



THE LLANCARFAN SOCIETY

Newsletter 87 March 1999

Editorial

The last year has seen a great surge of interest in research and writing. I now have most of the material in-hand for *Llancarfan, a Vale Village* and you will all appreciate, from the diversity of articles in the past six or seven Newsletters that our future is set on a fair course for the next few years. This Newsletter is longer than usual as we have featured the pantomime, *Sleeping Beauty* at some length. So many people in the community became involved that a historical record is worth-while if just to show our descendants that village spirit is far from dead. Long may LADS continue.

This month we welcome a couple of articles from an expatriate member, David Evans of *Garnllwyd*, now living in Belvès, France. David has written for us before, and readers will remember his sadness at the demise of the countryside known to those of us born before WW2. During my last few years in Llancarfan and recently, with growing intensity, the village seems to have become suburbanised - too many inappropriate garden walls and fences in the place of the unpretentious hedges of yore, too much concrete and asphalt and the inevitable consequences of cars and TV.

David has noted another such trend in the restoration of the Church. His views may be controversial but I think we should consider carefully what he is saying.

AGM Business and a pleasurable talk

Our usual AGM procedure of a block re-appointment of all officers and committee members was slightly complicated this year by the resignation of Sheila Mace as Secretary and Len Fairfax as the Committee's Sick-visitor.

Sheila has been at the centre of things for several years despite being more or less shoe-horned into the Secretary's position: we are most grateful for her help. We are fortunate that Mrs Ann Ferris has agreed to take-up the arduous pen during the coming year and, not surprisingly, was returned, unopposed! It is sad to lose Len Fairfax in his capacity of Sick-visitor. He has given many years of help and has brought a light of friendship to many folk who were housebound because of illness or infirmity. Thank you so much Len - it may be difficult to replace you. We welcome one new Committee member, Simon Heselton.

Our visiting speaker this year, Ian Fell, could hardly be described as a visitor - more a neighbour, as he has lived at *Whitechapel* for the past year or so. Ian is the Assistant Director of the National Museums and Galleries of Wales and in a former life was a television producer of educational programmes in northern England. His subject was **New Ways of Communicating History**.

I particularly looked forward to this as my passion for local history was almost stillborn when, as a teenager, I met the grey pages of the school history textbook which fronted a subject in which memorising dates seemed more important than understanding relationships.

Ian's thesis was that history can be presented as a living, dramatised entity, using all of the possibilities of interactive multimedia technology - the presentation of film, sound, text, animation and illustration in the relatively seamless mix which computers and television videotape now allow. Children and adults can be entertained as they learn, and have the option of asking questions so that teaching is automatically customised to individual interests.

He illustrated this with video tape clips from some of his previous television work and interactive CD-ROM material from the National Museum centred around the row of iron-workers cottages from Rhydycar, Merthyr Tydfil, now preserved at St Fagans, each restored to a different period of history. The flexibility of the CD access permits each viewer to ask different questions, answered in dramatised form by men and women from the period in question.

The Internet Web-site of the National Museum allows yet another way of seeing materials from all times in history - Ian illustrated this with various coins from a recent Welsh find of a Civil War hoard and he also closed with a glimpse of the very professional web-site established by local children and adults presenting the history of the parish of Roath.

Some of us may have wished we could have our education again!

Harry Hughes photograph

In the last Newsletter, as part of the article on the Raleigh Bicycle we included a photo' of Harry Hughes which was incorrectly attributed to Mrs. Biddy Renwick, *Ty Mawr*, Llanbethery. The photograph originated from Tom and Jean Hunt of *Copperfield*, Llancafarn and the dog was their black Labrador, Bess.

Mrs Renwick's print was in a frame, hanging in her home and, so far as Jean knows, nobody had a copy of the photo', other than Harry, so we must conclude that a copy of his print must have been made at some time.

Corrections and apologies

Idris Davies The article entitled "A highly respected Man", in Newsletter 85, identified Idris Davies, headmaster of the School from 1922 to 1928, as the son of Rees Davies, the previous headmaster. In fact, Idris Davies was not related to Rees. Apologies from the authors and editor, and thanks to Graham Jenkins for spotting the error. Part of the value of the Newsletter is the sorting-out of these hazy bits of history. Please don't hesitate to write or 'phone if you can correct or add to anything which we publish.

Glamorgan Record Office On the back page of the last Newsletter we printed a small part of an map showing *Pancross* and *Ridwells*. Though acknowledged in the text, the caption should have thanked the Glamorgan Record Office for permission to reproduce the extract from an estate-map dating from the late 1700s. The editor apologises for the oversight.

Authorship of photos and permissions

The item above raises a problem related to all the photographs which the Society has collected. Many of the prints have come from people who do not know who took the original photograph.

If they are reproduced in print, this makes a slight legal problem as no formal permission for use has been given. It is also rather sad if the authorship is not correctly acknowledged and it may well introduce historical inaccuracy as the date and other facts cannot be established.

To illustrate the difficulty, I first saw the photograph, reproduced below, hanging in *Old Mill* when John and Carol Evans lived there in the 1960s. John had a copy made for Robert and Mary Owen who bought the mill in the early 1970s. I know that several other copies passed into different hands at that time. This copy was photographed from a print which Gwynne and Dilys Liscombe lent me in about 1987 and I subsequently used it to illustrate one or two May Day Walks which I guided through the village.

During one of these walks, Lyn Price, *Newhouse Farm*, Moulton, stopped for a chat and promptly said "What are you doing with my photo?!!" As the photo shows a member of Lyn's family I think it is most likely that it is "Price copyright" but I really have no idea who clicked the shutter.

INSERT PIC

The overshot waterwheel at *Old Mill*. William and Catherine Lewis with children of their own and Lougher's, *Cross Green*. The boy is probably Gwilym Price, *Penylan*. Date c. 1910. Photographer - see text

News of Members, Friends and Places

- . With sadness we have heard of the death of Mary Owen who lived at *Old Mill* in the 1970s and 80s. Mary had moved to the Isle of Wight, with her son David and family to whom we send our condolences.
- Alfred Mills, of Barry, wrote to say that the photo of Harry Hughes in the last Newsletter made him feel that he had gone back many years, looking at Griff, Harry's father - the only difference was that Griff wore a moustache.

Memories of Llancarfan School; an invitation

Jean Hunt and Mary Gammon are researching the history of the school. They would like to hear from anyone with memories of their schooldays in Llancarfan - recollections of teachers or events, including the recent past will be most welcome.

Llanvithyn names by John Etherington

David Evans, whose two articles appear in this Newsletter, mentioned that he had collected a range of names for *Llanvithyn*. Many different names are quoted in G.T. Clark's paper in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 11 (1865):- *Llanveithin*; *Llandoyeuthin*; *Lantmeuthin*; *Lantmeuthen*; *Lamaseuthin*; *Lammeuthin*; *Llanvethan*; *Llanvithen*; *Llanvithin*; *Llanvythin*; *Llanvathan* - I may not have found all. The first is his preferred spelling - most of the others were collected from legal documents and reflect (I think), lack of unified spelling in earlier times, rather than actual usage. I discover that my own suggestion of *Llan* (enclosure) *eithin* (gorse) is not original but is hinted at on Sid Perkin's 1969 map of Llancarfan. Here in Pembrokeshire, one of our neighbouring farms is *Llanreithan* definitely believed to have its origin in gorse.

Brer Rabbit was a Hare by David Evans (formerly of *Garnllwyd*)

Fifty and more years ago the boys on neighbouring farms would be called upon to spend, a day and more helping out with farm work that required extra staff. Such was threshing; a dusty noisy fearsome task that could last for several days, particularly where several stacks of corn had to be dismantled and their seed contents removed.

Llanvithyn threshing was an awesome prospect. No wonder I never noticed those interesting hares in stone, set upon the eastern gable as one walked in the early hours to pay homage to the rick-yard, high on the hill behind the house. Mary Maddock was my sweetheart and her father was the tenant, so I must have been looking out for Mary between the brief intervals of lunch and tea.

John Etherington has given us some historical information about these carvings, and I would add that they must be drawn from the Mountain Hare which has shorter ears than the widely distributed Brown Hare. Rabbits reared on the small farms of France, in stacked hutches for daily food often have long ears, I have noticed.

Evans & Thomson (1972), Faber & Faber*, give some entertaining tales relating to our landscape, noting that in Glamorgan a hare's foot would be attached to a door to ward-off evil spirits, whilst elsewhere it was considered that back luck would follow should you see one running anti-clockwise. The hare has a split lip, and if a pregnant woman saw one, there was a fear that her offspring might suffer this complication. However it was not all bad news, for the hare meant dawn, new life, and increase. The activation of all art was animal art, and our ancestors were fortunate in not having to embrace a material world, and used the hare and its associated image as a safe mechanism for security and defence. Talk was that if a hare ran through a village then a fire would follow shortly afterwards. Good reason to place its image upon the wall. and face it east to ensure the earliest rays of the all powerful sun.

The Welsh Folk Museum at St.Fagans has the following recorded conversation on tape by John Ellis Jones (1886-1969) in Welsh:-

“It happened at Maesgwyn. It was a great sin at that time, do you see, to play cards on a Sunday instead of going to religious service. They used to play cards in the loft above the stable at this farm. Farm servants used to congregate, some from one farm, some from another, to play cards on a Sunday morning: about eight or nine of them. An uncle of mine was there with them. He was only a lad, a fine, polished young blade, at the time.

Now while they were at it playing cards, in comes a hare through the loft door - bang, right into the middle of the cards - well, that was an end of card-playing in Maesgwyn! They used to say that no one would sleep in the loft after that, not if you'd give them anything in the world! There was a spirit there, you see. A spirit. And that loft was closed for many years after that; and it is as a loft that was always shut up, that I can remember it myself. It was one of the beliefs of the old people, do you see. Those who were playing cards in the loft there really thought the devil had come amongst them; had come full pelt from somewhere. The door must have been ajar, and it shot into the other side of the loft, through the cards and everything. And it went out again after this without anyone there putting a finger on it. I've heard my uncle imitating-rehearsing exactly how this hare went.” (Jones was 82 years of age when he told this tale in the 60s).

Llanvithyn has several names. I have five listed, but had not known that *eithin* indicated the existence of gorse. This valuable beautiful densely branched shrub is a life source for many bird species,, whilst ponies rely upon it during bitter winter weather. In Co. Tipperary in

Ireland, we lost all our hares when the gorse was cleared by a ghastly machine in one summers day. They were perhaps six breeding couples on land beside a great freshwater lake. Then there were none. Yet we continue to talk - if land is neglected, should it not be highly cultivated? On the contrary I suggest that nature is always hinting at us. Why don't we listen?

* This was *The Leaping Hare* referred to in Newsletter 85. A book-lovers note: If you have not come across George Ewart Evans' books, he is well worth reading. Though born in Abercynon, he spent most of his life teaching in East Anglia and wrote some classics based on the oral history of that area. Titles are: *Ask the Fellows who Cut the Hay*, *The Pattern under the Plough* and *Horse Power and Magic*.

Floods in the Past a letter from Dr Maddy Gray

Many thanks for the newsletter. It is a magnificent piece of work: I am always impressed by the depth of local knowledge in the articles.

Gwyn Liscombe's article on floods has sent me back to Lifris's *Life of St Cadoc*. It seems that floods have always been a problem in the Carfan valley. The site of Cadoc's monastery at Llancarfan is described as a 'festering marsh', overgrown with scrub and reeds. Part of this was miraculously cleared to allow Cadoc to build, and the rest, he and his disciples cleared with their own hands. There is a similar story in the *Life of St Illtud*, whose lands at Llanilitud Fawr were threatened by the sea.

In Illtud's case, he was unable to build a sea wall strong enough to keep the waves back, but by a miracle the sea receded and the marshy ground became fertile. The usual interpretation of these stories is that sea levels were rising in the early medieval period and land which had been drained and cultivated under Roman rule was reverting to marsh. The monks of the Age of the Saints, like their Benedictine and Cistercian successors, had the knowledge and the organisation to undertake large-scale drainage and land clearance. This they did so effectively that their achievement seemed miraculous to their neighbours.

However, drainage and flood protection schemes need to be maintained - and it looks from the notes in the latest Newsletter as if this has not been done recently. Perhaps the Vale Council are hoping for another miracle!

A visit to Llancarfan by David Evans

During the third week of January I was fortunate enough to spend a night in Llancarfan, and for a few hours on the following morning, to look again at views and corners which I had not seen for perhaps thirty years. Age brings an ability to interpret the soul. *Ford Farm* seemed unchanged deep in a wooded fold from Pennon hill.

Driving slowly past the church I was astonished to see an extremely ugly large sign, a financial thermometer attached to the lovely old dressed stone wall. A sort of visual church plate. Why on earth, I thought should local people have to see this disfigurement daily, for the Church in Wales must be wealthy in its own right. If it does choose not to raise capital by releasing its vast assets, then why not seek a million or two pounds from the mightier polluters of this portion of the Vale, the brutally noisy British Airways who could write off this cost as a donation.

The Power Station at night looks like Armageddon and heaven only knows the pollutants it deposits relentlessly, and without question across the cherished landscape. Let the polluters

pay. This should be something that should be taken up with the new political men strutting for glory in Cardiff.

Expecting local people to find such resources is obscene and shameful too. Churchyards with their great yews, rich in shelter and whose berries provide survival for many birds, should have secret places of dark nettles and acres of white-laced cow parsley. The old earth path once walked for Sunday school has been replaced by a form of auto-path, a ghastly surveyor-straight Gucci-heel proof surface devoid of all character. What did it cost and why was it undertaken?

INSERT PIC

The offending path (photo David Evans)

Lunch at the *Fox and Hounds* was excellent. A friendly welcome and good cuisine. Attractive blue glass water bottles. My mother, in her nineties, was in great form and reminisced over earlier days. Clearly other guests thought we were total strangers and gave us no greeting. The French still possess marvellous manners, and in any bar or shop one's arrival and departure is courteously acknowledged by other guests.

My mother, who had left *Garnllwyd* after some sixty seven years, had vowed not to return up the valley, but very generously agreed to accompany me to *Llanvithyn*. Going up *Abernant Hill* her eyes were closed. The view remains unchanged in impression, but urban man has arrived with another fearful private style sign, and an intimidating one as intended. I had heard of the two stone eagles guarding the old entrance block, and now there they were, like something from an out-of-town Dublin garden centre. Why eagles I wondered?

Fortunately I was able to look at the stone circular sculpture set high on the wall facing *Garnllwyd*. Quite small and difficult to see, particularly as a Virginia creeper has been planted and its vigorous growth has been allowed to cover the surface of the actual carving and clearly damaging its surface. I took some photographs with a telephoto lens, but the light was not good and the dancing hares are difficult to appreciate, although the line of their velvet ears can be detected. The gate house from the lawn remains little changed, although the old shutters illustrated in Spencer's *Annals* has been replaced with a less attractive larger window. The old 1636 date on the inner beam remains, as does, miraculously, the actual dark black paint-work probably placed in the days when the Lougher family held sway, and handed on such a treasure chest intact. I wondered if the date could be attached to the placing of the hares in their secure vertical niche. I had seen the hares and that should be enough for a day.

My mother remained in the car. She received no word of welcome and that is what has been lost in the countryside. People no longer talk to people. There are no longer calling days when folk came quite unannounced, stayed for two hours for afternoon tea and departed. We saw a fine buzzard as we left *Llanvithyn* drive and this my mother greatly enjoyed, watching it fly in circles at no great distance. Wonderful her eyes were wide open, and as wonderful in another sense that those charming enchanting hares cannot see those eagles. 'The countryside has gone said Muzzie, the name I gave her as a boy.

LADS 1999 Pantomime - *Sleeping Beauty* by Steve Powell, *Ty Uchaf*, Llancaf, Llanarfan

Well we have now experienced two successful pantomime productions with the 1998 *Cinderella* and our latest performance of *Sleeping Beauty* written by Tom Batt. To write something funny from a traditional fairy tale which can be performed on stage is very difficult

but Tom Batt did it. He deserves recognition for his very professional and successful script and I hope that he will be able to put pen to paper for future productions. Well done Tom!

From our community come many talented people whose enthusiasm, energy and professionalism is I feel unique. This mix of characters from our parish inspired the decision to produce this year's pantomime. Sam Smith our director, Tom Batt, Jim Steeley our musical director, and I, as producer, met early last year and agreed that LADS should put on *Sleeping Beauty*. The amount of time and effort that seventy three of our friends and neighbours have given should be recognised and applauded. The cast was chosen and auditioned by both Sam and Tom:-

- Sam Smith (Director & Dragon) He is unique, strict and yet very funny - irreplaceable as a director and was born for the stage.
- John Angell (King Steven) Excellent acting and very committed.
- Patsic Smith (Queen Patsy) She excelled, was funny and enthusiastic.
- Ceri Trotman-Jones (Sleeping Beauty) Cen was superb and although nervous during rehearsal she gave great voice to "Once upon a Dream".
- Robert Teesdale (Fairy Godmother Snogget) A startling performance, "thsogging" his way into all our hearts
- Graham Brain (Fairy Godmother Basket) What a star! Graham always livens-up a performance
- Tom Batt (Fairy Godmother Lovett) Tom brought the character to life and was very funny.
- Gail Lacey (Evil Fairy Malevolence) Sadly Gail is moving away and her acting skills will be truly missed. Well done Gail for a most professional performance. Best wishes to Bill, Gail and the family.
- Annabel John (Young Prince Phillip) What a budding star She was the first to learn her lines and was committed to getting it right.
- Jane John (Adult Prince Phillip) Jane is a born actress and carried off this year's character as professionally as ever.
- Julie Potter (Courtier 1) A new Llancarfan star, truly excellent and a great mover.
- Ed Lazda (Courtier 2) Another new star has moved into Llancarfan, great performance from another great mover.
- Richard Knott (Courtier 3) Richard is a very talented young man. Well done on a good performance and our definitive dancer
- Sarah Angell (Courtier 4) Played her part both enthusiastically and well.
- Janet Lazda (Goblin 1) Janet is a super actress and we are so pleased to have her on board.
- Simon Heselton (Goblin 2) Simon covered lighting last year but was drawn to the stage for the 1999 production. His performance was excellent. He is marrying my eldest daughter Emma so I am especially pleased that he has become involved in the activities of the village.
- Geoff Evans (Simkin) Well what a star! He is so funny and was a major raiser of laughter in *Sleeping Beauty*.
- Edward Knott (Jester) Edward is without question a true professional and his contribution helped to make this year's panto performance the success it was.
- Vanessa Newton (Old Tree of the Forest) Vanessa is always popular with the audience and performed as always so well.
- Nick Renwick (Tree 2) A new member of our cast who stepped in at the last minute but acted as if the part had been written for him.
- Sallie Angell (Tree 3) What can you say other than these Angells are a talented lot.
- Bianca Rees (Tree 4) Bianca is a super example of the enthusiasm and style that come from our young people.

- Saplings: Rosie Angell (12) Ellen Jones (11) Sadie Whitlocks (11) Oliver Batt (6) Allan Renwick (9) William Renwick (8) Emily Renwick (6) Chris Lazda (10) They were all superb and added a certain kind of magic to the performance. Their singing of "We want to be Trees" was one of the highlights of the show.
- Lucy Brain (Crow) "Cor Blimey" - Lucy played the part well.
- Phil Watts (Doorman) Phil did us proud with his popularity and dry wit.

Unfortunately even though Sue Evans had learned her part as Tree 2 she was unable to guarantee being available for the performances due to personal circumstances. Sue did help during the performances and we would like to thank her for her overall effort. Our production team with their diverse talents were:-

- Alan Taylor (Stage Manager) Alan is a very practical and organised person and his ability to control the activities back stage helped towards the performances' success. I am grateful for the many hours Alan gave planning and building the sets.
- Robert Hutchings (Props Manager) Robert was a super new addition to the team and he certainly gave us 100% plus.
- Andrew Knott (curtain) Andrew's energy and willingness to help is commendable.
- Audrey Porter (Costume Manager) Audrey is a wonderful lady and Llancarfan wouldn't be the same without her. Her ability to conjure up low to nil cost props and costumes is amazing.
- Audrey Baldwin Judy Hutchings, Betty Pullen, Maureen Cotter, Mary Gammon, Marjorie Hobbs, Georgina Powell (Costume Production) These wonderfully talented ladies spent many hours making the costumes and brought the panto characters to life under the direction of Audrey Porter.
- Ros Hunt (Dresser) Ros as always can deliver the goods with her strong personality and organised manner.
- Emma Cowen, Elizabeth Rhys, Faye Williams, Carol Donovan, Georgina Powell, Jenny Knott, Jaime Powell, Sue Evans, Kay Brain, Debbie Schmit (Make Up and Hair) We were very fortunate to have some professionals on the make up team. Emma, Elizabeth & Faye are currently in the middle of degree courses in stage and theatrical make up. Thank you to all those involved. They certainly added a professional edge to the performances
- Jim Steeley (Music & Sound Effects) Jim is clever, innovative and enthusiastic and his performances were spectacular. Jim, Tricia & Thomas are unfortunately moving to Scotland and they will be sadly missed by the villagers and cast.
- Emma Powell, Jaime Powell, Debbie Price, Simon Hunt (Lighting) The lighting team produced many super effects not least spraying the audience with water for "I'm Singing in the Rain" and added a very professional edge to the performance.
- Derek Porter, Frank Jameson, Alan Taylor, Simon Heselton, Graharn Brain (Stage Construction) The construction team with me worked many hours rebuilding the stage and sets, wiring for sound, lighting and special effects and making the props. Thank you all.
- Heather Stevens, Janet Alexander, Jenny Knott, Jenny Rowlands (Set Artists) Heather and her team, with special thanks to Jenny Rowlands, brought every set to life. Their exceptional talent and many hours of work was appreciated and admired by the cast and audiences alike.
- Ieuan Bennet (Prompter) Ieuan was able to keep the cast on track even amongst the confusion of the cast adlibbing as they got more comfortable with their pan. Well done Ieuan.
- Joan Quelch (Ticket Sales & Seating) Joan did a fantastic job, it was virtually a sell out. She more than coped with the headache of organising the ever-changing bookings and on behalf of everyone would like to offer our thanks to Joan. Well done.

- Judy Hutchings, Jan Palmer, Ann Ferris, Fran Winterbottom, Audrey Porter (Refreshments) Our thanks to Judy and her team for their efforts.
- Sue Taylor, Ruth Watts, Viv Davies (Raffle) Thank you to Sue and the team for a very organised and successful raffle.

The advertisers in our programme are to be thanked for their support:- Sue Taylor, Map Relocations; Richard Powell, Industore Ltd; Maggie Levey, *Little Mill Cattery*; Watt's Family, Watts Coaches; Phil Jenkins, Phillip Jenkins & Sons; David Stevens, Admiral Insurance; Sam Smith, Culver Travel; Brian Lakin, Sigma 3; Graham Levey, Marden & Co; Jenny Knott, Designer Cakes; Kay Brain, Payroll Services; Graham Brain, Serco; Brian Quinn, Kings Fireplaces; Anders Leijerstam, Horse Drawn Carriage Hire; John Evans, John T Evans Haulage Contractors; Robert Teesdale, Quorum Associates; Tony King, Tony King Architects; Digby Rees, *The Fox & Hounds*; Steve Powell, Dragon Rescue; TheatreVision of Cardiff, as last year kindly loaned us lighting equipment. Raffle Prizes were donated by:- Dragon Rescue, Meurig & Vivienne Dayies, Robert & Judy Hutchings, Marjorie Hobbs, Tony & Shelagh Lewis, The Llancarfan Society, *Little Mill Cattery*, Marden & Company, Arwyn & Margaret Rees, Alan & Sue Taylor, Tony & Joan Thomas, Brian Vincent, Phil & Ruth Watts, Hilary West Florists.

Special Thanks to:-

- Carla & Richard Morgan for the use of their lovely home for the make up and a costume changes. Also the cast appreciated being able to sit in the comfort and warm whilst off stage.
- David, Edward Knott's brother kindly donated LADS three spotlights.
- Lyn Smith the Llancarfan Primary School Head-teacher for putting up with us during rehearsals and the performances.
- Sarah & John Angel for the use of their home for the changes and make up during the dress rehearsal.

Our community is richer from activities such as the panto. The efforts and support given by the individuals listed is an example of our super community. My family and I love living in Llancarfan not just because of its beauty or its location but because of the people, the characters which make this parish what it is. Thank you all for the part you play in this, the real life performance.

Pennyfarthings, tricycles and Picketts

In the last Newsletter, Gwynne Liscombe recalled visiting Mrs Pickett at *Brook Cottage* during the late 1930s. His memory of a pennyfarthing “ordinary” bicycle has raised some queries and also answered one or two editorial questions.

In those days the cottage was often known as *Pickett's Cottage*. This is hardly surprising as George Pickett was recorded at the house in the 1891 Census so, by the time Gwynne knew him, he had been there for almost 40 years.

At the time of the Census he was 35 and married to a much older lady, Jane, who was 56. Gwynne would be describing a time when George was between 75 and 80 years old. I knew there was a Mrs Pickett in the 1930s but had to assume that she must have been a second wife. Graham Jenkins now confirms this for us, recollecting that Claudia Pickett was about 20 years younger than George and his second wife.

What about the pennyfarthing? Well, many people have recalled a tricycle and this is depicted on Sid Perkins map of the village. Gwynne, in response to a query, wrote "I recollect a pennyfarthing but could be wrong. I also remember the three-wheeler which went, I believe, to Aubrey Lougher at *Cliff Farm* after George's days."

If George was rising 80, he was probably not agile enough to mount a pennyfarthing but a man who cycles at 80, probably cycled all his life. The penny farthing was invented in 1883 when he was in his twenties and the bicycle Gwynne remembers would thus be a real bit of history. I really hope he is right.

The Picketts are yet another family of which oral memory has been handed down the years. For example, in Newsletter 9, Albert Newton wrote of the 1930s:-

"The house at the right hand side of the *Wesleyan Chapel* (now *Whitechapel*), as viewed from the road, was occupied by a Mr and Mrs Pickett. I seem to have related men with beards as sailors and Mr Pickett wore a large white beard, but more importantly he had a three wheeled cycle and to see him setting off was an occasion. From the rear he pushed off and raised onto the saddle to start pedalling." (George Pickett was a roadman and agricultural worker, not a sailor).

Lyn Price, Moulton,, says that George was too fat to mount the tricycle in conventional fashion! However, he must have been fit - still working well into his 70s and cycling to work at *Cliff Farm* -. This would be why the tricycle ended its days at *Cliff*.

INSERT PIC

Brook Cottage, from Sid Perkin's 1969 map of Llanccarfan, showing the tricycle. This copy is taken from one of the tea-cloths, printed with the map, for the Society.

Christmas Tree a note from Graham Brain

The Llanccarfan Christmas Celebrations were very kindly supported by the Llanccarfan Community Council, the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Llanccarfan Society and I would like to thank them all for their generosity. I have now finalised the accounts which show that the Christmas Tree Fund received a grant of £225, *via* the Llanccarfan Community Council, from the Vale of Glamorgan for Christmas Celebrations and this, together with a kind donation of £100 from the Llanccarfan Society, was used as follows: A decorated Christmas Tree was put in the Llanccarfan Community Hall to bring some Christmas spirit to organisations that use the Hall. It was in place by the 2nd of December, in time for the Llanccarfan Society "Christmas bash".

The village Christmas tree by the ford, was kindly collected and delivered by Steve Powell's, *Dragon Rescue* and with help from several villagers, the tree was erected and dressed ready for the switching-on ceremony, on Saturday, 12th December. A children's party was organised on that Saturday, in the Community Hall. All children who live within the Llanccarfan Area and children who attend Llanccarfan County Primary School were invited. Some 60 children were entertained by 'Paddy The Clown', before eating their way through 120 Hot Dogs and rolls (not to mention the vegetarian ones), 3 bottles of tomato sauce and countless packets of sweets. After the party, all made their way to the Ford, where the Christmas Tree lights were switched-on, followed by carols around the tree. Despite poor weather, 80 - 100 residents and children of the area attended.

The annual painting competition is organised by The Llancarfan Christmas Tree Fund and Llancarfan County Primary School and is used to find an overall winner to switch on the Christmas Tree lights. The theme of the competition was 'Santa's Workshop' and the overall winner was Dominic Fouracre. There were six categories, based on age, and prizes of W.H.Smith's tokens were awarded to the winners.

I am grateful to Jean Hunt, *Copperfield*, who judged the entries.

Winner Year Six and Overall Winner - Dominic Fouracre - with the comment:: "Bold and very "painterly" painting - lovely rich colours and an overall effect which is full of Christmas warmth and spirit. A gorgeous Santa! I should love to have Dominic's painting on my wall and he has real feeling for handling paint and creating rich textures and a strong composition.

The other winners were:- Reception class - Lucy Matthews; Year One - Lucy Williams; Year Two - James Leonard; Year Three/Four - Lucy Brain; Joint Winners Year Five - Bethan McCarthy and Allan Renwick.

The winning paintings were kindly put on display in *The Fox & Hounds*, Llancarfan, by landlord and landlady, Jenny and Digby Rees.

Once again I would like express my gratitude to all concerned in enabling the above celebrations to take place and look forward to next year, which will be special to us all.

Watermeadows

Readers will remember that the editor got quite excited that there might have been Watermeadows in Llancarfan (Newsletter 84). Since then, John Cann has discovered the location of the field near Walterston, which was described as Water Mede. Sadly it is nowhere near the Ford Brook or any other stream and the name must simply have described a wet meadow. We can't win them all.