

# LLANCARFAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER 183 SEPTEMBER 2020



## FAREWELL, CANON DEREK



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## FROM THE EDITOR

As the days shorten and we move into a new season, we are at least (for the time being) no longer a community in lockdown. But caution is still warranted, and it will have been frustrating for Canon Derek Belcher and parishioners that Derek's retirement as parish priest could not be marked in the usual way. Derek has, however, blessed us with a long and touching farewell message, on pages 3-6 of this issue – signing off with a trademark flash of humour. We wish Derek well in retirement and look forward to more ecclesiastical jokes in due course!

As Derek moves on, St Cadoc's has chosen to join the East Vale Ministry area, having previously been in South Vale. With services disrupted and the church closed for months, these have been difficult times for St Cadoc's as well as other churches in the area, with income drastically reduced – even as its work has continued online, by phone and in other ways. As the doors reopen, St Cadoc's will once again become, for many, a much-needed presence in the community. Readers will find an insert in this issue, giving details of how to provide regular financial support, should they wish to do so.

Finally, a word on Phil Watts. We were concerned to hear that Phil has been unwell but we're delighted he's now progressing at home and we all wish him a speedy recovery.

***Valedictory words from Canon Derek Belcher, who, as most readers will know, recently retired as parish priest....***

## **WHAT I HAVE ENJOYED, WHAT HAS SURPRISED ME, AND WHAT I WILL AND WON'T MISS!**

**I was appointed parish priest** by Archbishop Barry Morgan some five years ago. This was a transition from being Rector of the Rectorial Benefice of Cowbridge. I had taken the decision to move before retirement because I was recovering from cancer and was beginning to have symptoms of renal failure. This had not decreased my working capacity, but I was concerned that I may not have the energy to sustain such a large operation as Cowbridge.

My first memory is of my wife Pam and myself driving to Llanccarfan and trying to find the Rectory. This is when we first encountered Sue Taylor, who helpfully guided us to where we could find the property. We already knew Sheelagh and Tony Lewis. They were previous parishioners from my time at Llandaff Cathedral and we had kept in touch ever since.

The three parishes have identities in their own right and were very welcoming to our coming. There was a wonderful welcoming Licensing service in St Cadoc's church to begin my ministry. The three-parishes responded well, and I particularly remember the wonderful catering. The local school children also participated in their singing of the hymn 'One more step along the way I go'. This was a refreshing experience that served to motivate me to give of my best for my new parishioners.

I surprised myself by becoming involved in the Llanccarfan community music event organised by Sheelagh Lewis. It was a great experience to sing with Ray Evans and a wonderful introduction to the strong community spirit of Llanccarfan. I remembered the very positive response to running a Confirmation course and the wonderful Confirmation ceremony presided over by Archbishop Barry Morgan. I also enjoyed helping to address different aspects of the fabric of St Cadoc's such as the brass work, repainting and the statue of Our Lady. The ongoing conservation of the medieval wall paintings was both a joy and a challenge, and in this I am grateful for the hard work that had already been accomplished by so many through the work of the Conservation Committee members. I will miss the excellent guide team who enthralled visitors - and the particular touch of Ian Fell. It was with sadness that Archdeacon Bill Thomas died so suddenly, ending his monumental commitment to our parish. Thanks also go to Archdeacon Peggy Jackson and all the work she had helped develop during her time as parish priest. I am also thankful for the support given by the Reverend Melanie Prince.

**I also enjoyed the time I spent** in Llanccarfan primary school and my development of a choir supported by Sheelagh. Sadly, this was not able to continue. However, a successful painting competition for one of our Summer

Fayres resulted in the printing of the two winning paintings as Christmas cards. Their work was outstanding.

Llancarfan village and its environs is noted for its Summer fayres. I have fond memories of these events. The flower festival organised by Mary Grey and her band of helpers was stunning, as is her work with her flower group that meets regularly in the village hall.

**My previous contacts with the Early Byrd Singers**, and the UltraSepulChral and their director Geoff Howells, meant that they readily responded to my requests to sing in St Cadoc's Church. The Christmas Tree



Festival and the participation of the local primary school members is a continuing wonderful event. This also included the Llancarfan Society Christmas party, which was moved to St Cadoc's where I personally ensured the presence of Father Christmas with my gallant team of elves (Barbara Milhuisen and Olivia Barry). My son Richard ably provided the music and photographic coverage.

**I am indebted to Sam Smith** and his commitment as a Server, Subdeacon and Eucharistic Minister. We have known each other since my Llandaff days, and he has been a wonderful support. I am also grateful for the work of Kevin Barry and Sue Taylor as Wardens.

Unfortunately, I was not able to attend this year's St David's Day service because of illness. It was a wonderful event. Christmas carol services, Farmers Harvest, Harvest Festivals and the roll-a-pound for fundraising! I have been involved with the Llancarfan Society through the encouragement of Barbara, its president, and I became vice-chair.

A more recent endeavour has been the production of online video services from St Cadoc's covering special events such as VE Day and Ascension Day and the Sunday services. This would not have been possible without the expertise of my son Richard.

I was immensely impressed by the restoration work undertaken by St Illtyd **Llantrithyd** church members that covered both the church and the restoration of their wonderful tomb and memorials of the Basset and Mansell families. I miss the candlelit services before electrification, and remember one occasion at a wedding where I could not read the service book until a cloud had passed!

Llantrithyd has a warm and welcoming face and is noted for its catering ability on special occasions. I remember the coffee mornings and wonderful cakes that because of my diabetes I could not eat!

**St Mary Penmark** was also a welcoming experience with their committed band of workers, as was my experience of working with the parish of Rhoose, and Porthkerry. I have warm memories of the Carol services and annual Scout service. Father Robert Evans welcomed me and has contributed much - not only with his abilities as a priest but as an organist. Penmark has a gallant band of people who work hard to maintain their church. We have



**The priest and the pussycat: Derek and Rae Evans perform "Big Spender"**

warm memories of the many Harvest suppers and more recently the special Dinner held in the Six Bells that raised so much money towards Penmark building work.

I have enjoyed providing pastoral support to people including free counselling, using my psychotherapy qualifications. A particular joy has been the encouragement and support of the developing vocation of Kevin Barry for the Sacred Ministry. I have seen him grow as a Server,

Subdeacon and Eucharistic Minister, and in his role with Sue Taylor as Warden. He has a warm heart for God and a supportive family.

**My family and I have enjoyed so much.** We were genuinely surprised by the warmth and support from so many parishioners. We are grateful for the kind invitations from people such as Sue Taylor, Sheelagh and Tony Lewis, and Jackie and Ralph Prole. Meals in homes, Chinese restaurants and hotels! You will always have a place in our hearts.

We will miss you all and I am saddened that the Bishop was not able to give me an extension. I will therefore not miss the hierarchy! In a similar vein we will not miss the many seasonal flies that regularly attack us in the Rectory!

Although I finished on my 70th birthday on July 2nd, the workmen have not been able to finish the work on our new



**Bubbly with Pam and Barbara**

home in Coychurch. So, we will still have to live in the Rectory until they have finished the work and it is safe for us to move. Due to the coronavirus, both my wife and I are in the high-risk category because of our age and health conditions. My family and I look forward to a new phase in our lives. There



will always be a warm welcome for all of you in our new home in Coychurch (23 St Mary's View, Coychurch, CF35 5HL). Although retiring from active ministry, I will be starting a private counselling service at my new home in Coychurch under the title 'Calm Waters Psychotherapy' (dbtherapy@gmail.com 07796170671).

My family and I are very grateful for the many farewell messages and the generous leaving gift from so many people. Sometimes in life, words of wisdom have a way of sinking into your brain and changing your life for the better. This was certainly the case with St Cadoc. Legend tells that St Cadoc after much prayer was led by God with his monks to a valley covered with thorns and thistles. Under God's guidance he built a monastery aided by a divinely guided boar. Llancarfan Monastery became famed for its spirituality and learning. St Cadoc lived at the same time as St Benedict and is known to



### Guess Ho!

have links with a Benedictine monastery described as the 'Beneventum monastery'. St Benedict's rule of life involved labouring in the fields with humility and praise of God in a supportive community of fellow monks dedicating the hours of the day in worshipping God. Cadoc was known as Cattwg Ddoeth - "The Wise", for his outstanding intellect. He also appreciated how love of others in the smallest of things makes the world a better place to live in. Cadoc believed that by putting others before ourselves, doing small things with great love, and offering even the tiniest details of our lives to God, we can live a life of beauty and contentment.

**I will miss my weekly Bulletin sheet** which contained a selection of topical jokes. Here is a farewell joke!

A new monk arrived at the monastery. He was assigned to help the other monks in copying a series of old texts by hand. He noticed, however, that they were copying copies, not the original books. The new monk went to the head monk to ask him about this. He pointed out that if there were an error copying from the original text copy then it should be corrected.

The head monk said: "We have been copying from the copies for centuries, but you make a good point, my son." The head monk went down into the cellar with one of the copies to check it against the original. Hours later, nobody had seen him, so one of the monks went downstairs to look for him. He heard a sobbing coming from the back of the cellar and found the old monk leaning over one of the original books, crying. He asked what was wrong. "The word is 'celebrate' (not celibate)," said the head monk. My apology if I have missed anyone out as there are so many celebratory and happy experiences to remember. My family and I will miss you all.

## Lockdown & Lanterns

Ian Fell

**Our (home-learning) grandchildren** aren't quite old enough yet to interview us about our life when we were young. That said, I bet we're not the only ones who have tried to use the Llancafarn lockdown to pull together bits of our personal past. Funnily, the silent skies and empty roads brought a mirror-like clarity to childhood memories.

My step-grandmother was a midwife who home-delivered me in 1943 into a rural Lancashire village. Since then, Pen & I have got about a bit, though we find we've lived in Llancafarn for nearly a third of our lives. And when you get time to think, it *does* start you wondering just how our simple Northern childhood compared with childhood here in the Vale.

I'm not referring to the deluge of diversions available to Llancafarn's young folk today. Compared with the 'my media' readily on tap for stir-crazy youngsters during the recent lock-in, you remember how very little 'off the shelf' home entertainment was around to quieten us kids back in *our* childhood. No bad thing – but things were pretty basic. Books & newspapers aside – no iPhone, internet, iPlayer, VHF, DVDs, Blu-rays – it took the 1950s transistor radio to bring any 'myness' to media ownership! Yes, there was a *family* gramophone, a wireless, & (by 1953) we'd glimpsed television. But this dramatic breakthrough was because my granddad built a telly & invited the villagers to watch the Coronation.

But no - what I'm wondering about now is a Llancafarn childhood of 120 years ago. And of course compared to this, my 1940s generation was spoilt. Earlier, just about the only 'home media' device available to late Victorians and early Edwardians was the time-honoured 'Magic Lantern'.

**Lanterns for projecting pictures onto screens** were invented a remarkably long time ago. I have an image of a picture-projecting lantern drawn in about 1420, which is a full 60 years before our church wall-paintings! Yet such boxes of magic light survived to be used even into my childhood. Despite the competition of the Co-op cinema, us Northern kids were still at times exposed to the wonders and novelties of the magic lantern.

All of which seemed as good a reason as any to wonder about Llancafarn's experience back in, say, 1900 – so, well before our award-winning Film Society, before Jim Bs' church-showing of '*A Month in the Country*', and over a century before we're feeling gratitude to Martyn & Martin for delivering life-saving Super-Fast Village Lockdown Broadband!

**I have to say** that a first trawl for reports of ‘magic lantern shows’, largely via *Welsh Newspapers Online* (an excellent site), was both disappointing, and yet fascinating. Now I know the GEM doesn’t hold the front page nowadays to splash revelations of our TV viewing, but back in the 1890s & 1900s, a slide show was still found newsworthy. However, though I’ve scanned several turn-of-the-19/20<sup>th</sup> century newspapers, I’ve been surprised to find next to no records of lantern shows in our village. To be precise, while we’ve had our eisteddfodau, and had concerts of music, so far I’ve only discovered **one single Magic Lantern show**.

If you can generalise from 1890-1910 reports in the *Evening Express*, *Glamorgan Express*, *The Star*, *Barry Herald*, and *Barry Dock News*, the purpose of lantern shows was rarely only to do with mere entertainment. The BBC, established in 1923, aimed to ‘inform, educate and entertain’, and magic lantern shows were often even more worthy in their motives. Maybe their visual novelty lowered our resistance to propaganda & would-be moral improvement! The magic lantern shows hereabouts seem to have been very much tools of religious foundations, or of early charities, each with a cause to fight, a country to save, or a roof to repair. Fund-raising movies in church or chapel *do* seem to have a precedent.

Space precludes much detail of those more-numerous ‘lantern lectures’ which *did* happen nearby. Surely the 1899 Christmas treat, organised by the English Baptist Chapel, serving a tea to ‘450 of the poorest children of the district’, did not also need the lantern lecture, given by ‘Mr. James, stationmaster at Cadoxton’ to tempt in the hungry kids? Then again, another tea in 1893 for ‘nearly 100’ youngsters at the Presbyterian Sunday School, Barry, preceded a ‘magic lantern entertainment . . . presided over’ by the Rev Christmas Lewis. But (kids having dined?) this had only ‘a tolerably good attendance’. ‘The lantern was manipulated by Mr. Gilbert on views from “*Nellie’s Rose*” & “*The Lifeboat*”, the elocutionary portion undertaken by Sherwood with considerable power.’

**Particularly interesting for us lantern enthusiasts of today** is the naming in this report of the chosen slide sequences, of which there was a choice of many commercially produced thousands. ‘*Nellie’s Rose*’ – catalogue name ‘*Billy’s Rose*’ - and ‘*The Lifeboat*’ were both visualisations of dramatic monologues by George Robert Sims, the journalist and social reformer who also wrote the famous ‘*Christmas Day in the Workhouse*’. Mr. Sherwood clearly brought fine Barry pathos to Sim’s lines, causing ‘*Billy’s Rose*’ to tug at the heartstrings as he recited that

*‘Billy’s dead and gone to glory – so is Billy’s sister Nell’.*

‘The Lifeboat’ too readily launches into communal gloom :



*Our women ain't chicken hearted when it comes to savin' lives,  
But death that night looked certain – and our wives be only wives . . .*



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**BILLY'S ROSE**  
[left]

**THE  
LIFEBOAT**  
[right]

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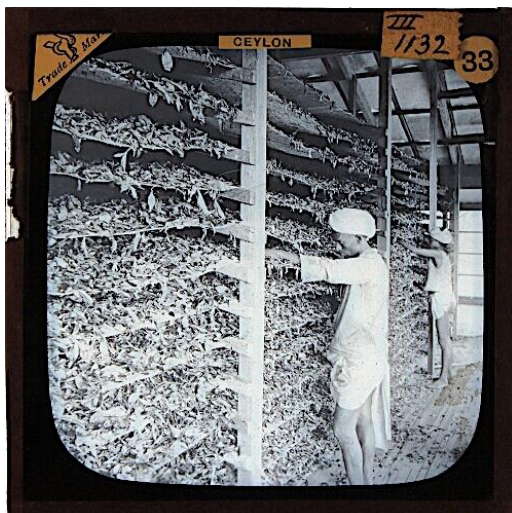
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Happily the sharing of '*Jessica's First Prayer*' at the Gospel Tent Mission-room, Barry Dock in 1897 raised £2 for the Indian famine. But what about our 15<sup>th</sup> January 1895 magic lantern show in Llancarfan?

This show took place at the Baptist Chapel, where the Rev E. D. Lewis 'gave a most successful magic lantern entertainment to a large audience'. Again, we know his subjects – they were '*How we get our tea*' & '*The end of a joke*'. Of course there were also many humorous slide shows to buy, and this 'joke' we're told was 'exceedingly amusing, and terminated with a good moral'. But there's the rub; it was a rare entertainment that could avoid moral improvement! And the sub-text of '*How we get our tea*' served, of course, to promote the Band of Hope's zeal for abstinence that was it seems a strong aspect of Baptist teaching.



**Anyway, should our Film Society like to recreate such delights,** the slides for '*Our Tea, and How We Get It*' do still survive. And *The Barry Dock News* assures us that they 'proved interesting and highly instructive'. I've learnt for instance that Ceylon's tea was kept [as seen here] in '*The Withering House*'.

Talking of which, '*The Withering House*' might well describe the joys of continuing the lock-in in our own Wesleyan chapel. No magic lantern, and we've forgotten the joke!

## A LOCAL GIRL WHOSE VOICE TOOK HER FAR

*Just occasionally, stories from Llancarfan history produce an amazing and unexpected response. In Newsletter 182, we reprinted an 1893 newspaper item about Llancarfan girl Cassie Lougher, a singing talent, who might – or might not – be about to tour America. Word was she had been picked by Madame Clara Novello Davies, famous Cardiff soprano and mother of Ivor Novello, to join a tour with the Welsh Ladies Choir. Did Cassie go? Well yes! Her choir were prizewinners at The Chicago World Fair. And as her great great niece Elizabeth Jones writes to tell us, the voyage dramatically changed Cassie's life.*



Cassie in 1916

Cassie (Catherine) Lougher was my grandmother's aunt and is my great great aunt. A few years ago (2009/10) I was in contact with Cassie's great granddaughter and we were able to exchange information regarding our respective great grandmothers, mine being Jane Lougher of Llanvithyn Mill. I also have notes written by Cassie's nephew, Thomas H Lougher.

CATHERINE LOUGHER (known as Cassie)

Known in Hawaii as Mother Forbest Kama'aina resident (Child of the Land)

Catherine Lougher was born 22 May 1871 in Greendown, Bonvilston. She was the fifth of eleven children of Robert and Elizabeth Lougher and in 1877 the family moved to Garnllwyd, Llancarfan. Cassie attended Llancarfan Board School where she became a pupil teacher, a position she held for a number of years. She trained as a singer with Mme Clara Novello Davies's Welsh Ladies Choir; she sailed with them from Liverpool to tour the USA, singing in Brooklyn, Buffalo and finishing at the World Fair in Chicago in October 1893.

Whilst in America, Cassie took the opportunity to visit her brother Robert, a sugar plantation manager near Hilo, Hawaii; here she met David McHattie Forbes who was also associated with the sugar cane business. They married on 7 August 1895 and settled in Kukuihaele, where they had five children – Blodwyn, Allister, Merlin, Dyfrig and Betty. Cassie cared for the welfare of local families and plantation workers, becoming their nurse, counsellor and midwife. During this time, she helped deliver many babies. She became a



lifelong member of the American Red Cross and received their 50-year pin many years later.

In 1908, Cassie, David and family returned to the UK to settle in David's native Scotland. After a short time, they moved to Wales, living in Llanblethian until 1912 when they returned to Hawaii, settling in Waiakea, Hilo District where David managed the Waiakea Sugar Mill. During these



**Cassie and David**

years, Cassie again ran an informal clinic for plantation workers and their families. She was later supported by her daughter Blodwyn, who had trained as a nurse. During World War 1, Cassie raised sufficient funds to purchase a Red Cross ambulance to sent to Cardiff!

Following David's retirement in 1925, the couple made their home in Kamuela (a staging post for US Marines during World War 2, many being entertained by Cassie). David became a judge and district magistrate and pursued his interests in horticulture, wood carving and collecting Hawaiiana, much of which now forms the basis of the collection in The Bishop Museum, Honolulu.

Cassie stayed in Kamuela throughout WW2, dying in August 1955. She never forgot her homeland and made visits

back to Llancarfan to see her family, the last trip being in 1948. The journey would have taken about four weeks, door to door, not easy as she got older. Her grandchildren and great grand children are now spread across America.

**HOW NICE it was to come across this plaque on a tree in the woods behind the waterwheel, where Mike loved to stroll and - of course! - gather wood. (For those seeking it out: it's in the clearing next to the rope swing.)**





## WILD RIDE: THE PENNON BUGATTI

Steve Powell

When Peter and Roz Hunt arrived in Ross Kear, Pennon, Llancarfan in late 1979, they came with Miss Daisy, a 1934 MGPA and a 1924 Morris 10. David Lougher a neighbour in Pennon (Little Pennon), was intrigued and he visited Peter one evening with a booklet on turning old VW Beetles into replica Bugatti Type 35s. David really wanted one for himself, but he convinced Peter it would be fun to make some. He then dragged me in on the idea. I think his intention was for me to look after the mechanical conversion, Peter to wire the thing and he would sell them. He also had connections with Gill of Gilburn Cars who was a fibre glass specialist and he was to design the body panels and Gill would manufacture them. We planned initially to build three cars, one green, one red and one white - the colours of the Welsh Flag. We purchased three donor VWs and we put new 2 litre engines into each chassis. They were so powerful that when we tested the first one on the road, the front end would lift up into the air, if we accelerated too fast. So a redesign was necessary, and that consisted of a 12 kilo lump of lead melted onto the front of the chassis, but out of sight.

During the build of the first three cars, the design changed slightly on each one, as we developed improvements. We had to stretch the chassis slightly

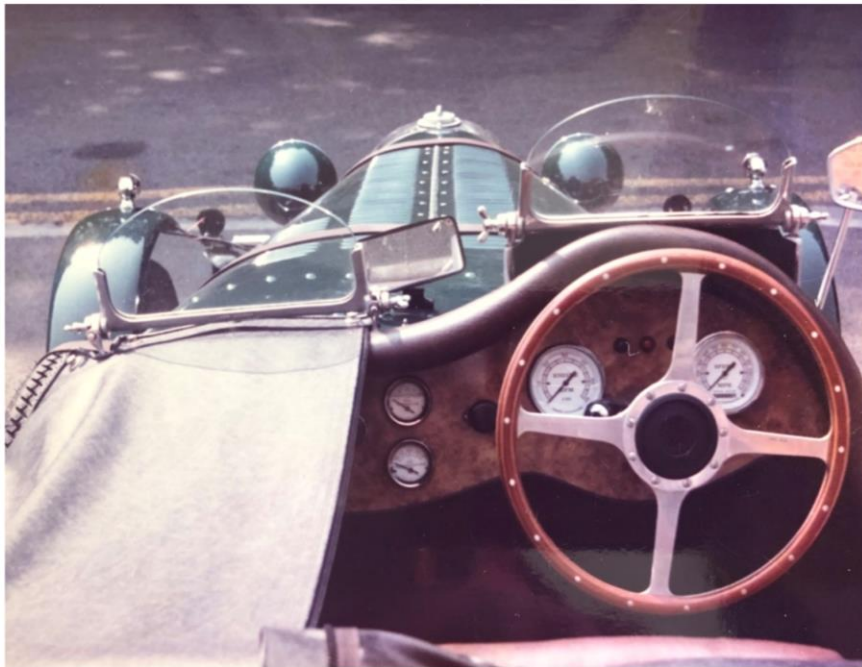


so that David could get into his car comfortably. We also created the walnut (fake) dashboard, with some very flashy and expensive instruments.

There was the trip to Paris as part of the Laver-bread Run and then another to Monte Carlo to promote Welsh foodstuffs, so David and Peter took a white Bugatti on these trips. They did food promoting, and then David wanted to

drive the Monte Carlo race track before returning home.

Twelve cars were built, each one with a brass chassis plate, and they were named the Pennon Bugatti. The BBC Welsh News did a feature on the Pennon Bugatti, with a live track of the Bugatti going up the Tumble Hill.



CAN YOU  
NAME US ALL?

## Village history in making

TODAY the Big Picture goes to Llangarfan, in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Residents of all ages turned up at St Cadoc's church, after the Sunday service had finished, to create an historic souvenir for the millennium.

After publicising the event in the Echo, encouraging as many people as possible to take part in the momentous occasion, there was a great turnout and the residents of Llangarfan agreed that the project was an excellent idea.

The Rev Malcolm Davies, of St Cadoc's Church, said: "I think it is a great initiative on behalf of the Echo."

Frank Jameson, who has lived in Llangarfan for 28 years with his wife Joyce, said: "I think this is excellent. We don't often get the opportunity to do things like this."





## GONE WITH THE WIND

*Llancarfan Book Club met on 12 March to discuss a book called "I'm Not Scared". Little did they know it was to be the last gathering for six months - and in the interim, there would be plenty to be scared about...The club kept reading and reviewing via WhatsApp, and joyously partied once again at lunch on 23 August, hosted by the Kemps. Early manifestations of Storm Francis ensured a healthy level of ventilation all afternoon. Fran Winterbottom and Jayne Eddins grappled with the gazebo in gale-force winds.*




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## A BLAST – OR RATHER A CLANG! – FROM THE PAST: THE RECAST CHURCH BELLS IN TRANSIT....





### STILL WALKING.....

Our President, Barbara Milhuisen, just can't stop pounding the pavement. First she walked 500 laps of Rhose Library, to raise money for a local care home. Then she completed another 500 laps for a dogs' trust, undeterred by a fall that left her with a broken nose and finger. Now, as we go to press, Barbara is close to finishing another 500-lap marathon to raise money for Lebanon. Will she then hang up her well-worn walking shoes? Not a bit of it! She has yet another 500 lined up - to raise funds to cover heating and other maintenance costs at St Cadoc's church, in order to ensure that the wall paintings remain in good keep. Support our super-walker, 85 years young!



### WARNING: QUACKTIVITY AHEAD!

Thanks to some quick creative thinking by young residents – 10-year-old twins, Imogen and Henry Powell – motorists approaching the ford in recent months have been alerted to the presence of several duckling families who loiter there. Those ducklings aren't half growing up quickly. Don't they all!

From Barry Dock News, 26th April 1895:



*A couple of choice tug-of-war pics, recently passed on to your editor. Anyone know when these were snapped?*



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