



## LLANCARFAN SOCIETY

### Newsletter 64 December 1994

I am not sure whether this Newsletter will reach you before Christmas but, just in case, have a peaceful and enjoyable holiday. At least we are in time to say Happy New Year to all our members. Thank you for your support during the past year and, in particular, our gratitude to those stalwarts who do most of the work for Society events.

#### ANNUAL DINNERS 1994

Twenty-three members attended the first Dinner in September. A good time was had by all and it was more like a dinner party than a formal dinner, because of the small numbers. In November we returned to our usual full-house, almost 70 members attending. Again it was a very enjoyable occasion - as always. Our grateful thanks to Gwynne Liscombe whose auctioneering skills, at the second dinner, raised £92 for the St Cadoc's restoration fund. Amongst the items auctioned was the "Llancarfan love-spoon" crafted and donated by Mike Cram. Mike has very kindly offered to make a second spoon to the same design which will be on permanent display in the Village Hall. A very big thank-you to all of the members who worked to prepare the Hall, the raffles and all the other behind-the-scenes jobs which make such occasions run smoothly.

We had to pay a surcharge to the caterers because the first dinner was so limited in numbers. Because of this, we are considering returning to a single dinner in 1995. It will have to be first come first served (tickets, not dinner!). At the moment the proposed date is in late September - let the Committee have any views on this.

#### DATES FOR THE DIARY

WHIST DRIVE: It is hoped that the next one will be in February, 1995. The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be on Friday, March 10, 1995. In addition to the very brief AGM there will be a glass of wine, refreshments and a slide show and short talk by John Etherington. Please come along for what is usually a very pleasant social occasion.

LLANCARFAN AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION "Race Night" on film - Friday, February 10, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Contributions for the Newsletter (which will be very welcome) should be sent to the Editor, John Etherington, Parc-y-Bont - New Buildings, Llanhowell, Solva, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, Dyfed, SA62 6XX. We will also be pleased to print short announcements of village functions but they must be sent in writing, at least 6-8 weeks in advance. Subscriptions and problems with mailing: to the Membership Secretary, Phil Watts, Abernant Bungalow, Llancarfan, Barry, South Glamorgan, CF62 3AD. Agenda items and correspondence for the Committee to the Secretary, Sheila Mace, Pel y Dryn, Llanbethery, Barry, South Glamorgan, CF62 3AN. Arrangements for visits to sick members: Len Fairfax, Summit View, Aberthin, Cowbridge, S. Glam. (Cowbridge 772654).

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#### CHRISTMAS CARDS - ST CADOC'S RESTORATION FUND

This Newsletter too late for advertising Christmas cards but you could always buy a packet to keep for next year, as they are undated.

The cards feature a pen drawing of the south side of the Church by Jim Grove. The greeting is "With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year". Packs of 10 cards are available at £2.50 from Trudy Fuller at Penonn House, Llancarfan.

Trudy also has original Jim Grove prints, mounted and framed, for £25.00.

#### LLANCARFAN LADIES TUESDAY CLUB by Beryl Booth

To celebrate the Silver Jubilee of the Tuesday Club a tea-party was held in the Village Hall on Saturday, October 22. Over 40 ladies enjoyed a delicious spread and the chat that went with it can be left to the imagination!

The original Chair Lady, Jean Darby, who formed the club 25 years ago and who had travelled from West Wales, made a short speech and then drew the raffle tickets. Another founder, and still a member, Kath Watts, cut the cake and it was announced by the Chair Lady that, during the 25 years the Tuesday Club has collected £11,000 for various, usually local, charities.

Some members had travelled from as far away as Hampshire and West Wales - our apologies to any ex-members who did not get an invitation - we hope we included you all. We would welcome any new members who might like to join us on the third Tuesday of each month at 7.45 p.m. in the Llancarfan Village Hall.

#### GENERAL NEWS OF LLANCARFAN by Phil Watts

During the summer months, local folk have been wondering what is happening in the field opposite the school where Gwynne and Dilys Liscombe were hoping to build a retirement bungalow. The entrance has been widened, level ground has been cut and trees planted on the slopes and surrounding the tennis court. Passers by have been inquisitive. Vale of Glamorgan officials have been alerted and shown an interest. Gwynne has now revealed all by placing three notices in the vicinity of School Hill explaining what he has been doing and what his intentions are.

The gateway is to be renewed, accompanied by a stile entrance. A nature walk has been created round the hedges revealing various forms of wildlife, to the delight of his grandchildren. A general tidy-up is how he describes it in the explanatory notice. I am sure that it has been very pleasant to see and hear the use of the woodsman's axe accompanied by the swish of the trashing hook in sharp contrast to the noise of the chain saw, J.C.B. and the flail hedge cutter.

The adjoining field has now been sold by the Land Authority for Wales at a recent auction in the Bear Hotel, Cowbridge. The price was well above agricultural rates but reflects a loss on the original purchase price.

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The Society has made its own contribution to improvement this year, continuing its programme of daffodil planting. More bulbs have been added to those on the banks of Pancross Hill and the Community Council has given permission for planting in St Cadoc's Burial Ground.

Wildlife in general seems to be flourishing: on Sunday, October 2, I observed a mink sneaking in and out of the waters of the Carfan, adjoining the Fox and Hounds car park. On further observation I noticed a trout, about 12 inches in length, darting back and forth in the river. This was quite surprising as the water at this point is very shallow. The trout must be satisfied with the water of the Carfan to have survived in spite of the various episodes of pollution which we have had, but whether they will survive the appetite of the mink is another matter! Several years ago the late Paul Schmidt reported a polecat opposite Brook Cottage on a number of occasions - was this in fact a mink?

## NEWS OF MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND PLACES

Phil Watts writes:- Because of ill-health, Muriel Bonney was unable to attend the Annual Dinner in September. She is now recovering and likely to be out and about again shortly. She is kept in touch with most of what goes on on the parish and still attends Carmel Chapel on a regular basis. She has many memories of Llancarfan and Llanbethery of years gone by and her mother who lived until she was over 90 had many more. Muriel's brother and sister, Jenkin and Carol, still live in Llanbethery and are probably the oldest people, still alive, who have lived the whole of their life in the parish. Jenkin was born at Flaxland Fawr.

Many folk will remember that Muriel used to cycle from Rhoose to Llanbethery, regularly visiting family before she became modernised to four wheel transport. On one of these

journeys she recalls meeting a convoy of army tanks on the corner past Cliff Farm at the top of Kenson Hill. The pedal of the cycle hit a rock jutting out from the bank and she was lucky not to end up under the tanks.

Evan Williams, 23 year old son of Rhys Williams, Aberogwrn, won the Welsh point-to-point championship in 1992 with 13 winners. This coming year he is aiming to regain the title from Tim Jones of Rudry who took it last year (Gem December 1).

Congratulations to Edward son of Tony and Joan Thomas, Pancross Farm, on his marriage to Catherine Davies on November 5 at Llanboidy, Dyfed.

The Church at Welsh St Donats is unable to call worshippers to services because of a cracked bell. The Gem (December 1) tells us that Rev. Counsell has installed a stereo system in the tower and now uses the tape: A Selection of Bells from the Diocese of Llandaff and Monmouth compiled by the Diocesan Association of Bell Ringers.

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It was announced in October that Blue Circle's proposals to use Aberthaw Quarry for waste tipping had been rejected by the Vale of Glamorgan Council. No doubt there will be an appeal.

At the second Annual Dinner, in November, a number of copies of a map of The Manor of Llancadle in 1622 were circulated. The copies were provided by Roy Booker, Llanbethery but, so far, the editor has been unable to discover from what source they were copied - they are marked Figure 2 and come from a modern publication. The map is of great interest when compared with the modern O.S. map and with the 1841 Tithe Map of Llancarfan Parish. Once the editor has resolved the question of origin, a short article will follow.

A Children's Party was held at the Community Hall on 10th December followed by the turning-on of the Christmas Tree lights in the evening.

FUN AND GAMES by Barbara Milhuisen

Recently I thought of celebrating the fact that I was becoming a senior citizen. My brother's family flew to France, the days were organised, and family and friends had dinner and a dance on the street in the nearest town one evening. The next day I invited 40 people to join us in the late afternoon for a game of rounders, then supper and another dance.

Some 60 people arrived plus their dogs. We had a good game in the long grass, thistles and nettles. The English people could not speak a word of French and the French not a word of English! My niece's husband kept moving one of the goals (it was the cool box with the beer).

The umpire called a halt when we had lost most of the balls, but I think he was more concerned with what was happening at the back of the house where my sister's son-in-law and the Mayor had been left in charge of the bar and refreshments. All was well as others had arrived bearing gifts of food and drink.

I was suddenly reminded of another occasion when I was involved with a game. Some 45 years ago I was still at school in Barry. On a Wednesday afternoon we were free to play games. School finished at 12.30 p.m. and there was time to catch the village bus at Romilly Schools at 1.00 p.m., arriving in Llancarfan at 1.20. I ran up School Hill and along the road to where we lived at Ty-Uchaf, across the bailey, then opened the door and stopped. My mother called me into the other room "I have given your dinner to the Gypsy (it was rabbit stew) but I am making some Welsh cakes for now - you can have your dinner tonight.

You did not argue with your mother in those days. I changed quickly as I had to catch the 1.45 bus back to Barry to play hockey that afternoon. I returned to sit at the end of the table to eat my Welsh cakes only to find that the Gypsy was having dessert and all the other Welsh cakes were fast disappearing into her basket.

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I then went to see my mother, this time to protest. Her response was "Never mind, her need was greater than yours." I just wish mother could have been at my rounders party.

#### GLAMORGAN WILDLIFE TRUST by Joan Raum

On the morning of Guy Fawkes Day, over £500 was given by members and friends to the "Coffee at Walterston" meeting. This really was a sparkling event and everyone who subscribed to this most tremendous success is sincerely thanked. It was especially pleasing that so many people from the Llancarfan area took an interest in the work of the Trust.

Our work is very varied. Management of the Trust's 45 nature reserves, including Coed

Garnllwyd near Llanccarfan, is our first priority. It may seem strange that nature, which has taken care of itself for millennia, should now need help! There are many reasons, most due to our modern way of life which puts great pressure on the countryside. Nature reserves can often be shielded from some of these pressures; also, many wildlife sites have evolved as a result of human activity in earlier years and careful management is needed to maintain such sites by activities such as coppicing, tree planting and felling, pond creation, drainage or flooding, mowing, grazing and so on.

The conservation expertise and administrative support for such work is provided by three Trust staff based at the Glamorgan Nature Centre at Tondu. Financial support comes mainly from members, fund-raising activities and grants. Our current need is for a trailer for our van, to carry tools and materials. The money from the Walterston meeting will be put toward the £1000 needed for this. In addition to management work, our staff comment on planning proposals, advise schools and generally assist in education and training programmes. Advice is given to individuals and organisations on creation or enhancement of wildlife habitats.

Unless you are a Trust member you may not know that the Nature Centre at Tondu is sited in the former offices of the Parc Slip East Opencast Coal mine, which became redundant in 1981, and were donated to the Trust. The British Coal Opencast Executive has undertaken an enormous reclamation scheme involving landscaping, tree planting, pond creation to create the 250 acre Parc Slip Nature Reserve to be managed by the Trust. If you would like to visit the Parc Slip Reserve we would be happy to arrange a tour. Please ring us on 01446 7781471 or at the Nature Centre on 01656 724100.

#### THE LICHFIELD GOSPEL - A LLANCCARFAN CONNECTION? by John Etherington

The Western Mail (November 19) reported that a West Wales vicar believes that the Lichfield Gospel, which is on permanent exhibition at Lichfield Cathedral, was stolen from Wales almost 1000 years ago. The Rev. Dr Patrick Thomas, Rector of Brechfa near Carmarthen, claims that the Gospel, also known as the Gospel of St Chad, was written at Llantwit Major, Llanbadarn or Llanccarfan and was either stolen by monks in the tenth century or given by King Hywel Dda to St Athelstan of Mercia.

The manuscript has marginal notes which may be the oldest surviving written Welsh and Dr Thomas intends to make a formal request to the Archbishop of Canterbury for the Gospel to be returned to its rightful owners.

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However, in reply, the Chancellor and librarian of Lichfield Cathedral says the Gospel was in Lichfield in the 10th century from where it was stolen by Welsh monks "who scribbled in Welsh in the margins". It was returned to Lichfield in 1673 (Western Mail December 7). Who knows? Did this venerable parchment once listen to the chuckle of the Carfan and

the gales roaring in our hilltop trees?

#### THE ROMANS AT LLANBETHERY by Ken Walls

Gazing north west from my home at Llanbethery one can see, across the deep valley of Pant-y-Coed, to an open field above it. Sixteen hundred years ago the area would probably have been all forest except for a small clearing in which there was a Roman building. Excavation has revealed a layer of occupation soil with coarse pottery of the 2nd to 4th centuries A.D. Animal bones, iron nails, slag, roof- and box-tiles were also found (O.S. ref ST 0355 7023).

About 58 metres from the building was found, in 1957, the lower part of a vessel of grey ware containing the remains of a hoard of Roman coins. This consisted of 814 coins, many of them Constantinian issues of 330-335 A.D.

What happened to the occupants of this building which may have been a villa (three tesserae - fragments of a mosaic floor - were found)? The fact that they left the coins may indicate a hasty evacuation, or possible death of the occupants at the hands of a hostile tribe. If they survived, did they leave Britain with the main force in 410 or is it possible that they and their descendents remained here? If they did remain, perhaps they grew tired of carrying water up the slope from the stream and decided to join the main settlement at Llancarfan where there was abundant water. Were they converted to Christianity and some 200 years later helped to build the monastery - we are left wondering?

For much of the above information I am indebted to The Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Wales: An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan, Volume 1, H.M.S.O.

#### INSTITUTION AND INDUCTION SERVICE FOR THE NEW VICAR, THE REV. MALCOM DAVIES by Malcom Mace (Churchwarden and Secretary, St Cadoc's P.C.C.)

A memorable service took place in Llancarfan on the evening of Tuesday, 13 September. The Lord Bishop of Llandaff, the Right Reverend Roy T Davies, assisted by the Rural Dean (deputising for the Archdeacon), instituted the Reverend Malcom Davies as Parish Priest of the Parishes of Llancarfan with Llantrithyd. A congregation of over 300 people attended and the few who could not find seats in the church were able to hear the service on a public address system outside the porch.

Refreshments were available in the Community Hall after the service and extra space was provided by a large tent, courtesy of the local scouts, in the burial ground, by kind permission of the Llancarfan Community Council. A good time was had by all, thanks to stalwart workers from both parishes.



Notices had been posted in both churches inviting everyone to attend. Unfortunately, the issue of some invitation tickets may have given the impression that admission was by ticket only; in fact, the only reserved seats were a few, as a courtesy, for the Bishop, his party, Churchwardens, members of the P.C.C., sidesmen and Reverend Davies' immediate family. Otherwise everyone was catered-for on a "first come, first served" basis.

I have been asked by several people to explain why the form of service was described as both the "Institution" and the "Induction" of the new incumbent. The Institution is performed by the Bishop of the Diocese who, thereby, commits to his Priest the care of Souls (the spiritual care of the parish) and confers upon him all the rights and privileges which will be his as parish priest. The Induction is performed by the Archdeacon and is intended to announce and signify publicly that the incumbent has been instituted and is taking up his work.

The members of the two P.C.C.'s sat together as the Bishop expected them, together with the Churchwardens, to lead the congregation in repeating certain promises. Hymns were sung from the Order of Service leaflet, which included a nice touch by the Rev. Davies - "A prayer before service" calling for a blessing in his future work amongst us.

While the well known hymn "We love the place, O God" was sung the clergymen and Churchwardens moved to the font for prayers, and promises by the priest and people, then to the chancel step and on to the sanctuary where the Institution by the Bishop took place, following which, the new parish priest was given a Deed of Institution and was blessed. During a psalm, the Bishop gave the new parish priest the Mandate for his Induction: he presented himself to the Archdeacon's deputy and handed to him the Bishop's Mandate.

The Church wardens then conducted the Archdeacon's and Rural Dean's deputies, followed by the rev. Davies, to the principal door of the Church. The Archdeacon's deputy laid the parish priest's hand upon the key and inducted him to his new living. The Rev. Davies locked and unlocked the Church door for which ceremony we had found the ancient key which turned smoothly in the lock without need for "3 in 1" oil!!

He also rang the bell from the base of the tower to signify to parishioners his taking possession. Did anyone present count the rings? Ask Rev. Malcom how long before he anticipates retirement (Something of a quite unofficial tradition here amongst the clergy!!).

I hope this has answered one or two queries and feel sure that all of us in the Llancarfan Society wish our new Vicar every blessing of happiness and good health in his work in the two parishes.

SOME CHANGES IN THE WATERWAYS by Phil Watts, November 12



We have just had one of the deepest floods for a number of years, following a fortnight when it rained on many occasions, followed by a night of rain on November 11.

We awoke at Abernant to see water running down the field and across the road toward Viv Price's farm and the orchard and croft (Barbecue car park) halfcovered, on the other side of the bungalow.

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We have often seen the water, in times of flood, covering the field in front and covering the road to the depth of about a foot, by the bridge but I cannot remember having seen the water so high on the side of the Whitton Brook. From this, I conclude that the new road bridge allowed water to get away more quickly but the undrained Whitton may have suffered from various obstructions en route.

Another thought I have is that, before the road existed, the rivers Carfan and Whitton joined at the south west side of Abernant and not at Garnllwyd as at present, the diversion being created for the benefit of the water wheel at Monastery Mill. It is only a theory, but I wonder?

The changes of waterways can be helpful but also, sometimes, a great nuisance. as Edgar Balchin and Carla and Richard Morgan can testify. Here, a wide ditch has been closed and substituted by an insufficient drain pipe though, who is to know whether they would have been flooded anyway, if the river toward Cliff had not been straightened, deepened and widened (see John Etherington's article on Floods in Newsletter 34). The flooded areas are newly built upon in any case. The straightening of the river gave more land to New Mill and Morningside (The Nook). After this operation the locals called the Carfan a ditch rather than a meandering river.

During this week's flood the overflow of water formed a river down Llancadle Road causing a number of properties in Llancadle to be flooded.

The water collecting area for the Carfan is a very wide one and ends in a narrow valley before it gets to the sea. When it is in flood the water flows very fast and all drivers travelling through the water should beware. It is not long since a car was picked-up by the flood water at the middle bridge and carried down to the Fox and Hounds bridge - driverless by this time!

Talking of Fox and Hounds in time of flood, one is reminded that a helicopter once landed in the car park as water was pouring in through the front door of the pub and out through the lounge doors. Water almost reached the top of the Wesleyan Chapel wall.

It seems that water and a wheel would be better used for electricity than the windmills on a windfarm! Nothing can stop you from having a splashing time on the roads around Llancarfan!