



LLANCARFAN SOCIETY

Newsletter 75 January 1997

Happy New Year to all our members in this tenth anniversary year of the Llanccarfân Society.

As editor, I apologise for the very long delay in preparing this Newsletter. The last one was, I'm horrified to see, dated August 1996. The problem has been a hiccupping word-processor which has prevented me from doing any writing for several months - our old-fashioned typewriter was dumped years ago, so we were completely stymied. It is very frustrating to know that all the writing is there, hidden away in that little magnetic disc, and yet you cannot get at it! All is now well (fingers crossed), but the editor has made the decision to buy a new machine to avoid further problems. Once we have learned to use it there will be the added advantage of better print quality.

Looking back, we have produced 75 Newsletters in ten years, most having about eight pages of text - nearly 580 pages in all - over two and a half million words! This is a tribute to all our members who have helped with their thoughts and memories and particularly to Mavis Coles who has just retired from the job of printing the final product. Of recent years she has also had to retype my draft copy as our word-processors could not "talk" to each other.

1997 SUBSCRIPTION NOW DUE

The subscription remains at £5.00 or £2.50 for a senior-citizen living alone. A renewal form is enclosed and should be sent to our new Membership Secretary, Margaret Rees, Pen-Onn Farm.

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, 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, Margaret Rees, Pen-Onn Farm, Llanccarfân, Barry, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3AD. Agenda items and correspondence for the Committee to the Secretary, Sheila Mace, Pel-y-Dryn, Llanbethery, Barry, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3AN. Arrangements for visits to sick members: Len Fairfax, Summit View, Aberthin, Cowbridge, Vale of Glam. (Cowbridge 772654).

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY by Phil Watts

As we near the tenth anniversary of the formation of the Llancarfan Society it is my wish that I relinquish the post of Membership Secretary. I have done this work since I took over the Treasurers post from Derek Higgs in the first year of the Society. We have had changes of Secretary, Chairman and Treasurer during this time and I am sure all will agree that it does no harm at all for the work to change hands and be shared around. Margaret Rees of Pen-onn Farm has very kindly agreed to take over the job of Membership Secretary.

-2-

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone for their cooperation and consideration in paying their subscriptions to me, for the Society over the past 8 or 9 years. I am sure you will all give Margaret the same magnificent support that I have received.

To continue my support and enthusiasm for the Society it is my intention to help in the production of the Newsletter. Since John moved to Pembrokeshire it has been a big strain managing to produce sufficient material to keep a constant supply of Newsletters. The Committee firmly believe that the strength of the Society depends in the circulation of the Newsletter over a wide area. It is my hope that I will be able to assist in producing more material for the Newsletter.

ANNUAL DINNER 1996 by Phil Watts

The Society's Annual Dinner was held in the Village Hall on Saturday, September 28. The number attending was 64: the general feeling was that the dinner was good value for the £12 per head, particularly as everyone was treated to their first drink free. We were expecting 67 diners who had paid for their meal but, alas, three forgot to turn up.

The occasion was notable for the varied distances and places from which members had travelled to be in Llancarfan for the Annual Dinner. Many of us will remember Melvin and Grace Morgan living in the Green some years ago. There were four children, Heather, Joan, David and Maureen. Heather travelled from Wolverhampton, Joan from Basseleg, David from Taunton and Maureen from Cwmbran. Their party was made up by their auntie Eunice (Llewellyn), now living in Blaengarw - Eunice Llewellyn formerly lived in Corner House with her grandmother Mrs Hartrey. Barbara Milhuisen made her usual pilgrimage from the South of France and Clive Jenkins came from Kent. These members are to be commended for making the effort to attend the Society Dinner.

Our chairman, Philip Gammon, thanked all the Committee and members for supporting the various events and working toward the success of the Society. He also invited members to put forward new ideas for future activities.

A presentation was made to Mavis Coles on her retirement as Assistant Secretary, the main function being the printing of Newsletters. Phil Watts was asked to present Mavis with a parchment copy of the Sid Perkin's map of Llancarfan. He recalled the happy days of 50 years ago when they were growing up in the village of Llancarfan and travel was by

bicycle and bus rather than by car as it is today. He also spoke about the responsibility of the Society for bringing people together after being in different parts of the world for so many years.

A message was received from our President, Sir Keith Thomas, that he hoped to attend the Annual Dinner in 1997: the tenth anniversary of the formation of the Society.

-3-

A MESSAGE OF THANKS FROM MAVIS COLES

I want to thank everyone involved in my presentation at the Annual Dinner. The gift was exactly what I wanted and looks just right where I have hung it. I'm sorry I couldn't continue helping with the Newsletter but the equipment was failing, including my wrists! It was always a pleasure to be involved in its production but I must say it is very relaxing to read the Newsletter for the first time over a cuppa instead of when typing it!

I thought Phil's revelations about our teenage years very funny - so did everyone else the hall which was filled with laughter. It was a very happy evening made more so by the presence of so many friends from that period.

I hope to continue to support the Society in any way I can and look forward to the next get-together.

Thanks again.

OBITUARY - JOAN POWELL bu Phil Watts

It is with great regret that we announce the recent death of Joan Powell of Capel-yr-Efail, better known to many of us as the Bethlehem Baptist Chapel. Joan came with her husband Richard to Llancafán to renovate the Chapel into a four bedroom property. Some two years into the renovation, Richard suddenly died. We have all watched with great admiration how Joan and her four boys faced up to each problem as it arose. Slowly but surely the job was completed - all done with their own hands and devoted to the cause started by Richard. The final part of the picture was complete when Robert married and Joan became a grandmother for five weeks before her death. Joan was a teacher when she was working. She joined in all the activities of the community. She will be missed, walking the bounds of the village and, accompanied by her four sons, to the Fox and Hounds for refreshments and the company of other locals. At this sad time our thoughts are with Nicholas, Michael, Gerald, Robert and the rest of the family. We have all been inspired by the courage and devotion of the Powell family.

NEWS OF MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND PLACES

Christmas in Llancarfan was celebrated with the illuminated tree which has now become a tradition. The switching-on of the lights was followed by carols around the tree on Saturday, 14 December. Thanks to Kay and Graham Brain and all those who helped.

A Whist Drive was held on 24 October but was not so well supported as usual. A detailed report will appear in the next Newsletter as will the results of the Quiz Night held in the Fox and Hounds on 22 November, again less well supported than our events usually are. Apologies for postponing these reports but the delay in the production of this Newsletter has caused a logjam in typing-up material on current events.

-4-

The printing of 100 teatowels from the Sid Perkins map of Llancarfan has ultimately been a great success. All 100 have been sold at £5 each. Copies of the map on parchment or on bromide paper are also available and again these are doing well.

No doubt people will be wondering why a marquee suddenly appeared on the lawn at Pancross Farm. A little bird has indicated that Joan and Tony Thomas have been celebrating a number of years together. The same little bird worked out 480 months, 2080 weeks, 360640 hours, 21, 038, 400 minutes and - more than a billion seconds all cleverly corrected for leap-years. Readers will now realise that this was their Ruby Wedding. The whole of the Thomas family was conscripted to help with the serving of food etc. It is probably in order to offer our congratulations to Tony and Joan on 40 years of happy marriage (PW).

HTV recently re-showed a series of films made by the late, great Gwyn Thomas in the 1960's. One of these looked at the Vale, including Llancarfan and Llantwit. It was well worth watching - keep an eye open for a repeat. Was that a glimpse of the younger Len Mortimer striding through the Ford?

Welsh Water have spent a lot of time recently, digging trenches between the A48 and Llancarfan and on Moulton Road. The work should, by now be finished to everyone's relief but at least we have new water mains.

An application is going to the Millennium Commission for help in refurbishing St Cadoc's bells and it is gratifying to know that the Commission have agreed to give money in all such cases. The bells will soon be ringing again.

John Davies, Welsh historian, has recently published a book, commissioned by CADW, entitled *The Making of Wales*. His best-known previous work, *Hanes Cymru (A History of Wales)*, is the definitive history of Wales. I couldn't help noticing that he describes the British Airways hangar at Rhoose as "among the country's most obtrusive buildings." What an advertisement for the Vale and what an appalling planning decision to site it in such a place!

On September 9 there was a serious fire at Aberthaw-B Power Station. It started in a recently-serviced turbine and spread to about one third of the roof of the station. Our sympathies to folk in West Aberthaw and Gileston, some of whom were very frightened by this happening, not knowing whether an explosion would ensue.

Near the editor's home in Pembrokeshire people using metal-detectors on agricultural land often find tubular brass objects with a knob at one end. These are horn protectors which were fitted to the sawn-off stump of cowhorns in the days before de-horning became a usual practice. The protectors

-5-

were fitted to beasts which were a nuisance in attacking other cows or were aggressive to cowmen. Does anyone know whether these were commonly used in the Vale and, if so, when did the practice cease?

The *Western Mail* on November 5, ran an article on baseball in South Wales. Ted Peterson, the chairman of the Welsh Baseball Union has recently retired at the age of 80 after 33 years service. The article described the game as being played in a coastal strip from Newport to Llantwit Major and also on Merseyside. The game grew from mediaeval rounders and in some ways resembles American baseball. Prominent sportsmen have played - Mark Ring and David Bishop have both represented Wales in baseball. Is there any history of interest in the game by Llancarfan residents? Has anyone played competitively in the Welsh Baseball Union?

ANNUAL DUCK EGG RACE - BOXING DAY by Gwynne Liscombe

Many readers will be aware that a duck-egg race has been held on the river in Llancarfan since 1988. The idea originated from Phab Wales which had obtained the "duck eggs" from the manufacturer. Each year these brightly coloured eggs make a colourful picture as they float down the river.

In the first year the proceeds went to Phab Wales, but then it was arranged that the money would be shared between Maes-y-Coed Special School, Barry and Phab Wales. As the years have passed the number of good causes has been increased and, since 1994, proceeds have been shared between Phab Wales, Llancarfan Church Restoration Fund and the Margaret May Memorial Fund (Maesy-Coed Special School). In 1996 the good causes were increased to four with the Lindens School, Penarth coming on board.

Punters are extremely generous and, for example, this year over 300 eggs were sold on the day at Llancarfan. The event is becoming a popular tradition and one which many people would like to see continue. Unfortunately, like everything else, the organisation falls upon a few people and we are always mindful of those brave and hardy persons who enter the water to collect the eggs at the finish and carry out other tasks in connection with the race. This year was no exception: Phil Watts, the Rev. Malcolm Davies, Alan Taylor and Russel Watts could be seen manfully organising the race and recovering the eggs in sub-zero conditions. The result was good with £814 being raised after paying out prizes. This was shared between the four good causes and it is pleasing to see that the event still attracts many people when competition such as the National Lottery and Bonus Ball competitions exists.

The organisers are extremely grateful to all those people who sell duck-eggs prior to the event for their particular cause, and on the day to Bronwen Gane, recent acting head teacher, Maes-y-Coed Special School, who helped so much in selling the remaining eggs.

Perhaps, to look into the future, we need some young blood on the day - it cools more slowly - and some extra donated prizes as, in the past, all of the prizes additional to the cash prizes have been found by Phab Wales. I well remember the first duck egg race when one of the prizes was "six farm fresh duck eggs". These were given by Barbara Milhuisen, former head teacher

-6-

of Maes-y-Coed Special School and long standing member of this Society. At the time Barbara kept ducks and I also remember the winner - John Gammon of Glan-yr-Afon, Llancarfan.

If you think you can help in some way on Boxing Day, 1997, please contact the Society either with a prize or in your waders in the river.

Readers might be interested to know that Maes-y-Coed Special School finally closed at the Autumn half-term and the children are now educated elsewhere. The Margaret May Fund is now called the Barry Respite Care Scheme and aims to provide small grants to

parents of children with severe learning disabilities. The late Margaret May, who was a friend and colleague of Barbara Milhuisen, spent much of her professional life managing the residential hostel adjacent to Maes-y-Coed Special School, Barry. Incidentally, I used to drive Alistair Cann to Maes-y-Coed on some mornings, from Llancarfan and we used to sing "O bla di O bla da" on the way!

Prizes: the first three prizes of £75, £50 and £26 went to Rose Thompson of Cardiff, Ian Harvey and Louise Harvey both of Barry. The net income was £814.00 giving £203.50 to each of the four good causes. It is interesting to note that the last four years' distribution has been 1991 - £638; 1993 £655; 1994 - £830; 1995 - £758. No real evidence that the National Lottery has done any damage to this event.

EXTRACTS FROM LLANCARFAN SPORTS MINUTE BOOK 1922-24 by Gwynne Liscombe

When visiting the Fox and Hounds in August, Mike Ashmore passed me a notebook which had been sent to him by Alyson Russell who lived in Woodlands, Llancarfan until 1984 (this was just after Mike Morris, her fiancée, was lost, presumed dead in the Himalayas). Alyson had found the book when clearing out to move to Cumbria. It had been found (probably in the attic) during the time she spent at Woodlands. Her letter asked that the book might be returned to someone who had an interest in it and would "give it a good home".

The book is an Army book, clearly my fathers from the First World War. It had found subsequent use in recording the meetings of Llancarfan Annual Sports Committee during 1922-4. My father, Tudor Liscombe, appears to have been the chairman or secretary for most of this period.

Readers may be interested by some of the extracts that I found to be informative:-

Original Committee (which remained largely unchanged) Chairman: T. W. Liscombe;

Treasurer: Mr Richards; Committee: messrs Davies (Whitton Bush), Morgan

(Walterston), G & T Lougher (Treguff), James (Pancross), Griffiths (Glan-yr-Afon), G. A.

Vincent (Llancarfan) Bedford Griffiths (Llancarfan), M. W. Price (Middlecross), Alf

Lougher (Cliff), Rowlands (Garnllwyd), Hopkins (Pennon), Harris (Fox and Hounds),

Davies (schoolmaster), Gibbon (Middle Hill), and Secretary: R. S. Gunson of Ty To

Maen. Meetings were held in the Fox and Hounds (not much has changed!!)

-7-

At the first meeting held on 14 July, 1922, it was decided that the sports would be at Pancross and that there would be a band. (A reference to 12 acre field must be at Pancross).

At the next meeting it was decided to have a ladies committee for refreshments and agreed that the Barry Silver Band be engaged for a fee of £8 with transport being made available for them from "Barry Top". It was also decided that the ladies (none of whom were on the main committee) would have full control of the refreshments - not too long I note after the enfranchisement of women which came, I believe in 1918.

The majority of the money to run the event was raised by door to door collection and a raffle. Turnover was £45 5s in 1922. Master Dai Harris was asked to print posters and samples of rope for Ring to be obtained from Mr Wilkinson, Llantwit.

Galloway (or Galloping?) race to be held (confined to parish with no spurs allowed) Cart-horse race to be arranged - all horses to be classified by Mr James, Pancross.

Rope obtained: 1cwt 5/8 inch rope - £3 15s. Raffle: 1st Pig; 2nd Duck; 3rd Pair Fowls; 4th Pair Pigeons; 5th, 6th, 7th & 8th all 2/6d.

Pontyclun Silver Band in 1924 £7.00 - cheaper than Barry

In 1924 Mrs Withers offered the option of supplying refreshments on the field - being the 12 acres. Tea for "outsiders" adults 6d children 3d.

Dilwyn Griffiths to provide jumping sticks.

I found the prize money to be quite significant - maybe someone will put it into today's value - some examples, and I wonder what was an agricultural workers wage in 1922?:- 100 yds 14 year olds 1st 4s; 2nd 2/6d; 3rd 1/6d. High Jump (local) 1st 5s; 2nd 3s. 100 Yards open 1st 10s; 2nd 5s; 3rd 2/6d. 1 Mile bicycle race open 1st 12/6d; 2nd 7/6d; 3rd 4s. 1/2 Mile trotting horses 1st 15s; 2nd 7/6d 3rd 4s. 2 Mile steeplechase 1st 30s; 2nd 10s. 1 Mile horse race 1st 30s; 2nd 10s. In all there were 27 events.

There is also reference to a motor cycle race with the quote "open your throttle and let her rip" and added "speed limit 100mph".

Race judges appear to have been Mr Llewellyn Price, Mr Rees Thomas and Mr Thomas Lougher with handicappers being Mr D. P. Griffiths, Glan-yr-Afon, Mr Jo Lewis and Mr Idris Davies. The main starter was Mr George Lougher.

The book also contained two interesting invoices for the purchase of the rope and prize draw tickets which show a steam engine and printing equipment of the time. The notebook itself is Army Book 136.

Note - Gwynne asks about agricultural wages. A pound in 1922-4 would be worth £20 today (Central Statistics Office) and the average wage for farmworker was about £2 per week. This suggests that disposable income was much less than today but of course we all now want to have a car, fridge, television and -the list is enormous. The prizes were remarkably large - 30s for the horseraces would now be £30!! The situation for the women was even worse than Gwynne suggests - 1918 saw only the emancipation of some women over 30 (those who were rate-payers or married to a ratepayer). Full emancipation to the age of 21 did not come until 1928. (Ed.)

-8-

POSTAL DELIVERIES by Phil Watts

On two days recently we failed to have our mail delivered because of a postal strike. We are told that the postmen object to a change in working arrangements.

Long ago, mail was been delivered by a man who walked from Cowbridge, did a farm-job in Llanccarfan and then returned to Cowbridge with outgoing mail. Then the postal base changed to Rhoose and after that postal delivery vans were introduced. We have always had a regular postman, a man that we know and recognize. Now it is proposed that postmen will work in a group of eight, paid a lump sum for work carried out. If two are sick the work has to be done by the remaining six for the same money. It seems that, in these days of privatization that it will not be long before, as in the rural parts of America, that we will have to collect our mail from a box number in town - in our case it could be Tesco?!

I remember being taken to school in a post-van, sitting on the floor - no passenger seat - one week by Mr David and the next by Mr Bosh. Strictly, illegal but a kindly gesture on their part. The good old days.

EVEN MORE ON ST CADOC by John Etherington

Recently it was my sad duty to attend a funeral at St Annes Church, Talygarn, near Pontyclun. I had never been to the church before and was intrigued to find that it is rather isolated and appears not to serve a village as such. Searching through David Francis' "The Border Vale of Glamorgan" I discovered that it was built in the 1800s by G. T. Clark, the then owner of nearby Talygarn Mansion. We have mentioned Clark several times before as the writer of an interesting 19th century history of Llanccarfan.

However, though I have read through "The Border Vale of Glamorgan" several times, I must have missed the following story about Llansannor:-

"The Church and Court are steeped in legends, most of which are related to St Cadoc. According to one account Cadoc was murdered by a marauding band in his chapel at Llansannor, called Civitas Beneventana, while taking Mass and that his beloved people then placed his body in a silver coffin and buried it secretly. No Briton was allowed to enter Civitas Beneventana, so the legend runs, as it was feared that the people of Llancarfan would try to take St Cadoc's remains back home. If this should occur, a fountain by the rampart would have overwhelmed Llansannor and everyone in it. The other legend about St Cadoc is that he placed all his treasures into a silver casket and dropped them into a well and, ever since, on certain nights he can be seen at Llansannor, seated in solitude waiting for someone to speak to him so that he can guide them to the spot where the treasure lies."

Much of this echoes the stories concerning the burial of Cadoc at Beneventum told in Newsletter 72. Beneventum was identified as being in Italy or, more likely, Y Gaer (near Brecon) of which the Roman name was Bannium. It seems that Llansannor must be another contender for the honour.