you for your generosity, your kindness and the thought in arranging, preparing (in secret), and hosting surprise events for me. I have Very Many Glowing and Happy Memories of this milestone Birthday. My heartfelt thanks to you all. Audrey Baldwin.”

#### **LIGHTNING BOLT : ‘A SERIOUS BELT FROM MOTHER NATURE’**

Before it vanished under the carpet of history, Sam Smith shared his account of the many Llanbethery villagers affected by January’s lightning bolt - which struck the semi-detached houses of the Tummon family, & their neighbour, Mrs. Carol Dunn. ‘At 04.17 on Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of January,’ reported Sam, ‘a great flash of light lit up our bedroom – a serious belt from mother nature.’ The flash was but a glimmer of what had happened to Andrew, Nicola, Lucy & Jack across the road. Lightning there tracked through the roof, down a metal chimney liner, blew out the chimney, part of the ceiling, cracked a stove, & blasted a wardrobeful of clothes across the Tummon bed. Next door, ‘Auntie Carol’s’ fireplace was dislodged, and smoke was sucked up from her fire into Andrew & Nicola’s bedroom – to the extent that the rapidly-arriving fire service treated Andrew for smoke inhalation. Remarkably, no fire ensued, Mrs. Dunn was ‘rescued’ from her bedroom, and the Smiths hosted their neighbours while the fire engines did ‘a magnificent job’. Virtually every phone, television, satellite box and plug-socket in the village was blown out of action, as was the water main. Llanbethery is still slowly recovering and refurbishing. (Meanwhile the Smiths’ ceiling projection clock still tells the time, despite the gross insult of a bolt of lightning at 04.17 precisely.)



Η Κοτούλα Τουλα . . . and what's the Korean for *Hattie Peck*?



*Hattie Peck* has gone Multi-lingual! We're taking local illustrator Emma Levey's word for it that her best-selling book is still called *Hattie Peck*, despite the foreign tongues in which it now appears!



"Seeing Hattie in indecipherable languages is enough for my brain," says Emma, "let alone trying to understand what they've called her instead!" Fact is, Emma's first book is now in its third triumphant reprint, having sold over 7000 copies just in English. Happily (Hattily?) a sequel is in the incubator. Please watch out for the official hatching of *Hattie Peck : The Journey Home*.

Meantime, avid collectors of Emma's artwork can track down the four more books she's illustrated. Look out for *Yuck Said The Yak*, *One More Rabbit*, *See You Later Alligator* (May 2015), and sections of *365 Treasury Stories* (publishing date TBC). The creatures below, guesting here as Easter Bunnies, come (with Emma's permission) from the cast of *One More Rabbit!*

### HENRIETTA AND THE EASTER EGG LEG-PULL

Mick Mace, on the other hand, has shared here a shaggy hen story often fondly related in Llanbethery's (chased & vanished) *Wild Goose*, not to mention the surviving portals of the *Fox & Hounds*. Writing about his and Sheila's friends, Mary & Roy Booker of Redholme Cottage, Llanbethery, Mick tells the tale of 'Henrietta, the hen who changed sex'. Mick writes, 'This was Roy's pièce de résistance against me, and worked well it did!'

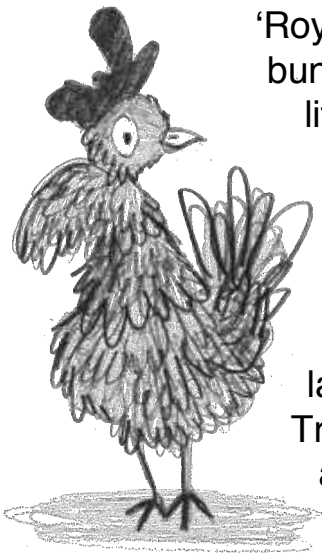


'The story started when Sheila adopted a tiny chicken that had been roughed up by a dog – featherless, bloody & muddy. The tiny creature survived under Sheila's tender care, and she grew to be a fine smart hen named 'Henrietta'. (To be fair, Sheila *did* claim to have had some doubts, given the appearance of a very small comb.)'

'Anyway, all was settled for me when

our dear little hen laid an egg in her enclosure. First one, then another, then a third. Then dead stop. I should have tumbled because of the interest shown by farming wives asking, almost nightly, about Henrietta. My delight at being proved correct about her gender was only slightly lessened when the egg production ceased. “Well, they do go off, Mick, don’t you worry.” ‘

‘Matters came to a head one evening at a Rotary event. Sheila was suspicious because Roy was taking no part in pub banter about our Henrietta. “Come on, Booker,” said Sheila. “What do you know about this?” ‘



‘Roy then came clean. He admitted creeping up to the side of our bungalow, three times depositing an egg, suitably ‘soiled’ with a little chicken muck, into the ‘run’ of our rear garden enclosure. Needless to say, everyone in the *Wild Goose* and *Fox & Hounds* (except the Maces) were well in on the jape!’

‘To end – Henrietta became Henry, and grew into a beautiful cockerel with a thing about attacking people, especially the ladies of Llanbethery. He made a trip in a sack to a farm in Treforest, and last I heard he’d escaped into the farmer’s yard and attacked the farmer’s wife. I asked no more details!’

‘The sadder end came when I got hold of a wicker bottle holder, shaped like a French cockerel. I put in some small chocolate eggs, and had intended to creep up to Roy’s cottage and leave the Easter gift. Tragically, Roy died suddenly at home, that Eastertide 1996, so he never enjoyed my planned retaliation. May he rest in peace.’

### **AT LAST A WELCOME PANEL**

After lengthy debate, this Creative Rural Communities funded panel is finally welcoming visitors to the village & church. Thanks to the generosity of Sue & John at *The Fox*, a corner has been found to introduce folk to our historic attractions. Good Mr. Rob Gretton is seen here, nobly doing the dirty deed. The panel was made for the churchyard, but unease from some PCC members caused the Community Council to rethink its permission. Such quirks of village life could have amused Iolo Morganwg. This iconic Pen’Onn-born anti-slavery Welsh historian features on the panel alongside the newly-found St. George.



**CANON  
DEREK  
BELCHER  
:  
THE MAN  
WHO  
FOUND  
MORE  
DAYS IN  
THE WEEK**

*Penny Fell  
welcomes  
the Priest-  
In-Charge*



Derek & Pamela Belcher

At last, Llancarfan has a new resident priest. There seems to have been a long gap, but the end of the month sees the arrival of Canon Derek Belcher, (formerly of Holy Cross, Cowbridge) at the Llancarfan Rectory a'top Pancross Hill. His new role will be that of Priest-in-Charge for Penmark-with-Llancarfan-with-Llantrythid.

The Archbishop of Wales will conduct the service licensing Canon Derek to these churches here in **St. Cadoc's** at **19.30** on the **25<sup>th</sup> of March**.

Canon Belcher leaves Cowbridge after fourteen years spent juggling the priorities of eleven churches, whilst incidentally tackling a Master's Degree in Ecclesiastical and Civil Law, writing a book on Canon Law in Wales, and initiating key projects on community counselling.

At 65, he joins the three villages here for what is, ostensibly, the simpler life. When I visited him at the Rectory in Llanblethian, the home was teeming with boxes, packed with evidence of a busy life, ready for the short Vale migration.

One accusation levelled at rural clergy is that they are protected from the blows of modern living, almost literally cloistered. It is a charge which would be quite hard to press against Derek Belcher. A mini-biography reveals a CV of astonishing breadth and some length :

“First of all I studied catering, then, nutrition and dietetics at university, and worked initially in the hospital service in Cardiff as a dietician; and thence went off to theological college at Chichester - I was, let's think, maybe 24?”



After ordination, there followed a career of constant diversity, starting in Porthcawl : “I’d been a choir master and organist, and the prep school there didn’t have a music teacher so I also taught part time. Then, following a Postgraduate Certificate of Education, I went to Llandaff as Priest Vicar, teaching part-time there, too . . . I was a diocesan advisor on education and later Inspector of Schools . . . I did a Masters’ in Education at Cardiff University. Then we moved to Margam Abbey!”

In Margam, as well as pastoral duties of Vicar, Derek Belcher famously set up the Kitchen Restaurant. This facility expanded the Abbey’s attraction to tourists & acted as a training ground for catering students, neatly synthesizing his areas of interest & experience. He was also, as if this were not enough, Area Dean & Communications & Press Officer to the then Bishop of Llandaff.

In 2001 he was persuaded by the newly-arrived Bishop to take on the challenge of Cowbridge – a large and diverse patch requiring a high level administration and co-ordination of clergy and lay workers. This was also when he acquired his legal qualifications. And there, feeling he should become more professionally proficient in the pastoral areas of his work, he took a degree in psychology and counselling, and set up the (free) Vale Counselling Service, financed by the Anglican Deanery.

“If I do something, I think ‘let’s do it as professionally as we can...’ ”

A bystander might be forgiven for thinking that, as a perk of the job, Canon Belcher has been granted more days in his week than most of us. But he attributes four decades of relentless output and study to the stirring support of his family – not least his wife of 38 years, Pamela. The couple have three children, and one baby grandson. Their daughter Sharon & son Richard still live with them, and will be part of the package in the move to Llancarfan.

He is excited by the prospect of coming to the area, of working with the school; and in being part of the growing interest in St Cadoc’s wall paintings. He finds the images not only historically instructive but “an inspiration and focus for prayer, which is why they were put there in the first place. The Seven Deadly Sins, for example, are presented as very powerful images . . . Pictures give profound psychological messages, stimulating all sorts of feelings that the written word doesn’t always do justice to.”

His chief aspiration is to relate pastorally to residents of the three villages. And officially his job is half-time. “But I’ll do what’s needed, really. I enjoy working with people, helping people.” He pauses. “It doesn’t matter if they’re not interested in God,” he offers with a laugh. “I’m still interested in *them*.”

## WAKE UP ON THE FRONT PAGE!

The sleepy fellow on the front page, discouraged by a spike-hackled demon from leaving his cosy bed, is the latest awful warning to appear on the walls of our remarkable church. This newest discovery (conservation begins again on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March) now offers an unparalleled set of the Seven Deadly Sins. Our sins prove to be eccentric, and ‘unparalleled’ seems the right word, for no British ‘sinful’ depiction appears to match what has come to light on our walls.

**These images are remarkable.** The quality of the drawings, and fine survival of lines & colours, ranks them with the best of any other British set of sin paintings. I’ve been boning up on my sins recently (alright - settle down at the back there!), and learn that there are some 26 other groups of ‘sins’ presently on view in British churches. Interestingly, the only other Welsh church in a ‘modern’ list, at Llangar, Corwen, might offer a strong comparison.

‘Pride, Envy, Wrath, Sloth, Avarice, Gluttony & Lechery’ – that’s the usual list. But strangest of all is that in St. Cadoc’s, while no ‘Envy’ has appeared, we have *two* forms of ‘Sloth’ – labelled in Latin as ‘**Acedia**’ and ‘**Som(p)noleucia**’.

Well now, the glib interpretation is that Llangarfan people were particularly lazy, needing a double warning from the walls. But no - the ancestral sins were a complex matter, and our two ‘sloths’ represent very different states.

Briefly, ‘**Acedia**’ (the man committing suicide) has deep depression, spiritual dryness, his melancholy being a known hazard in the loneliness & monotony of monastic life. Then our second Sloth – ‘**Somnoleucia**’ or sleepiness – has much more to do with you and me lying in bed of a Sunday morning. Not even the bell’s call can tear us from our duvets – even if we slept, as is still known in Brittany, sitting upright to avoid diabolical visitation during the night.



(c)  
vintagejane1@  
yahoo.co.uk



(c) St. Cadoc's  
Church,  
Llangarfan

Finally for now, on a lighter (or perhaps chubbier) note, I am grateful to a USA church visitor, Sheila Lewis of Bryncethin, for confirming that sin survives – in her case, in a childhood game of ‘Snakes & Ladders’. Compare & contrast our ‘Gluttony’ (above rt.) with an improving square from a 1930s board game!