



## THE LLANCARFAN SOCIETY

**NEWSLETTER 89      JUNE 1999**

### **Editorial**

This year has seen a lot of new material coming in for the Newsletter and book, with several new contributors. John Cann of Walterston has been researching his converted-barn home and has unearthed all sorts of good things. In this number he writes of the dreadful goings-on in his hamlet during the first years of the century!

Speaking of the book, I now have the majority of the text material to hand and it will take the rest of the summer to edit it all together. We still have gaps for some illustrations so anyone with undivulged old pictures will be welcomed. If there are any more outstanding writings, please let me know quickly before the existing bits transmute into tablets of stone.

### **1914-1918: Llancarfan at War - Ivor M. Thomas, Curnix Farm: a tragic letter** compiled by John Etherington

Tuesday 19.3.1918

Dear Uncle & Auntie,

Just a line to let you know I am alive and kicking somewhere in France. It is quite different to England as you would naturally expect and just where we are at present everything is pretty quiet and hope it will continue so, but you never know how quick a change may come. Of course we shall not say where we are but you can have a good guess, as they know partly at home. We haven't had such a bad Winter out here, although it was rather rough for the first two months. We are having lovely weather this month but I think it is changing now, it has turned to rain today after a long spell of fine weather, but we want it for some things.

I received a letter from Home one day in the week and by what I can make out the land will soon be ready for Spring sowing so I expect you are rather busy just now. I will be out of all that hum this year. I haven't seen much this last three years, but will see less this, but never mind hope to see it next. There is some good land about here and I think I should be more at home with a good team of horses and a plough turning some of this over. If all goes well I hope to be home at the beginning of the Summer, (but I don't think I shall bring Girl home with me). Have you been lucky with the lambs this year, they have been fairly lucky at home, and it was the same throughout the district so they said. I should like to hear from you at any time and trusting you are all quite well as I am.

I remain, Your Affec. Nephew, Ivor.

Within five days of writing this letter, and before it had arrived in Wales, young Ivor became yet another victim of the Great War. His memorial in the Somme valley reads:-

In Memory of I M Thomas Private 204232 1st Bn East  
Yorkshire Regiment who died on Tuesday 26th  
March 1918. Age 26

Additional Information: Son of Rhys and Sarah Jane Thomas, of Curnix Farm, Penmark, Cardiff.

Cemetery: CERISY-GAILLY MILITARY CEMETERY, Somme, France Grave Reference/  
Panel Number: II. B. 6. Gailly was the site of the 39th and 13th Casualty Clearing Stations during the early part of 1917, and of the 41st Stationary Hospital from May, 1917, to March, 1918; the villages were then captured by the enemy, but they were retaken by the Australian Corps in August, 1918. Cerisy-Gailly Military Cemetery was begun in February, 1917, and used by medical units until March, 1918, and after the recapture of the village it was used by Australian units. Other graves were transferred from nearby small cemeteries (Commonwealth War Graves Commission commemorative information).

Cerisy is about 25 km north-east of Amiens and 10 km south of Albert, in the Somme Valley. On 21st March the German spring offensive opened with a violent artillery barrage along some 70 miles of front. At first this was successful and the German army took a large area between Arras and Reims. We can only guess what happened to Ivor Thomas in the days after writing his letter. He must have been involved in the battle and by the 24<sup>th</sup> March, either wounded and in hospital, or a part of the defending force which protected it until its capture. The British toll on March 21<sup>st</sup> was 7000 dead, some 30,000 wounded and 21,000 taken prisoner.

We are grateful to Lyn Price, *New House Farm*, Moulton, for a copy of the letter and the photograph of Ivor Thomas.

### **WW1 Records - some notes** by John Etherington

When we published the introduction and first article in this series (Newsletter 88), a lot of gaps in the record still existed. These were mainly names which had so many duplicates in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission registers that they were difficult or impossible to identify.

Various people have volunteered further information which has made some of these remaining searches much easier - most usefully by providing year of death and Regiment (or Service). Phil Watts has done sterling work, talking to relatives, to fill some of these gaps. As a result we now have only three outstanding records:- William Howells and Thomas Matthews, both of Llancadle and D. Stanley Sherrah, *Flaxland*.

William Howells was probably a relative of Owen Howells, *The Farm*, Llancadle (unrelated to the Llancarfan Howells, as the Llancadle family originated from St Brides, Bridgend). D. Stanley Sherrah was son of Evan and Margaret Sherrah who moved to *Flaxland* when Evan retired as a mining engineer, from Senghenydd. Margaret remained, living at the *Parsonage*, until the early 1940s. So far we have no information on Thomas Matthews.

Stanley was a mystery, as his unusual name does not occur anywhere in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission registers. However, by chance I have discovered that another victim who appeared to have no C.W.G.C. record, Edward John of *Flaxland*, died of his wounds, in June 1919. He appears above Stanley Sherrah (also of *Flaxland*) on the War Memorial.

Individual sections of the Memorial are in chronological order, so I think Stanley died after Edward in 1919 and thus has no C.W.G.C. record. If Stanley's parents did not notify the C.W.G.C., as the John family did, no record of his war-death would appear.

I am grateful to Gwynne Liscombe for accidentally telling me that Edward John died in 1919 (this Newsletter). In addition, Audrey Williams (née Taylor) and Tony Thomas provided information on Thomas Taylor who was mentioned in the last Newsletter, and Graham Jenkins helped me locate details of the deeply sad story of David and Reggie Lewis, father and son. Future articles will tell these stories.

Most of the information comes from published sources or from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission registers which are easily available at [www.cwgc.org.gc](http://www.cwgc.org.gc). If family members wish to trace further details, next-of-kin may obtain service records from Army Records Centre, M.O.D. CS(RM)2B, Bourne Avenue, Hayes, Middlesex, UB3 1RF. Details of Battalion actions can be obtained from the relevant Regimental Association's archive or museum.

Few small communities can have such a complete record of their War Memorial dead as we have here. I shall be grateful if anyone who traces further information will let me know.

#### **Gravestones and history** by Gwynne Liscombe

The headstone of William and Maria Price is in Llancarfan churchyard, occupying the same plot as that of Annie Jane Lewis (their daughter) and Jehoiada Lewis. Annie Jane and Jehoiada were the parents of Dilys (Liscombe) and Idris, now living in Durban.

When the Baptist Chapel was sold to Nigel Reynolds, a developer from Penarth, the graveyard was altered, stones moved or destroyed and, as you will see today, few remain. At that time Dilys and Idris decided to move the gravestones of their parents and grandparents to a plot, which we bought in Llancarfan churchyard, and there they remain:- two headstones on one plot: William Price d. 22/10/32, Maria Price d. 21/10/39, Annie Jane Lewis (née Price) d. 30/5/63 and Jehoiada Lewis d. 5/10/77.

Their mortal remains rest at the former Baptist Chapel (*Bethlehem*) Graveyard but *not* in the environs of what is now the garden of the converted chapel. The graves are at the rear of the former Baptist Vestry which is now part of *Chapel Cottage*, Llancarfan. I believe that others are buried in this piece of ground but that no headstones survive. Sam Smith of *Chapel Cottage* confirms this and says that one grave, close to the back wall of the *Vestry*, had iron railings around it.

It is of interest that, in all probability, the grave plots in the churchyard are without interred remains. However, I do remember, over the years, graves being prepared and revealing evidence of former burials occurring before proper records were kept.

Of course, in more recent years families have a "receipt" of ownership of a particular plot in parish churchyards which is accurately recorded, albeit, maybe on an earlier plot as undoubtedly the graveyard is very ancient. This is unlikely to have happened in Nonconformist graveyards - relatively recent and of course receipt of ownership was given, I understand.

Whilst we have not yet done so, it is our intention to mark the two headstones referred-to above, with an appropriate adjunct which may explain to future parish or community administrators, or indeed the casual observer the unusual appearance of two headstones on one

plot. The Llancarfan Society records, which I am sure will be of historical importance, may well indicate that human remains are interred at the rear of the *Bethlehem* Baptist Vestry, now detached from the former graveyard which is, of course much more obvious I believe that the remains of the Thomas family, of *Curnix*, also remain in that piece of ground, together with some others.

You, Mr Editor, may well remember when the two of us built the walls at *Ceffyl Du* (all those years ago), that they include a piece of inscribed headstone. How did it get there I wonder? It must indicate that headstones have disappeared over the years not only those at *Bethlehem* Chapel but also the Wesleyan Chapel and *St Cadoc's* Church.

These stones were and are a wonderful record, for example a stone laid into the floor of Llancarfan Church bearing such a true inscription (if I remember correctly): "Thou that standest and looketh on me, as I am so shalt thou be." I also remember being shown a headstone at *Bethlehem* Chapel bearing the Welsh inscription "Buried 30<sup>th</sup> February", shown to me by Jehoiada Lewis, my father-in-law. Interesting history is being or was lost.

The location of the graves described in this article.

I William Price; II David Rhys Thomas, *Curnix*;

III Annie Jane and Jehoiada Lewis; IV Evan Griffiths [*Glan-yrAfon*]; Ethel, Helen and Ivor Morgan Thomas, *Curnix* [sisters and brother. Ivor killed in WW1 - article above]. Plan derived from Glamorgan Family History Society gravestone transcripts.

After writing this, my memory was jogged and I recollected that the John family of *Flaxland Farm* also moved a headstone. I have been to the churchyard to check this and found:-

"Edward John, son of Edward and Catherine John, *Flaxland Farm* d.18/6/1919 "In the midst of life there is death" Eleanor, their daughter who died in infancy, Also the said Catherine John who died April 13, 1928 aged 67. Also the said Edward John who died November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1947 in his 88<sup>th</sup> year. Also of William John who died December 31<sup>st</sup> 1968 Aged 76."

They are the parents and relatives of Richard John who died 24/8/94, a well known and respected son of Llancarfan - a solicitor who rose to be Clerk of the former Glamorgan County Council and the person responsible for bringing the Ulmer Spatzen Children's Choir from the City of Ulm-Donau in West Germany (as it was) to sing at Llancarfan Church in Vicar Payne's time.

I remember Richard John telling me about moving a headstone and I am 99% certain that it was the one referred to above. What is also evident is that the stone is completely upright (as are ours) with no evidence of subsidence which obviously occurs after some years.

Richard John is also buried in the Llancarfan churchyard and his grave, as well as the headstone referred-to above, is obviously tended at appropriate times. His son, David Roydon John probably sees to this, but I have no idea if he is a member of the Society. Carol Dunn of Llanbethery, Richard John's niece might be able to confirm what I have written.

Its odd how one thing triggers another in the "old grey cells".

Notes. The fragment of gravestone from *Ceffyl Du* had part of a date, "17—", but nothing else useful. We have already recorded details and family histories for stones which were found being used as flags at *Brook Cottage* and *New House* (Newsletters 23 & 24/89 and 33/90). The Family History Society has made transcripts of *St Cadoc's* and *Bethlehem* stones. Unfortunately these were too late to include the Wesleyan stones which went to the sides of the garden in the 1960s. The appended plan shows the burial areas behind the *Vestry*, taken from the FHS transcript. "Buried 30<sup>th</sup> February" is mentioned in Stan Awbery's *Village of a*

*thousand Saints* and in Newsletter 44/9. Richard John has two obituaries in Newsletter 63/94, one of which gives his son's name as Royston.

### **Foot and Mouth** by Phil Watts

In Newsletter 86 Gwynne Liscombe mentions foot and mouth at *Abernant* and the cattle being burned.

I have written elsewhere of foot and mouth, the farms that had the disease I can remember were: *Pencarreg* (Dilwyn Griffiths), *Tyn-y-Coed* (Ted Griffiths), *Village Farm*, (Triddy Evans), *Greendown* (Bill Thomas), *Garnllwyd* (Bill Evans), *Shortlands* part of farm only. These are definite as well as *Abernant* (William Liscombe). Others that I am not quite sure about were *Court Farm* (Tom Evans) *Sheepcourt Farm* (Jim James), *Blacklands Farm* (Tom Thomas).

Foot and mouth had a significant effect on us at *Abernant*, it brought about the retirement from farming of William Liscombe at the age of 78. The labour operations of disinfecting, fumigating and everything labour intensive was supplied by the out of work - unemployed. When they went to sign on they were detailed to the farms to work. It must have been a great shock for some of them. As a boy of 9 year old it brought me into social contact with the first blackman I had ever seen, other than photographs. It did surprise me that they were just the same as us but had a funny accent.

For several days there was a lot of noise, action and movement about the farm culminating in the big fire in the field where the carcasses were burned. All the cloven footed animals were slaughtered and burned. Then after all the turmoil came the great silence because as I have mentioned the neighbouring farms had been struck with the dreaded disease as well. We were left with the chickens, geese, ducks and one horse - Pleasant. I wonder what their thoughts were at the time - glad to miss the great execution I expect. All this destruction had a profound affect on all our lives.

When one is young things stay in ones mind never to be forgotten. I recall Mrs. Dilys Griffiths, *Pencarreg*, saying many times how she hated the song that was very popular before the war - "A tisket a tasket I lost my little basket" all because the vet that confirmed foot and mouth at *Pencarreg* was whistling it over the road gate as he dipped his wellingtons in the bucket of disinfectant.

Farmers were compensated at market price for animals, I do not recall any allowance for loss of income. So there was a six month period without income. At this time my father had just obtained a better paid job building St. Athan aerodrome. He was told that if he came home he would not be able to leave the farm again until restrictions were over. So he lodged with Mrs. Amelia Evans (Richard Evans mother), *Ford Cross*, but later he was allowed back to help with the cleaning down, fumigating and disinfecting that took place on all the farms. I think the most significant effect on rural life brought about by foot and mouth is the silence. No mothers calling for their calves, no lambs seeking their mothers. Nature and the farms have survived no doubt they will again with a little help from everyone.

**Contributions for the Newsletter** should be sent to the Editor, John Etherington, *Parc-y-Bont*, Llanhowell, Solva, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA62 6XX or e-mail to: [eth.pbont@virgin.net](mailto:eth.pbont@virgin.net) We will also be pleased to print short announcements of village functions but they must be sent in writing, at least 2 to 3 months in advance.

**Contact addresses:** 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, Ann Ferris, *Fordings*, Llancarfan, CF62 3AD

Llancarfan Society administrative and web-site e-mail:-

[llansoc@llancarfan.force9.co.uk](mailto:llansoc@llancarfan.force9.co.uk)

Internet address:-

[www.llancarfan.force9.co.uk](http://www.llancarfan.force9.co.uk)

### **May Walk 2000**

In the last Newsletter there was an account of the 1999 May Walk. Now we are thinking a year ahead to 2000! Maddy Gray has offered to lead her third May Walk and suggests that we go to the western part of the parish - Llanbethery and Llantrithyd.

Some possibilities are to visit the remains of the old chapel at Llanbethery, to walk part of the course of the former Cowbridge-Aberthaw Railway and, if possible to have a look at *Treguff Farm House* which is being restore by its new owner. Maddy hopes to find a way of creating a circular walk and has asked for suggestions, both as to the route and for any other features of interest to be included.

Communications to Maddy at 01222 810191 and e-mail [mgray01@newport.ac.uk](mailto:mgray01@newport.ac.uk) or to the editor (address and e-mail below).

### **News of members, friends and places**

- The Golf Foundation Most Improved Boy Player this year was Andrew Gibson of *Pancross Barn*. Andrew attends Cowbridge Comprehensive School and on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May he travelled to the Wentworth Golf Club in Surrey to receive this most prestigious award.

Previous winners of Golf Foundation awards have been Lee Westward and Justin Rose. Andrew was picked from over 1500 entries from all over the British Isles,, he was awarded a trophy and a grant towards his golfing expenses. Andrew's club is Cottrell Park in St. Nicholas and he was nominated by last year's captain of his golf club, Tony McCarthy. Andrew's handicap dropped rapidly this year from 24 to 9. He is entering his third season of golf playing off 7.7 and he intends to improve on this once he has completed his G.C.S.E. examinations.

The award was presented to Andrew in the Ballroom of the Wentworth Club by Bernard J. Hunt MBE, a winner of over 30 major golf titles and Ryder cup veteran. Andrew met a number of professional golfers during his day and made an excellent speech in front of many distinguished golfers and the Ryder Cup committee - he hopes they'll remember him!

- **The "Fire Lizards" of Glamorgan.** In Newsletter 63 we featured the rather strange legend of the flying serpents of Penmark, Porthkerry and other places near Llancarfan. The story of the "dragons" has now appeared in the Borders magazine, *Country Quest* (June 1999). Anyone who has read Ann McCaffery's dragon books will find these glittering, colourful creatures reminiscent of McCaffery's "Fire Lizards". But what were they? How do such folk-tales originate?



- **St Cadoc and the Mouse.** In Newsletter 62/94 we recounted the tale of St Cadoc and his salvation by a grain-eating mouse. This has now been turned into an illustrated children's book, aimed at the very young. A book with a local flavour:- *Cadog and the Mouse* by Siôn Lewis, illustrated by Gina Wade, Carreg Gwalch, £2.99 ISBN 0 86381 417 4.

### **That chimney again** by David Evans

It would be most interesting to discover the long lost *Garnllwyd* Tudor chimney. I may be able to add something to assist those with better facilities than I possess here. As a boy at *Garnllwyd* the story was that it was taken by a relative of the owners of the lands there, before the arrival of my father William Rowe Evans, in about 1931, as tenant farmer. At that period the land was managed by Lenthall of Cardiff, on behalf of the Radcliffe Estates, whilst Wyndham Radcliffe, a wealthy bachelor, seems to have been the incumbent beneficiary. At one time he was I believe High Sheriff of Glamorgan.

At Wyndham Radcliffe's death, two nieces inherited the entire properties. One was married to an American and the other an Italian Swiss. It was the latter lady, from tales of the day, that may have been responsible for its departure from *Garnllwyd*. It was probably taken down, piece by piece, by James of Fonmon, those brilliant artisans who managed all the difficult and demanding building work in the Vale of Glamorgan. They were the recognised firm, who would have possessed the skills needed for such an operation.

**From S. P. Perkins 1969 map. The chimney was octagonal, however, not round**

The present chimney tower, placed exactly upon the site of that Tudor treasure, is a miserable affair with a treble line of red brickwork with sides dashed with small pebble wash, altogether incompatible with such an important house. We must remember that those were different days, halcyon for some, but hard for others, yet in a sense the *régime ancien* preserved community life. One dealt with real people not an obscure bureaucratic system.

Note: David inadvertently corrects an editorial error. The previous article attributed ownership to the Church Commissioners.

### **Walterston Sam** by John M. Cann

There have been quite a few characters in Llancarfan but few will remember Walterston Sam, as he was known world wide, but he was justly famous. He was born and brought up on the farm at Walterston in the 1920s. His unmarried mother worked there but his father remained in service on the Estate of Lord Rhondda with Sam's grandfather, known as Sir Sam. Edwin Morgan, then the farm Bailiff, was *in loco parentis* of Sam.

When Sam was old enough he worked on the farm. Two of his sons were also to become famous, one was named after him and worked for a while on the farm and then emigrated to Argentina, and a Master Robert worked for a longer time, and then left. He also had a daughter called locally Walterston Topsy.

Sam took after his father and never married, but was very promiscuous with a great many offspring. Few of them had the same mother, indeed he seems to have had relations with his relations - Master Robert for example was the son of Sam's aunt, & another son was by a 'step-daughter'. His two sons took after him in this. The one named after him even had a daughter by his 'Great Aunt'. Known as Walterston Rose, she was born and initially brought up

on the farm. The three of them produced a remarkable number of offspring between them, sometimes even with the same mother but a different father.

This was the 1920s and one should not criticise their behaviour unduly, to an extent it was what made them famous, Clearly it had been bred into them from Sir Sam and his son, for all of them and their offspring were part of the 'Walterston Herd of Herefords' belonging to D. P. Barnett, and managed by Edwin Morgan. This herd was of exceptional standard. Barnett started with pedigree Hereford cows in 1916, and in 1917 bought many of the plums of Lord Rhondda's famous herd. He attended the majority of the great sales and secured the best of the most popular and prize winning blood. He bought *Walterston Fach* in 1918 and *Fawr* in 1919, when Edwin Morgan came as Bailiff of the combined farm.

Barnett was impressed with Lord Rhondda's noted bull "Sir Sam" , and purchased one of his sons "Broadseal". Then "Crossways Hampton", a son of "Ringer", who had fetched the highest known figure for a Hereford Bull - 9,000 guineas. Thus he combined the blood of the two most famous bulls of that time. Then a further cross of Sir Sam by using Walterston Sam, who Barnett bred from "America" one of "Sir Sam's" finest sons. In 1925 he bought "Resolute", who's sire was also "Ringer". "Resolute" had fetched 8,000 guineas as a yearling in 1917, was 1st and Champion in the Royal Show in 1920, and was still working hard at 12 years in 1928 when Barnett sold the herd. At the sale "Resolute" was 'On view, but not for sale'. 'Mr Barnett does not propose offering this grand old Stock Bull for Sale by Auction, but is prepared to present "Resolute" to the largest customer at the Sale'.

Edwin Morgan and his hands went to many shows in the eight years of the herd's life. Ralph, Edwin's son, was born the year the herd was sold, but he knows that the cattle were walked to Peterston to the train for the shows. Ralph's mother told him how she dreaded the one day shows, which meant Edwin leaving at 3am and not returning till 3am the next day. But for Barnett, and maybe Edwin, it was worth it. They won a great number of prizes for both bulls and females in all the most important shows; the Royal, the Royal Welsh, the Three Counties, the Bath & West, etc. "Walterston Sam's" son "apSam" was 1st & Champion at the Royal Show of 1924, and in 1927 & 28 "Samlute" (sired by "Resolute") won many prizes. There were four 1st & Champions for "Snowdrop" a daughter of "Walterston Sam", and seven firsts for other ladies of the herd.

"apSam" was used extensively in the herd before being sold at a high figure for export to Argentina. Harry Hughes told us, when we first bought the bulls' home to convert to our home, that when the Argentinians came to view the cattle, the South end wall was being rebuilt with a very wide entrance. They were very impressed by the work. Harry could not have been much more than ten at the time, so maybe he had heard it from Edwin.

"Walterston Sam" himself doesn't appear to have had any prizes, but was renowned as the sire of many splendid bulls. Ralph Morgan has his father's copy of the illustrated Sale catalogue, from which all this information comes. It shows that "Walterston Sam" sired at least 19 bulls and 24 heifers between 1921 & 1927. No wonder he didn't have time to visit the shows.

Note. The only previous mention, in the Newsletters, of the Walterston Hereford herd was from the late Dick Evans who wrote of Sam and ap-Sam, a cow named Lux, and the bulls which were sent to Argentina, As Dick said:- "each time you eat a tin of corned beef...???" (Newsletter 10/88).

**Telephone conversation: Phil Watts and Llew Griffiths** (brother of Les)



When I received a tape recording of Les Griffiths interview with a representative of *St. Fagans Museum*, I made a copy and sent it to Les' brother Llewellyn living near Hereford. After this I received a telephone call from Llewellyn in which he says he found it a little distressing to hear Les's voice now that he had died. However, Llewellyn gave me some stories and facts of his days in Llancarfan as a boy and young man.

As we know, Llewellyn's grandfather William Griffiths, was a Maesteg man. He owned a Hotel (Pub) there, and several mines and other properties in the Garw Valley. They met hard times but had enough money to set up in a holding at *Caradoc Cottage (Top end)*, Llancarfan, in 1910, as we were told by Leslie. Llewellyn says they farmed the field behind *Caradoc Cottage* to the side of *Ty To Maen* leading towards *Gowlog*. (Part of *Pancross Farm* now). This was their largest field. Another field was the Oak Tree Field, *Bakehouse* side of *Ty To Maen*, the gate of which is by the Llancarfan Village sign - part of *Ty To Maen Farm* now. The third field was a small field opposite the school to the left on Broomwell Lane by the 'Tump'. This is part of a larger field now owned by Steve Powell, *Ty-Uchaf*. Originally there were two fields which David Harris used with the *Fox and Hounds*. The fourth field is on the top of *Cross Green Hill*, the gate of which is by the Llancarfan sign on the top of the hill above *Cross Green*; this is now part of *Middle Hill Farm* previously used by David Harris and George Gibbon. Llewellyn believes that all these fields belonged to the Church. Llewellyn remembers the field by the house having four large oak trees and they had branches on which they used to have swings. The four fields of the holding came to 12 acres.

As a boy Llewellyn loved shooting and fishing. He had a gun by the time he was fourteen and shot rabbits - before Myxomatosis. The cow shed was one half of the shed *Ty To Maen* side of *Caradoc Cottage*, there was a cart shed next to it and a loft over the top for hay. The loft door was at ground level to the rear. This shed is still there with some minor changes - a sliding door to open the shed. There was another shed on the village side of *Caradoc Cottage* used as a stable above another loft also with entrance at ground level to rear.

Llewellyn served his apprenticeship at Shepherd's garage in Bonvilston, now run by Richie Evans as *Bonvilston Service Station*. He worked there from 1928 to 1938. He then went to work for the *Bristol Airplane Company* in Bristol and worked there for five or six years, met and married his wife Flo. They later moved back to Cardiff where Llew worked as an engineer and he retired 20 years ago to live in Rhoose and then, two years ago, moved to Canon Pyon near Hereford.

Some recollections from Llewellyn's boyhood in Llancarfan. He remembers the steam lorries delivering beer to *Fox and Hounds*, for David Harris, and corn to *Llanvythin Mill* for William Liscombe. He recalls William taking a load of wheat on horse and wagon past *Caradoc Cottage* where a gypsy by the name of Julia obstructed his movement along the road. William asked her to move or probably told her to move - probably in a sharp manner. Julia responded by throwing a knife at him. Llew remembers the knife sticking in a sack of wheat. The first field out of the village on the opposite side of the road to *Ty To Maen* house was known as *Glan-yr-Afon* field, probably because it was used by David Griffiths (was it owned by him?). In this field was a well and in the surrounding area grew watercress of golden/copper colour. The Griffiths family obtained their water from a tap situated at *Rose Cottage*, the home of Mrs. Lloyd [now *Hollies*]. An example of how silly little things stay in a child's mind, and not forgotten by Llewellyn, was when he and his brother Robert (Bob) were walking along the road and two other children a little younger than the Griffiths boys were heard to say "Here come Robert and Bob Griffiths"!! Another case of mistaken identity?

Llewellyn was quite a good athlete: he says he won the high jump and finished second to Gordon Gregory in the three mile. He also had a punch bag in the shed at *Top End*. By this time the cowshed and loft had passed to other uses and the land had passed to other users. I have a memory of Llewellyn going to work at Bonvilston from Llancafán, past *Abernant*. I remember him having a motorbike, which I thought was a B.S.A. Bantam, but he says it was Francis Barnet. However, we both agree it was a pop-pop bike probably 125 c.c. The road often flooded at *Abernant* (it still does) - a local's knowledge was that if you could see the crown of the bridge it wasn't too deep to go through. This doesn't work now - different bridge. Lets hope we have some more stories from Llewellyn.

## **Llancafán Fossils II. A squid in a shell** by John Etherington

The fossils illustrated below are Ammonites from the Lower Liassic limestone of the Jurassic period, more than 150 million years old. Though they look like the curled shells of modern snails they were very different, made-up of a spiral series of chambers, a new one formed each time the creature outgrew its last-formed "room". The name comes from "horn of Ammon" referring to the shell's resemblance to the Roman god, Jupiter's horn.

The creatures which made the shells were most closely related to modern squid and octopus, together with one surviving ammonite-like creature which makes chambered, floating shells and is named the *Nautilus*. This, also, was the name of Captain Nemo's fabulous undersea vessel in Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. Both were named by derivation from Greek and Latin words for "sailor".

When alive, Ammonites, probably floated in a shallow, warm coastal sea. They were able to swim, thanks to the construction of their shell, which was divided into a series of air chambers. The air in the chambers allowed the animal to float, and like a modern squid, it probably moved through the water using jet propulsion. By altering the amount of air in the empty chambers they could sink or swim in pursuit of prey which they gripped with squid-like tentacles and chewed with a beak. Small fish and crab-like creatures probably kept hunger at bay.

We know the sea must have been shallow and near a coast as the fossil shells are embedded in alternating layers of limestone, and clayey sediment, which rivers swept into near-shore waters, together with the plant fragments we saw in the first article of this series.

My Llancafán ammonites are all less than four inches in diameter but others are much larger. Years ago, to my children's great regret, we left one behind on the beach near St Donat's Castle which was at least a foot and a half in diameter and in a block of limestone weighing over two hundredweight!

The Ammonites in the photo were picked up on the surface of the ground near the river where frost had cracked-open exposed chunks of limestone, some were found whilst breaking walling stone and the smallest one was dug from the foundation trenches of *Ceffyl Du* in 1968.

Ammonites first appeared in the fossil record about 400 million years ago and lasted for more than 300 million years. They became extinct, suddenly, at the same time as the dinosaurs. This happened at the K/T boundary - geologists shorthand for the transition between the Cretaceous period and the subsequent Tertiary. It seems likely that the same events killed both ammonites, dinosaurs and many other creatures - possibly a meteorite impact or massive volcanic eruption which seriously altered world climates for many years.

I noticed, the other day, that Dorset County Museum had attempted to defuse some of the “hype” surrounding the “millennium” by celebrating the **4.5 millionth** millennium of our Earth’s existence (give or take a year or two!). Puts our human-centred **2** millennia firmly in their place! Even these geologically young ammonite fossils have lasted well over 100 thousand millennia, which is pretty breathtaking

### **Hog-Roast**

For once, the Newsletter appears at a convenient time to advertise a forthcoming event. The Hog-Roast is to be held on Sunday, 25 July at 12.30 in *Culvery Field*, by kind permission of Frank Jameson or, if the weather is wet, in the Community Hall. Details from committee members.

### **Yet another appeal**

On several occasions I have asked whether anyone is willing to spend a few minutes, each month, writing down a list of Llancarfan happenings and forthcoming events. Exiled here in Pembrokeshire (I’m not complaining!), it is otherwise difficult for me to cover current affairs and announcements accurately.

A volunteer would be welcomed with great enthusiasm!

### **For contributors**

The editor is only too pleased to have items for the Newsletter, whether hand-written or typed. However, if you can send typed material, please write any corrections in the margins, not on the type itself. I can save a lot of time by scanning typescript directly into the word-processor. Even better, send word-processed text on a 3.5 inch floppy disc. I use “MS Word” but can translate most other modern word-processed output. Discs will be returned.