



## LLANCARFAN SOCIETY

### Newsletter 80 February-March 1998

This is a slightly unusual Newsletter: almost half of it is a supplement, provided by another organisation in the community: the Llanccarfam Amateur Dramatic Society. The article, provided by Steve Powell, is a detailed account of the recent pantomime, Cinderella. All too often nowadays we hear complaints of a lack of coherence in small communities and it has often been said that people who live in commuter villages often find their pleasures elsewhere and retreat within their own homes at other times. No one could say this of Llanccarfam today, and the obvious enthusiasm and enjoyment which the pantomime has engendered is heartlifting. Long may such things go on as part of the old tradition of self-entertainment.

ADDRESSES: Contributions for the Newsletter (which will be very welcome) should be sent to the Editor, John Etherington, Parc-y-Bont, 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, Phil Watts, 23 Heol Sirhwi, Cwm Talwg, Barry, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 7TG. 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).

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Phil Watts writes to tell us that January brought in 95 renewals. We now have to await the remaining 95! Recent circulation of the village has brought in some new members and we welcome them. We have just had an application from a three year old to be a member on his fourth birthday. Our oldest member is some 90 years older!

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BOOK AND NEWSLETTER: THE FUTURE by John Etherington

The last Newsletter carried the chapter breakdown of our proposed book, Llanccarfam, a Vale Village. I am grateful to those people who have written with enthusiasm for the project - their support has been a great encouragement. If anyone else has constructive comment or criticism, please write to me.

I am grateful to the folk have volunteered to help with researching some of the gaps in our knowledge of the village and useful information is already accumulating. Diane Morgan is pursuing various bits of missing family history and the early days of the Wesleyan and Baptist Chapels. Phil Watts has undertaken to talk to some older members - this is most valuable as we have already, and sadly, lost many oral memories since the Society was formed. Mary Gammon and Jean Hunt intend to research the school records and Graham Jenkins has already helped with some Llanvythin Parish records, some early memories and offers of further help.

Items for the Newsletter have been few and far-between recently, mainly because the easily accessible memories of recent history have been exhausted in ten years of Newsletters.

In making enquiries for the book, I identified various gaps in the genealogies of long-established families in Llancarfan and it is surprising how enthusiastic a response there has been. Several people have written to me with new information including some who have not corresponded with us before. I think this must reflect today's very wide interest in family history.

When the family records have crystallised, I shall publish some of them in the Newsletter in the hope that readers can tell us what is wrong or what is missing - once we reach back to the turn of the century it is amazing how little is known of ownership of property or occupations in the village, let alone which Griffiths is related to which, how the Griffiths, Prices and Loughers all became interlinked by marriage or why squire Robert Jones sold the centre of the village to one Mary Williams for a pittance.

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**MORE HELP NEEDED:** Each Newsletter carries an item entitled: News of Members, Friends and Places. Living at a distance it is a bit difficult for the editor to cover everything which has happened. I receive various items from the Committee and much comes second-hand from local papers or Sam and Patsie Smith's column in the Gem. Would anyone like to write something of this sort for each Newsletter? It would also include the necessary updates of our "What's on" information including all other village organisations. At the present frequency of publication it would total four or five half-pages or so per year. Write or phone me if you would like to volunteer.

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**AN AMAZING CURE!** - A note from Graham Jenkins

Graham wrote to the editor in relation to our book and, in his letter he enquired whether anyone had mentioned the various vagrants and travelling people who used to visit the village. He recalled one we have not met before and told the following story.

Old Nichols was a farrier who would be sent for if farmers had sick animals. He would ride out from Cowbridge and stable himself and his horse with my Grandmother. He would also treat humans and I am told that he saved the life of my aunt who had meningitis (Doctor had given up hope) by killing a pigeon and binding a half (entrails and all) to each of the patient's feet to draw the fever through her body!

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#### BOXING DAY DUCK EGG RACE by Gwynne Liscombe

Thanks are due to all the sellers of eggs and to those who helped on the day, particularly Phil Watts, Digby Rees, Alan Taylor, Sam Smith and Ruth Watts, many of them getting very wet in the bad weather which made collection of the eggs a greater challenge than usual. Bronwen Gane sold many eggs on the day and made up for rather poor sales prior to the event - thank you Bronwen.

Takings totalled £861 at £1 per egg. Deducting prizes and expenses, this left £706 split three ways as £176.50 to Maesycoed (Melin Glas, Penarth), Phab Wales, The Lindens (Ashgrove) Penarth and the Llancarfan Church Restoration Fund. The Church received an extra £20 from late takings on one sheet.

The first three prizes of £75, £50 and £25 went to Mick Mace, Llanbethery, John Sedgebeer, Barry and Felicity Holgate c/o Jameson, Llancarfan. Thanks to Barbara Milhuisen for Champagne (4th prize) and Ruth Watts for Port Wine (5th prize).

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#### NEWS OF MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND PLACES

The Three Horseshoes at Moulton has been nominated for a Community Pub of the Year Award. Licensee, Steve Peter and his family have raised over £35,000 for charity on the past ten years. The pub was nominated by Gwynne Liscombe: we wish them the best of luck.

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The Christmas Tree, which has become such a village feature of recent years, close by the ford was provided again by the generosity and hard work of Graham Brain and Steve Powell. As usual the ceremony of switching-on was followed by carols around the tree.

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Many of you will have sent, or received the 1997 Christmas card, sold for St Cadoc's restoration fund. It was a photograph of the chancel and alter, taken in about 1949. Phil Watts wrote to tell us that it was reproduced from an original provided by Doreen Everett (nee Gibbins), formerly of the Old Parsonage. The photo' was handed-down to Doreen from her mother. It was given as a raffle prize at the time, but the winner did not want it. Mrs Gibbins purchased it for £5 - at that time about a week's wages! Amazing!!

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Barry and the Vale seem to have been dangerous places to live recently. Following a railway accident in Barry on December 27 there was a risk of leakage of the rather nasty vinyl chloride monomer, the liquid from which PVC is made. Many families were evacuated from their homes. A few days later, toxic vapour of styrene monomer turned-up in Barry sewers and then, on New Year's Eve, a serious road accident took the life of a cyclist between Boverton and Eglwys Brewis.

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Editor should never have enquired about gales! On Christmas Eve here in Pembrokeshire we had one of the worst I have ever experienced. However, we survived 100 mph+ gusts with no damage and our electricity remained on but others were less fortunate, spending Christmas without power. I have immense admiration for the SWALEC engineers who worked in terrible conditions to restore power to the surrounding villages. I imagine Llancarfan was equally battered but no one has written to tell me (see appeal above!).

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Before Christmas, the Barry and District News in its "50 years ago" columns, printed the following:- "Farmers in the Vale have been suffering heavy losses to their Christmas poultry owing to raids by numerous foxes. One had lost 66 head of poultry, another 25 and a third 17, in fields as far apart as Penmark, Llancarfan and Llantrythyd. The local hunt said it had no fund to compensate farmers for their losses."

Editor could not help but reflect how times have changed. How many local farmers keep free-range birds in open fields today, prior to Christmas? In those days, foxes really were a problem and I imagine many paid the penalty through the barrel of a shotgun.

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A few months ago the Pembrokeshire Prospectors, a metal-detecting group, published a most interesting little booklet illustrating some of their finds and outlining their co-operation with archaeologists and historians. One of the items illustrated was a makers advertising brass from the noseband of a horse harness. The brass bore the name "Liscombe - Cardiff" and, as Gwynne Liscombe has collected brasses for many years I enquired whether this was a relative. Sadly the trail is cold and doesn't relate Gwynne to our Pembrokeshire past.

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## GLAMORGAN HISTORIAN

Readers will remember that the editor has twice asked if anyone had volumes of Barry Williams' Glamorgan Historian which they wanted to sell. After several years of effort we

have completed our set except for one volume, but we now have good condition, duplicates of volumes 1, 9, 10 and 11 complete with dust-covers. If any member would like to have these, they are available at £10 each + p & p. This is about half the dealer-price. Please 'phone John Etherington on 01348 837928 if you are interested. They are available for only a few days as we have a "first refusal" offer for them already.

We lack only volume 5, for which we are willing to pay the full price of about £20 if in good condition if anyone has it to spare.

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RODNEY by R. M. Lougher, Llanishen.

Referring to your query in Newsletter 79 as to why local last trains were called Rodney trains, the following may be the explanation if one assumes that the word used was originally rhodni, a dialect word in Welsh which might well have been mis-heard as Rodney. Its meaning is "a ne'er-do-well".

A last train no doubt carried many a passenger who, after an evening's revelry, would have been looked-upon by fellow travellers as ne'er-do-well, that is a rhodni; the word eventually being applied to the train itself.

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RODNEY AGAIN by John Etherington

After posing the question in the last Newsletter I thought of looking-up Rodney in Eric Partridge's Dictionary of Slang and in John Edwards' Talk Tidy: The Art of Speaking Wenglish.

Talk Tidy reinforces Robert Lougher's explanation, a Rodney being a disreputable person and the name being applied to the last trains up the valleys. Partridge adds some more, identifying it as South Wales' railwayman's slang for the last trains but also still extant as dialect for an "idle fellow" in the North and Midlands. However, we now have another puzzle. Which came first, Rodney or rhodni? Any philologists out there who know the answer

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DINNERS, MEMORIES AND SCHOOLDAYS by Barbara Milhuisen

At the 1997 Annual Dinner (I have managed every one, even getting to two, some years) I sat between Mavis Coles and Valerie Cram. I suddenly had a feeling of deja-vu, the reason being that Mavis' mother and father and Val's father and my mother had attended Barry County School at the same time, travelling to school on transport provided by Norman

Hardy. My mother and Ivor Jones had to walk to Moulton from Llancafán every day. Sometimes the vehicle that collected them had taken cattle to market immediately beforehand!

Some twenty odd years later I attended Barry County, by then Barry Grammar School, at first cycling to school but then, thanks to the effective intervention of Mrs Ruth Jenkins, chairman of Llancafán Parish Council, a taxi was provided. This taxi picked up children first in Llancafán, then Penmark and Fonmon. At the dinner were four of these original children: Sir

Keith Thomas, Tony Thomas (for a short while), Margaret Griffiths (Moseley) and myself. If we were late for school we had a ready made excuse. It was the taxi's fault. The boys and girls schools were separate, so if the boys had a film show, we sometimes were also able to attend.

Margaret and I compared notes at the dinner, recalling that our homework was sometimes brilliant. This was when we managed to persuade Keith to help us especially with Latin. Sometimes this help was given in return for us keeping quiet because I think it was 1947 and the first post-War test-matches between England and Australia were held - until then I never knew what a test-match was.

Those years passed so quickly, then we suddenly were told no more taxis as there now was a suitable bus service. At the dinner, Keith talked about the possibility of a Taxi Reunion. Maybe this might be possible. I wonder how the present day children of the village get to school once they pass eleven years old?

(Ed. I think this is a wonderful illustration of the way our Society reawakes memories. Would one of our reader-parents like to persuade a Barry pupil to write an account of the school bus journeys, 1998 style?)

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#### VISITORS TO LLANCAFAN AND RHOOSE by Phil Watts

On Saturday, September 23rd, we spent the day with Tom and Doris Lougher who were visiting from their home in Coquitlan, B.C., Canada. They were staying with John and Christine James in Fonmon Road, Rhose and attended the Annual Dinner held in the Bear Hotel, Cowbridge.

While parked in Fonmon Road my attention was drawn to the large number of Llancafán people who have taken up residence in Rhose, the latest being Trevor Evans who has just moved from Broadclose Farm, Moulton. I shall talk about this further in the next Newsletter.

#### **Pantomime Supplement: Cinderella 1998** by Steve Powell

The Foreword written in the 1998 souvenir programme:-

Welcome to this inaugural production of the Llancarfan Amateur Dramatic Society. We hope you enjoy the evening's performance and will give your support to the cast as they dazzle you with our pantomime tonight (Oh no they won't! Oh yes they will!) But first a word on the history of the Society and tonight's spectacular .....

The idea for a Dramatics Society was born at a meeting of the Llancarfan and District Community Association, back in the Spring of 1997. Ways of raising funds for the Village Hall and Church were being sought. The Village Hall was looking to fund its plan for an extension in which to house tables, chairs etc. and which might easily adapt for use as changing rooms, scenery storage and so forth. The Church still needed substantial sums to carry out its planned restoration of the belfry. An Amateur Dramatics Society with a first production of a pantomime would be a great way of raising funds whilst at the same time providing everyone with the opportunity for a bit of fun and a chance to create a strong sense of community spirit.

Into the spotlight stepped Steve Powell and Sam Smith as Producer and Director respectively and a first meeting was called in July to gauge interest in a possible production. The response was overwhelming. A production team was soon formed and auditions held to cast the play. It seems the village is blessed with a wealth of talented individuals who between them can act (thankfully), sing, make stages (yes its hand built), paint, play music, rig secret doors and curtains, make costumes, even make certain village worthies uglier than normal

The stage construction started in August and rehearsals began for real in September. Since then the pace has been hosting up and January has seen the lights an in the Village Hall on most nights. Either Sam is putting his stalwart cast through their paces yet again, or Steve and Alan are busy finishing off some further improvement to the set.

What you will see tonight is the culmination of many hundreds of hours work and fun combined. We hope you enjoy it and we look forward to entertaining you with future productions - or perhaps next time you will be taking part too?

With many thanks to all of the cast and those on the production side, and of course to their families for sparing them. Also, many thanks to the Llancarfan Parish Council and the Llancarfan Society for their generous donations of £100 each.

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The formation of the Llancarfan Amateur Dramatic Society L.A.D.S.), which is a part of the Llancarfan and District Community Association has been a tremendous success in its first year with its production of Cinderlla..

We are all so fortunate to live in this magical parish. Georgina and I have lived here since we were married 24 years ago and with our daughters Emma and Jaime we love Llancarfan and its super community.

When it was decided that a pantomime was a reality rather than a pipe dream a lot of planning was necessary and a meeting was held with a number of willing helpers. Heather Stevens found a super book in the Cowbridge Library which became our bible for the construction, lighting and props. Alan Taylor managed to order and purchase a copy, which I'm certain will be well used for years to come. Our carpenters Derek Porter and Frank Jameson were involved from the start and with the use of a scale model made by Frank the materials necessary and rough costings were able to be planned.

Because of the commitment from many in the community and with such a spread of talent I felt everyone who took part should be named and thanked for what was, a super team effort:-

### **Production team**

- Alan Taylor (*Windrush*, Llancarfan) gave the panto a tremendous amount of time and effort, his assistance in respect of the stage construction, scenery and special affects was brilliant. During the rehearsals and performances Alan position was stage manager and his control of the scene and cast changes was that of a professional.
- Heather Stevens (*Ty Berllan*, Llancarfan) has excellent planning and organisational skills. Her ability to draw, paint and manufacture gave the scenery and programmes the touch of professionalism necessary to support the efforts of our super cast.
- Frank Jameson (*The Grange*, Llancarfan) has a gift with carpentry which proved to be essential in the construction of the stage and scenery.
- Derek Porter (*Mill Race Cottage*, Llancarfan) again has such a talent with wood and his skill was essential in the manufacturer of the stage, scenery and props.
- Audrey Porter (*Mill Race Cottage*, Llancarfan) as always Audrey is guaranteed to help and her efforts in organising costumes and props, plus her help at the performances with the refreshments etc. was magnificent. Audrey and Derek seem to have a limitless supply of whatever you want which made considerable savings with props and costumes.
- Ros Hunt (*Shoedene*, The Broadshord, Cowbridge, previously living at *Ross Kear*, Pennon) Ros was Costume Dress Manager. She was super, her personality and authoritative air made her the ideal person to control the costume changes before and during the performance. She has now seen the male members of the cast in a totally different light.
- Georgina Powell (*Ty Uchaf*, Llancarfan) she calls herself the Panto Widow having to put up with my long hours in work and what seemed endless hours at the ball preparing for and attending rehearsals. Georgina helped during the performances with the costume changes and the casts make up before and during the performances.
- David Mink (Colorado, America) currently staying at *The Hollies*, Llancarfan) Dave is Sue and Geoff Evans' (*Garnllwyd*) son-in law. He is unbelievable, being able to turn his hand to almost anything and his help with the stage and scenery construction, plus his role during the performances and dress rehearsals as Props Manager was excellent.
- Larna Vink (*Meadowgate* Llancarfan) Lorna was one of our very talented make up artists, which I'm certain helped our cast live their part.



- Jenny Knott (*Pennymead*, Llancarfan) Jenny with her artistic mind and steady hand was one of the casts make up team. Her ability to create gave the performances a truly professional air.
- Carla & Richard Morgan (*Bridge House*, Llancarfan) Gave up their home for the cast to dress, make up and rehearse their lines in before and during the performances. Their generosity in giving up their home and providing refreshments for the cast was appreciated.
- Patsie Smith (*Chapel Cottage*, Llancarfan) Was our script prompter, her task was very hard as the script, due to the cast ad-libbing became I'm sure a nightmare to follow. Patsie as always though was the true professional providing the support the staff needed, they new she was there to pull them through if and when required, she also helped in ticket sales, raffle and refreshments etc .....
- Audrey Baldwin (*Broadhayes*, Llancarfan) Spent many hours making and altering costumes. Audrey had to attend rehearsals to understand the characters parts and then with the help from other members of the village, the cast costumes. were produced.
- Graham Brain (*Ynysdawl*, Llancarfan) Was Beatrice, one of the ugly sisters. His off stage electrical prowess was invaluable, he wired together the music system and the lighting affects on stage, what a man?
- Andrew Knott (*Pennymead* Llancarfan) Was the taxi driver in the performance but off stage he was always there, happy and willing to lend a helping hand
- Richard Knott (*Pennymead*, Llancarfan) Richard apart from playing the part of David Bailey in the Panto and his notable performance heading the cast in the Time Warp dance helped with the stage lighting. What a super and talented family the Knott's are!
- Janet Alexander (2 *Whitewell*, Llancarfan) Janet was one of the scenery painters, she, Heather, and Jenny Rowlands worked long and hard and I'm sure everyone would agree that the scenery was magnificent.
- Jenny Rowlands (*Pwll y Min*, Pendoylan) Jenny is a true professional and it was her expertise with our Heather Stevens that formed the fantastic panto scenery affect.
- Caitlin Bartlett ( Cowbridge) Apart from playing Lady Bunchmottle helped with the make up and assisted Alan Taylor (Stage Manager) in collecting up the cast for the different scenes.
- Sarah DodweU (*Chapel Cottage* Llancarfan) Played the part of Lady Baggydraws but off stage again assisted Alan Taylor collecting up the cast when required.
- Simon Heselton (St Arvans, Nr Chepstow) Simon was our lighting engineer and from the luffi balcony his expertise added that extra touch of professionalism to the performance.
- Emma PoweU (*Ty Ucluf*, Llancarfan) Emma was the front of the cow in the performance but also assisted boyfriend Simon Heselton with the lighting and helped change the word prompt sheets which were hung from the balcony for Fairy God Mum and the Ugliers.
- Jaime Powell (*Ty Uchaf*, Llancarfan) Jaime assisted sister Emma with the balcony prompt sheets as well as playing her part in the performance as the back end of the cow.
- Jim Steeley (Llancarfan) Jim had only lived in the village for five minutes and he was a truly super catch with his musical expertise with percussion and keyboard, the panto came alive.

- Patricia Steeley (Llancarfan) Apart from assisting on costume changes Patricia, Jim's wife was one of the make up artists, her mice faces were really good.
- Ailsa Newton (*The Mill*, Llancarfan) The youngsters in this village are amazing, Allsa's musical talents were appreciated with the keyboard, flute and the harp. Her timing on the sound affects was excellent and between jim Steeley and her the musical direction of the performances was super.
- Sue Taylor (*Windrush*, Llancarfan) Sue helped on the seat layout and numbering with Patsie Smith as well as working with Ruth Watts with the organisation and sale of tickets for the five raffles.
- Ruth Watts (Cwm Talwg, Barry) With Sue Taylor organised the raffle which proved a success. Our Ruth is always there to give a helping hand and between her shouts of laughter she assisted with the refreshments and cleaning up.
- Phil Watts (Cwm Talwg, Barry) Phil played his star part as the Dancing Doorman and off stage he was in control of the curtain pulls. Phil's stage performance will be remembered by many in the village for years to come he was super.

We were very grateful for Maureen Cotter's most generous gift of the velvet curtains. What a truly professional image they gave the stage.

- Judy Hutchins (*Bluestones*, Llancarfan)
- Betty Pullen (*Nauvoo*, Llancarfan) With Audrey Porter altered the curtains used in the performance, this took many hours of hard work, but the result was excellent.

Thanks must be given to the Leijerstam's, (*The Farm*, Llanbethery) the loan of their super horse lorry was really appreciated. Thanks also to Edger for the loan of his garage for the performances. Magaret and Arwyn Rees were kind enough to store and transport the hall's tables and chairs at Pennon.

During the intermission the refreshments were organised and given out by our willing helpers:-

Fran Winterbottom; Jan Palmer; Joan Quelch; Sue Evans; Sara Bartiett; Sue Taylor; Ruth Watts Patsie Smith;

Our talented cast.-

Cinderelia; Philliappa Spilsbury  
 Prince Charming; Gale Lacey  
 Dandini; Jane John  
 Buttons; Edward Knott  
 Fairy God Mother: Vanessa Newton  
 Lady Hardup; Tom Batt  
 Baron Hardup; Bob Teesdale  
 Beatrice (Ugly Sister) ; Graham Brain  
 Grizelda (Ugly Sister) ; Geoff Evans

Cook; Rev. Malcom Davies  
Lord Lendagob; John Angell  
Lady Giggler; Sarah Angel  
Lady Baggydrawers; Sarah Dodwell  
Lady Bunchmottle; Caithn Bardett  
Town Crier; Sam Smith  
Doorman; Phil Wafts  
David Bailey; Richard Knott  
Taxi Driver; Edward Knott  
Ghost A; John Angell  
Ghost B; Geoff Evans  
Cow; Emma & Jaime Powell  
Mice; Rose Angell Angharad Hunt, Annabel John and Lucy Brain  
Cat; Thea Dodwell

Director; Sam Smith

Producer; Steve Powell

The dismantling and clearing away was made easy by the many helpers:-

Geoff Evans  
John Hunt  
Alan Taylor  
John Angel  
Graham Brain  
Simon Hesleton  
Edward Knott  
Richard Knott  
Tony Lewis  
Sam Smith  
Frank Jameson  
Derek Porter

The scenery, stage and props were transported and stored by Dragon Rescue.

How sad, it's now over, no doubt we all feel happy with the tremendous success of the production but also deflated when we now look at the empty and bare hall.

On Saturday the 31 January we finished our fund-raising by having a Cowbridge and Vale pub crawl. The Ugliers were dressed in full ball costume and their tenders, Alan Taylor, Steve Vink, Phil Watts and Edward Knott, (dressed in black - black hats and sunglasses) plus their entourage which included myself, Georgina and Jaime Powell, Jim and Patricia Steeley, and Kay Brain and Richard Knott. We ended in the *Fox* with a competition to guess how much money was in the collection bucket. On the day we raised £181 plus about £400 in sponsorship, well done to all concerned.

Do you have to ask? - yes plans are in place for another production - watch this space!