



THE LLANCARFAN SOCIETY

Newsletter 96 March 2000

Editorial

In Newsletter 94, we included some verses related to the medicinal wells of Llanccarfán. At about that time, Dr Maddy Gray posted a short article about the Llanccarfán wells on the Web-site. It is worth reading, if you have the chance, as it brings together information, which was previously scattered through various publications and ten years' worth of Newsletters.

I was not aware that any of the wells were still visited for the traditional purpose, but Mavis Coles tells us in this Newsletter, that at least one well, close to the northern boundary of the parish, still has medicinal use as an "Eye Well". Folklore, history and modern times coming together.

Reynard Community Project

The first five Reynard Community Project Newsletters have been distributed with our Llanccarfán Society Newsletters in the hope that a few of you in far-away places might be persuaded to lend some weight, or at least £s, to the project.

Now it is all up and running, there is no need for us to send any more Newsletters, but we will continue to give progress reports, so that expatriates are kept in the picture. The Reynard Group will still welcome help, financial or otherwise.

Reynard Newsletter 6 contained a detailed statement of intent and an appeal for further pledges. Newsletter 7 presented the site-plan for the development, and solicited sealed tenders by 10th January. Finally, Newsletter 8 (28th Jan) indicated that discussions are being held with three bidders. It also presented further options for development of the rear car-park site:- either two large houses, or four terraced "starter-homes" plus one larger house.

A public meeting in the village (15th February) was told that the Vale Council, through lack of amenity space, had rejected the 5-house idea. However, the Council has provisionally accepted Reynard's plans for two houses in the rear car park area. To clarify the picture, the plan on the next page shows the proposed siting of the two houses.

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
We will also be pleased to print short announcements of village functions but they must be sent in writing, or given to Alan Taylor, Local Correspondent.

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Annual General Meeting 2000 will be held in the Community Hall on Friday, March 24 at 8.00 p.m. Guest speaker, Dr Madeleine Gray will talk on local history. Tea, coffee and “nibbles”. By the way, **subscriptions** are overdue – pay Phil at the meeting! John Etherington will display some facsimile pages and pictures from our book, *Llancarfan – a Vale Village*. The manuscript is now progressing well and we shall fairly soon be opening a subscriptions list.

The May Walk on Monday, 1st May, will be led by Dr Maddy Gray, in the Llanbethery area. More details in the next Newsletter.

A strangely shaped parish by Madeleine Gray and John Etherington

In Newsletter 93 John Etherington wrote of the parish boundary, which gives Llancarfan so many neighbours and extends our territory to meet the pre-enclosures commons, north of the A48.

John commented that the boundary was probably established when the lands taken by Fitzhamo (c.1090) were shared-out amongst his retainers. This initiated an e-mail exchange with Maddy Gray concerning the history of this parish boundary. The following paragraphs are an edited version.

MADDY I too have frequently remarked on the odd shape of Llancarfan parish! I had always assumed - following Jeremy Knight (1984), that the parish indicated the core estates of Cadoc's monastery, and that the boundaries were drawn as they were to include *Treguff*, *Walterston* and the bit of land near Bonvilston.

Llanfeuthin is an oddity as it was almost certainly part of the endowment of Cadoc's monastery but was subsequently given to Margam. As Margam was a Cistercian abbey, *Llanfeuthin* was for a time tithe-free and extra-parochial: and as a result it has become a separate parish.

I would go along with your idea that the narrow corridor along the *Caemaen* road was designed to allow inhabitants of Lower Llancarfan to get to the commons in the northern part of the parish

INSERT PIC (Parish map)

The southern and western boundaries are defined by the rivers Weycock-Kenson and the Thaw, much of the eastern boundary by the 5-Mile Lane, running along the watershed east of the Thaw catchment. The northern edges are a law unto themselves!

JOHN Cadoc must have taken-over a land, which already had a history of enclosure and cultivation dating back to the Iron Age (maybe even Bronze Age?). Though the monastic boundary may be reflected in our parish, was it in turn inherited from Roman and preceding Iron Age farming?

The number of people needed to build, maintain and utilise Castle Ditches and *Castell Moel* suggests that the area was extensively cultivated when the Romans arrived and we know they must have continued intensive agriculture. Rowley (1986) wrote of Hereford Beacon that there must have been

“an agricultural surplus sufficient to support such a massive hill-fort and its inhabitants.” (30 acres, supporting an estimated 1500 to 2000 people). He continued: - “In the latter part of the Roman era, most parts of Britain were densely settled, with fields of some form over much larger areas than those of the twelfth or thirteenth century A.D.”. (see **A hill-fort – loaves and fishes** in this Newsletter)

Cadoc probably ruled a land, which still bore the imprint of centuries of agriculture and might not have been so difficult to reclaim as we have thought?

MADDY Castle Ditches and *Castell Moel* are small in comparison with fortifications like Herefordshire Beacon (Note 1). What has always interested me about pre-Christian settlement patterns in the Llancarfan area is the way that the villa sites, like the hill-forts, are all on the surrounding plateau. Is it not possible that Cadoc and his followers were the first (or the first for some time) to colonise the stream valley? i.e. that they used the challenge of farming this rather difficult land, prone to flooding as it still is, as a spiritual discipline, and then by the superior organisation of a monastic institution it was made fruitful.

JOHN Yes – you have previously made the point that the valley floor was probably a swamp. However, there is an interesting reference to the Somerset Levels, in the 17th century which, in winter, were “so covered in water you would rather deem them sea than land” but in summer “fertile and pleasant moores and meades.” (Coles, 1976).

The population needed to build and maintain Castle Ditches, in the Iron Age, had to be fed from somewhere, presumably the land on the plateau and the shallower hill-slopes (see **Castle Ditches** this Newsletter). Rome, and subsequently Cadoc, inherited this farmland. If *The Life of St Cadoc* (Baring-Gould and Fisher) is correct, in saying:- “He daily fed 100 clergy, and a 100 soldiers, and a 100 workmen, and a 100 poor persons with the same number of widows”, the valley land, alone, would not have made the monastery wealthy enough to allow such largess.

What happened after Cadoc’s time? Probably a slow decline in farming, during the 500 years which elapsed before the Norman invaders seized something a lot less productive than the agriculture which the Romans found when they came.

Whether you swallow the 12-Knights fable, or not, there must be the element of truth, that the land itself was parcelled out amongst the hangers-on. What set the boundaries? Was it the pre-existing agriculture with its fields and ploughed-out pre-historic banks and ditches? Are those historians right, who suggest that the Norman land-allotments set the seal on many of today’s parish boundaries? Is our parish a “fossil” of superimposed prehistoric, Roman, Dark-Age and Norman relics?

MADDY I think what I would suggest is that the carve-up in this area was partly dictated by existing monastic settlement patterns. A lot of land in Llancarfan parish came into the hands of Norman religious houses - Treguff, Pennon, Llancarfan village itself, as well as the detached area around Llanfeuthin. The parish boundary seems deliberately to have been drawn to include these. There is also the fact that much of the parish was served by chapels of ease dependent on the church at Llancarfan. The parish boundary could well reflect the areas covered by these chapels of ease. (I think Jeremy Knight had a theory that Penmark was also part of this super-parish, and possibly Cwmciddy - but that they were hived-off at an early stage. Now the politics of why they were separated and not (say) Walterston or Llancadle would be interesting.

Note. Interestingly, since this exchange took place, James Campbell, Professor of Medieval History at Oxford, has written of Britain: - “--- more surprisingly there is a good case for supposing that over wide areas the pattern of fields, minor roads and even boundaries was pre-Roman.” *History Today*, February 2000, p. 29.

References

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A Hill-fort – loaves and fishes by John Etherington

The area of Castle Ditches hill-fort is 4.2 ha (10.4 acres). It is surrounded with a ditch and rampart, about 800 metres long (about half a mile). The rampart is built mainly from material taken from the ditch, which was originally about 13 square metres in cross-section. This demanded the moving of 10,400 cubic metres of clay and limestone-cobbles, which would weigh about 13,000 tonnes. Nowadays, a job for an excavating machine!

There are some other complications. The mixture of clay and stone is very difficult to dig, even with modern steel tools. The Iron Age builders used wooden spades, probably antler picks, and baskets. The work was probably undertaken quickly, and labour may not have been available from neighbouring communities (why fortify the camp in the first place? – see footnote). Finally, the labourers, and probably their families, had to live somewhere, presumably on site, as the work progressed.

My approximate sums suggested that the work would take 200 men the best part of a summer, working a long day and given dry weather. I then discovered that a similar calculation had been done for Ravensborough Castle in Hertfordshire, giving an answer of three to four months. Ravensborough is bigger, but it is on chalk, which is much easier to dig, and less prone to delays in wet-weather.

This is where the loaves and fishes come in. Two hundred strong men have two hundred families, perhaps 1200 people in all. The men were occupied with the fort for much of a summer and the womenfolk and children probably undertook fetching and carrying so there was no one to do the farming.

Even today, feeding more than a 1000 people for several months would be a problem. Either there must have been sufficient grain-surplus from previous years to tide them over the “lost harvest” or there must have been an additional labour force looking after the arable land, flocks, herds and draft animals (whilst eating more!).

The crucial question is how much land would either of these options require? It would need grain, meat and milk sufficient to feed 1200 people, if food could be stored, or on-going production for more than 1500 people.

We know that grain production in medieval times was very much less than we achieve today and might be even less in the mid-Iron Age. Perhaps five or six bushels per acre is a reasonable suggestion for maximum yield – if it were much less, the return would be less than twice the seed sown and not worth the effort (see Postan (1972) *The Medieval Economy & Society*. Penguin). 1972). We also know that in medieval times a bad harvest often led to many deaths in the rural population, so production did not much exceed requirement.

Assume that three bushels per acre were available for milling. This would give about 100 lb. of flour per year. At a minimum calorific intake per person of 2000 Kcal per day, if the population was 1200, the land needed to support this energy-requirement alone, would be over 5000 acres (This neglects the extra need for animal or legume protein). As a matter of interest the old civil parish was about 5000

acres. Did the province of the hill-fort define the later monastic lands, and thus the parish, which evolved from them?

Obviously, to provide food for the probable Iron Age population of the hill-fort, a very large area of land was required - perhaps twice the present area of the parish. These thoughts also lead to questions about organisation, control and transport. Even storage of grain, in our damp-climate is not easy.

Footnote: 1. If a mere hedge or wooden palisade was insufficient defence, and such enormous earthworks were truly necessary, then it seems reasonable to assume that they would have been built as quickly as possible. A year or two, rather than over a period of years, interspersed with the needs of farming?

A Home Guard story as told to Phil Watts by Doreen Everett (née Gibbins).

With an apology to Doreen who says we have often printed her married name as Gibbon. Not only is this wrong but also confuses her with another family! Sorry - editor will try harder.

Doreen's father, Alf, was a Sergeant in the Home Guard commanded by Second Lieutenant Tudor Liscombe. These part-time soldiers were subject to emergency call-out if there was any danger of enemy activity, or worse, Invasion! The Home Guard did most of its training in evenings and at the weekends and was surrounded by the usual secrecy of the military.

One evening, a young member of the Home Guard threw his bicycle down on the drive of *Old Parsonage* where Doreen's family then lived. He ran up the path shouting "Woodbines!, Woodbines!", upon which Alf rushed out of the house in full uniform and armed to the teeth.

The younger Gibbins thought this a bit over the top to get his Woodbines as everyone knew that Mrs Harris and Betty at the *Fox and Hounds* kept the locals supplied with cigarettes without calling out the Home Guard.

"Woodbine" was the code word of the week but one could never be sure whether this was a real emergency or just Tudor Liscombe keeping his platoon on their toes.

One such call out was real - the occasion when there was a breakout of prisoners from *Island Farm* POW camp at Bridgend, when a few of the escapers made it to Bonvilston before being recaptured.

Obituary - Jeffrey Booth (formerly of Whitton Lodge) by Phil Watts

With great sadness we announce the death of Jeffery Booth, husband of Beryl and father of Helen, Linda and Nigel.

Many members will have known Jeffrey, Beryl and Nigel for 25 years, since they moved to Whitton Lodge from Lisvane, Cardiff. They soon made friends and remained loyal after moving to Cambourne Close, Barry.

Jeff was a retired member of the National Orchestra of Wales. My grandson, Rhodri, is learning to play on Beryl's piano, which could not be taken when the family left *Whitton Lodge*.

Jeff was a very kind, courteous and gentle man. He loved cricket and was interested in most sports. Good company, he had a sense of humour which made people want to meet him. He attended most Society functions and we, who knew him, will miss him and say thank you both for sharing your time

with us in Llancarfan over the past 25 years. We hope that Beryl and Nigel will have many more happy years in association with the folk of the Llancarfan Society.

Prisoners of War notes from Phil Watts and Mavis Coles, edited by John Etherington

A week or two ago, there was a short article by Tom Clemett, in the *Gem*, which suggested that Dick Turpin occasionally came to the Vale, and that he obtained the horse, Black Bess, from *Highlight Farm*. Dick Turpin was reputed to have been active at *Pant-y-Lladron* (Thieves' Hollow) near *Tair Onnen*. and the Tom Clemett said he had been told that bones were dug-up there, during the war, "when a Prisoner of War camp was being built at the top of the lane."

The editor contacted Phil Watts saying that he knew of the P.O.W. camp at Bridgend, but not this one at *Tair Onnen*. However, some of the Forestry huts do look like military buildings (and we have previously mentioned other military huts at Sycamore Cross).

Phil: - The P.O.W. Camp was situated inside the boundary wall of Llantrithyd Park, near Pant-Ffynnonau by Hill's Quarry. The "lane" was probably the original A48 which was much altered in the thirties, when the road was widened and a number of houses were taken down (including one Mavis [Coles] lived in at *Penyrheol*) and the Old Post. Yes, the huts at *Tair Onen* are similar to military, probably same supplier but never used as a P.O.W. camp.

Mavis Coles typed Phil's reply and was consequently set-off down her own memory lane.

Mavis The German and Italian prisoners of war were housed in huts in Llantrithyd Park, and sent out on to the farms to work. They remained there until they were repatriated after the war. Some stayed, some revisited after the war on an exchange basis.

Supervision by the guards was minimal. The farmers had their regular workers and selected projects on the farms such as drainage were undertaken by the P.O.W's. One such project I recall was the drainage of the seven acres field between *Abernant* and *Garnllwyd*. Around this time the young ladies of Llancarfan had to cycle to Bonvilston to catch the bus to Cardiff to their place of employment. Their journey coincided with the P.O.W's arriving on the farms for their day's work. To the P.O.W's the sight of young ladies on bicycles was a happy one for young males a long way from home!

Those young ladies, who are now grandmothers, tell me that there were such calls as "lovely leg", No problem with the language then! Isn't it ironical that P.O.W's were driven to the farms and the girls had to cycle to catch the bus to work. The P.O.W's were allowed considerable freedom and were some of the more trusted. They had their football teams and I recall playing for Bonvilston Football Club against Italians on *Village Farm* field. There were hundreds of spectator P.O.W's: quite inhibiting for us youngsters as we were only 14 at the time (at least I was). These were the early days of Bonvilston F.C. formed in 1941. It was difficult to get fixtures as everyone was busy with the war.

The first goal posts came from the forestry in rough timber, complete with the bark of the fir tree still on. Another fixture that Bonvilston F.C. obtained was against *Hensol Castle* Psychiatric Hospital staff. For this match most of the inmates were allowed to be spectators. This was another well-attended match. For this game I was chosen as goalkeeper. Many of the spectators (too many for my liking) gathered to the rear of the goalmouth. I felt much more confident standing on the penalty spot, a comparatively safe distance from spectators. Another fixture was Civil Defence team from *Cottrell Park*. The house was still there at this time and was used for Civil Defence training.

The huts at *Llantrithyd Park* were later used to house agricultural workers directed by the employment offices. They were known as war Agricultural Workers, employed by the Glamorgan Executive Committee, and they worked on the local farms in the same way as the P.O.W's had done before them.

The young families returning after the war, unable to find accommodation, also used these huts. Many of them later became council tenants in Maes-y-Ffynon in Bonvilston.

Reading Phil's letter brought back another memory of Prisoners of War during the time we lived at *Curnix Farm*. We had two regular P.O.W. workers, one German, one Italian, Kurt and Mario. Kurt was a carpenter and made several photo-frames for my mother, one of which I still have. My mother used to get small items of shopping in Barry for Mario to send home to Italy, such as soap, toiletries etc. After they were sent home, Kurt kept in touch for many years with friends that he'd made here. I always remember them as courteous and hardworking.

An "Eye" well by Mavis Coles

I have a friend - Sid Williams - who was a forester in the Bonvilston area for many years, The mention of Shag Lane, in the Newsletter, reminded me that he swears by the "eye-well" which is about half way down the lane. To this day he goes there to collect the water in bottles if any of his friends have eye-problems, styes and so on! After I remembered this I mentioned it to him and he corrected me by saying that it was a spring, not a well.

Editorial note. All of the Llancarfan medicinal wells and domestic wells, are surface springs – not deep wells with a shaft. Even in English, the word "well" is used for either a spring, or more commonly, a shaft-well. The Welsh word *ffynnhonau*, means, with equal weight, wells, springs or fountains, but is usually translated into English as "well" Francis Jones' *Holy Wells of Wales* gives some discussion of the Welsh terminology but does not explain why they are all generally termed "wells" in English. Any advice from our Welsh experts?

Llancarfan at war: the Minister's sons compiled by John Etherington

At the beginning of World War 1, William and Mary Evans lived at *The Manse*, Llanbethery. William Edgar Evans was born in Newquay, Cardiganshire, and ordained into *Carmel*, at Liege Castle, in 1880 where he remained as Minister of the Chapel for almost 40 years. A governor of Barry Grammar school for many years, he was widely known as the "Bishop of the Vale". The chapel was popular with Llancarfan people and we know that several villagers travelled regularly to Sunday worship there.

William and Mary had several children, of whom Owen must have volunteered at the very outbreak of war, standing in line with his friends. His service number was G1025, in between that of David Rhys Davies, the headmaster's son and Maurice Griffiths of *Bridge House*. One survived; two died. Owen was killed in July 1916, at the end of the first week of the Battle of the Somme, presumably during the offensive in which parts of Ovillers were taken. The only mercy was that he did not have to endure the awful months until the battle ended in November.

Owen's younger brother Emrys did not join until later in the War, judging from his service number. His parents must have been distressed beyond imagination by the loss of one son and anxiety for another. They did not have long to wait for the news that Emrys was missing. His body was never found, and he is commemorated on that monument to horror at Ploegsteert, his name alongside at least one other son of Llancarfan.

In memory of O. Evans Private G/1025 7th Bn., Royal Sussex Regiment who died on Friday, 7th July 1916. Age 24

Son of the Rev. W. E. and Mary Evans of *The Manse*, Llanbethery, Cowbridge, Glam. Born at Llancarfan, Glam.

Commemorative Information

Cemetery: OVILLERS MILITARY CEMETERY, Somme, France

Location: Ovillers is a village about 5 kilometres northeast of the town of Albert off the D929 road to Bapaume. The Military Cemetery is approximately 500 metres west of the village on the D20 road to Aveluy.

Historical Information: On the 1st July, 1916, the 8th Division attacked Ovillers and the 34th Division La Boisselle; the villages were not captured, but ground was won between them and to the South of La Boisselle. On the 4th July, the 19th (Western) Division cleared La Boisselle. On the 7th July the 12th (Eastern) and 25th Divisions gained part of Ovillers, and the village was cleared by the 48th (South Midland) Division on the 17th July. The two villages were lost in March 1918, but they were retaken on the following 24th August by the 38th (Welsh) Division. They were later "adopted" by the City of Gloucester. The cemetery was begun before the capture of Ovillers, as a battle cemetery behind a Dressing Station.

**In Memory of EMRYS MORGAN EVANS Lance Corporal
202824 2nd/4th Bn., Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry
who died on Thursday, 12th September 1918. Age 23.**

Son of the Rev. W. E. Evans and Mary Evans of *The Manse*, Llanbethery, Cardiff.

Commemorative Information

Memorial: PLOEGSTEERT MEMORIAL, Comines-Warneton, Hainaut, Belgium

Location: The Ploegsteert Memorial stands in Berks Cemetery Extension, which is located 12.5 kilometres south of Ieper town centre. The Memorial commemorates over 11,000 men who have no known grave. They fought throughout the War on Belgian soil beside French troops, and died in France or Belgium when the frontier was of little interest in this area in which trench warfare lasted longest. The Memorial is a covered circular colonnade, 20 metres across and 11 metres high, enclosing an open space, and is entered by an opening between two stone lions. The names of the dead are carved on panels set in the walls of the colonnade. They belonged to thirty-six different Divisions and to a hundred Regiments; of these Regiments the Rifle Brigade with 559 names, the Northumberland Fusiliers with 535 and the Durham Light Infantry with 444 claim the largest individual shares.

Historical Information: The Memorial in Berks Cemetery Extension, Ploegsteert, is one of those erected by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to record the names of the officers and men who fell in the Great War and whose graves are not known. It covers the period from the arrival of the III Corps in this area in 1914 to the date of the Armistice with Germany. The Battles of Ypres and Messines fall to the north of these limits, and the Offensives of 1915 mainly to the south; the normal state of the area, during the greater part of the War, was one of trench warfare.

INSERT PICS (2 of postcard)

There is a redeemingly human postscript to this dreadful story. The late Dick Evans recalled driving Evan Sherra, by horse and trap from *Flaxland* to *Carmel Chapel*, on Sunday mornings (Newsletter 10, 1988). Dick was paid sixpence for his trouble, and his memory identifies Evan Sherrah as a dutiful part of William Evan's flock. The Sherrah's son, Stanley, was another victim of the War who is honoured on our Cenotaph, although he did not die until after the armistice. The Sherrah and Evans families thus shared tragic losses and it is of interest that a postcard survives, written six years after the war, in which William Evans sent greetings to Mr Sherrah at *Flaxland Fach* and told him that he was staying with his brother in Cardiganshire. Evan Sherrah, a mining engineer, had retired to Llancarfan from Senghenydd, shortly after the disastrous explosion at Senghenydd Colliery in 1913.

The postcard read: - "I am here for the week with my brother. I hope you have recovered well. Regards to you both. W. E. Evans Llanbethery" (Gilfachrheda, Newquay, Cardiganshire, 30 May 1924).

Acknowledgements. The postcard was given to us by Mrs Joan Jenkins *via* Tony and Sheila Lewis. Robert Lougher, Llanishen, translated Mr Evan's note on the card. .Historical information: Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Historical whispers by John Etherington

Most of us played "Chinese whispers" when we were children and we all know what happens. History seems to be a bit like this. We have already seen that the name, *Llanvithyn*. has had about every permutation and combination of letters that could be imagined, and there is no "correct" spelling. It has all been lost in the whispering from person to person during ten centuries or more.

It can happen faster. Jim Cannan's name, which appeared under the photograph on page 3 of Newsletter 95, was misspelled. Or was it? The Electoral Register has him as Cannan, but various people have written to me using Canan, Canon or Cannon.

Jim was the brother of Mrs Jenny Weight, who lived for many years at *Chapel House*. Phil Watts tells me that he was one of a threesome, which included Bill Watts (Phil's father) and Melvyn Morgan (also in that photo') who, during their travels from pub to pub, during the 1940's, became fondly known as the "Three Must have Beers".

Sadly, Jim had died by the time I came to Llancarfan, but Mrs Weight was a good neighbour for several years when I lived at *Black Horse (Ceffyl Du)*, and during that time I heard numerous tales of Jim Canon, if you prefer it in that spelling.

News

The recent Whist Drive held in the Village hall suffered rather poor attendance, for various reasons. Society members were outnumbered by visitors from as far afield as St Brides Wentloog and Talbot Green, as well as the faithful from Rhoose and Barry. Prizes were won by: - **Ladies**; Joan Thomas, Elizabeth (Talbot Green), Betty Williams (Rhoose); **Gents**. Francis (St Fagans), David Brock (Barry), Enid Lakin (Highlight Farm); **Special**; Doreen Everett; Sylvia Brock, Hartland. Next Whist Drive will be in October.

60th Anniversary

A number of members recently attended the 60th Wedding Anniversary celebration for Llew and Flo Griffiths. Congratulations to them both.

St Cadoc's stags by John Etherington

Rector, Malcolm Davies recorded the New Year Service in the *Gem* of 7th January. He mentioned the new stag-weathervane and the legend that St Cadoc used stags to haul timber when building the monastery. This reminded me that the Newsletter has probably never described this as a possible origin for the name of Llancarfan.

The Life of St Cadoc, claims that the saint was helped by two stags in the labour of building the monastery. The translation from the *Life* reads:- "two stags, yoked after the manner of oxen and

drawing a wagon". This tale gave rise the name *Nant Carwan*, derived from 'valley' (*Nant*) and 'stag' (*carw*). [*Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae Geneologiae*, Wade Evans, 1944].

Fairy tale or not, the Llancarfan Community Council uses the stag emblem and it is sported on the Llancarfan Society Newsletter, note-paper and neckties. In the more distant past a stag appeared in the family crest of the Basset family of Bonvilston and three adorn the shield of Jesus College, Oxford which, to this day, owns land in the parish. The most recent appearance of the stag is on the new weather vane on the tower of St Cadoc's. We featured a photograph of Robin Veysey's sculpture for the weather vane, at the head of Newsletter 90 where he took the place of our usual fellow, who is copied from a medieval stained-glass panel.

In post-Roman Wales, the only good candidate for hauling logs was a red deer stag though it is not much heavier than a large man (and a sight friskier!). There is no historical record of any deer, other than reindeer, being used as a draught animal and they are more than twice as heavy as the red deer – 300 kg as opposed to c. 130 kg for largish ones. If the legend has literal truth it may well commemorate a miracle!

Many other origins of the name, Llancarfan, have been suggested, some perhaps more realistically. You can read about these on the Llancarfan Web-site at www.llancarfan.f9.co.uk

Betty Martin in conversation with Phil Watts

When we were first at the *Fox & Hounds*, a special delivery was arranged. A barrel of Worthington beer came from Birmingham, to be tried on the local customers. A large quantity of the ale had been consumed by some of the locals, including Bill Watts. Time came for Bill to resume his journey home to *Abernant* by bicycle, so he left. The remainder of the drinkers waited for him to pass the window on his bike, but nothing happened so they went outside to find Bill trying to kick-start the bicycle. He thought he had travelled by motor bike rather than bicycle!

In the main bar of the *Fox & Hounds* are flagstones and it was common practice for the drinkers to check their soberness by walking a straight line along the flagstone joints. Two who did this on a regular basis were Tom Shanklyn (Shanks) and Tom David. They were both keen to see who could do it the quickest without falling down, and the straightest of course!

To the older members Tom David will be better remembered as Tom the Thatcher. Tom David lived in Llantrithyd and will be remembered for thatching the Dolls House, *Y Bwthyn Bach*, that was presented to the young Elizabeth and Margaret Rose, children of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, now the Queen Mother, the. If I remember rightly it was a gift to the Royal Family from the people of Wales. Perhaps members will have more information?