

Y Llychau

A NEWSLETTER FOR TALLEY & THE SURROUNDING AREA

www.talley.org.uk/y-llychau

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These Newsletters hope to provide information about the Talley and Cwmdru area and to report on recent happenings. They also aim to provide articles of general interest as well as historical items relevant to our community.

**Y Llychau is produced on behalf of St Michael & All Angels, Talley,
for distribution locally.**

THE EDITOR WRITES

Welcome to the first edition of *Y Llychau* in 2015. Not only does this issue see the start of a new year but it is also our 50th publication. Back in November 2006 when the first copy was issued, very few people thought that it would still be going after 50 editions. This has only been possible because of the support the project has received from the local community, particularly from those readers who have submitted articles for inclusion. Thank you.

On behalf of everyone associated with the production of the Newsletter, I would like to put on record my sincere gratitude for the support and encouragement that has been shown to me as editor. As I have mentioned many times before, I can only include articles that are sent to me, so if *Y Llychau* is to continue for another 50 issues I need more readers to write more pieces to fill its pages. If you have written something in the past, or if you are feeling guilty that you have not yet composed a contribution, please consider putting pen to paper (or keyboard to computer) and send me the results. If no-one writes anything, you may have to put up with my ramblings.

One suggestion that has been made to help alleviate this lack of material is that selected past articles could be repeated (with or without updating, as appropriate) for the benefit of new readers or in the hope that long-term readers have short memories. Taking this suggestion on board, on the next page I have reproduced an article written by Jo Penberthy when she was Vicar of Talley. If anyone wishes to suggest other pieces from past issues that they would like to see again, please let me know.

On the subject of contacting me, I would like to point out that I now have a new e-mail address. I can now be reached on **rogerbpike@outlook.com** – my old e-mail will no longer work. Other contact details remain the same and, as usual, are given on the back page.

One final point I would like to make concerns the Newsletter's front page. It has been our practice to include photographs of local places – buildings, views etc. – and I would welcome suggestions for future issues, if possible with a short explanation of the subject. If a picture is provided it can be scanned and returned, so if you have anything suitable, please give me the details.

Happy New Year to you all.

Roger Pike
Editor

THE VICAR WROTE

In the January 2007 edition of Y Llychau Rev Joanna Penberthy, vicar of Talley at that time, wrote the piece below. As her comments are still relevant, they are reproduced here.

Well, Christmas is over for another year and the six nations has not yet begun. We are stuck in the post-Christmas indulgence malaise and starting the business of a new year can seem an effort. But, like dogs, Jesus is for life and not just for Christmas so how about starting to unwrap that present given to each of us year by year that lurks in the corner of the living room when all the other presents have been unwrapped and put away and the decorations are back in the loft (well they are in well regulated homes, in my home, they too lurk in boxes in corners waiting until we find the ladder). What might we find if we paid attention to the baby in the manger?

There are as many answers to that as there are people. I can only tell you a little of what it meant for me when I started realising Jesus was not just the long ago hero of Bible stories but someone who might have something to teach me, something to show me, something to give me, might even ask something of me. The Church tells us that the baby in the manger grew up and had a huge impact on his society by his teaching and miracles and, being considered too dangerous, was finally crucified. To anticipate the next great festival, that wasn't the end of the story.

He appeared to his friends a number of times after his death and before his last appearance, promised He would be with them until the end of time. So as we celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus each Christmas, the adult Jesus waits for us to strike up a conversation. The conversation can be curious questions, angry accusations, gentle gratitude or simply puzzled silence. My conversations with Jesus started with flinging out questions towards the great unknown, "Are you there?", "Is there a god?" "What does it all mean?" and what came back to me was not answers to questions but the growing sense of a loving presence with me through all the ups and downs, breathing through the happy times and enduring with me through the sad, a forgiving presence that nevertheless expected the truth from me and who called and calls me still into His Reality.

So in this in between time, why not unwrap your last present. It might just be the best you have ever had.

Revd Joanna Penberthy

SAINT TIMOTHY

In the Anglican Calendar of Saints, 26th January is celebrated as the feast day of St Timothy. In this context “feast” does not refer to a large celebratory meal but to the particular day dedicated to a saint. The system arose from the early Christian custom of the annual commemoration of martyrs on the dates of their deaths, or entry into heaven.

Timothy (meaning “honoured by God”) was the first first-century Christian bishop of Ephesus. He was born around 17 AD and lived in the Lycaonian city of Lystra in Asia Minor.

When Paul and Barnabas first visited Lystra, Paul healed a man who had been crippled from birth, which caused many of the inhabitants to accept Paul’s teaching. When he returned a few years later with Silas, Timothy was already a respected member of the Christian congregation there, as were his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice, both Jews. In 2 Timothy 1:5, his mother and grandmother are both noted as eminent for their piety and faith.

Timothy was by nature reserved and timid but is said to have been acquainted with the Scriptures since childhood. His father was Greek so he had not been circumcised. Paul thought that Timothy’s preaching would be more acceptable to the Jews if he was circumcised so he ensured that this was done; some sources even report that Timothy’s circumcision was performed by Paul in front of a crowd of Jews.

Once circumcised, Timothy became St Paul’s disciple and later his constant companion and co-worker in preaching the gospel. In the year 52, Paul and Silas took Timothy with them on their journey to Macedonia. Timothy immediately abandoned his country, his house and his parents, to follow the apostle so that he could share in his poverty and sufferings.

Timothy was subject to ill health or “frequent ailments” and Paul encouraged him to “use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake”. When Paul moved on to Athens, Silas and Timothy stayed for some time at Beroea and Thessalonica before joining Paul later at Corinth.

According to the Acts of the Apostles, Timothy was with Paul in Ephesus (from 54 to 57), but in late 56 or early 57 Paul sent him to Corinth. He arrived there just after Paul’s first Epistle to the Corinthians reached that city. The letter was not well received and Timothy quickly returned to Ephesus to report this to Paul.

Timothy was with Paul in Corinth during the winter of 57-58 when Paul dispatched his Epistle to the Romans. Just before Passover 58; he left the city

before Paul, going ahead to await Paul in Troas. That is the last mention of Timothy in Acts, but in 64 AD, Paul left Timothy at Ephesus, to govern the church there.

Timothy's relationship with Paul was close. Paul entrusted him with missions of great importance. Timothy's name appears as the co-author of 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians and Philemon. In his Epistle to the Philippians, Paul says of Timothy, "I have no one like him" and when Paul was in prison awaiting martyrdom, he summoned his faithful friend, Timothy, for a last farewell.

The writer of Hebrews implies that Timothy himself was jailed at least once during the period of the writing of the New Testament by mentioning Timothy's release at the end of the epistle.

It is generally believed that in the year 97 Timothy, now an 80 year old bishop tried to stop a procession in honour of the goddess Diana by preaching the gospel. The angry pagans beat him, dragged him through the streets, and stoned him to death.

In the 4th century the relics of Timothy were transferred to Constantinople and placed in the church of the Holy Apostles near the tombs of St Andrew and St Luke.

Timothy is venerated as an apostle, saint and martyr and his feast day, along with Titus and Silas, is now on 26th January. From the 13th century until 1969 the feast of Timothy (alone) was on 24th January, the day before that of the Conversion of Saint Paul.



Icon showing Timothy as Bishop

Roger Pike

AN EXPERIMENT IN SIMPLE LIVING

For thousands of years individuals and groups have felt the need to look for a greater meaning in their lives by searching out the remote and wild places in which to live more simply, in close contact with the natural world. The ruins of Talley Abbey stand testament to this impulse from a different time.

In 1985 I had returned to Wales from a year travelling across Europe, Africa and Asia where I had witnessed the lives of villagers as they sowed and harvested crops, built homes and raised families often without technologies available to the West. Societies in which water was drawn and goods carried by hand and where food was grown using only hand tools.

I was inspired by the resilience and self-empowerment demonstrated by these peoples, whose needs were met using only their own efforts and skill and drawing on the resources available in their local environments. I wondered if it were possible to use this land based economic model here in Britain as a way of simplifying my own life.

I had previously tried the Tipi life in Cwm Tipi and I decided to return to set up a personal experiment in Simple Living, drawing on my travel experience. Cwm Tipi was ideally suited to this challenge as the only village I knew in Wales without roads or motor traffic and without mains services. There, the noise of power tools and motors do not disturb the sound of running water and bird song.

So I set about building a small dwelling hut using local timber to build a round frame. The roof I thatched using rushes cut by sickle and tied together using recycled baler twine. The walls were made using a technique of screen making using compressed vegetation in a hazel frame. Apart from some nails, all the materials were harvested in the valley. My tools comprised a bow saw, an axe, a hammer, a sickle and a mattock.

I then turned my energy to terracing the hillside for food production with the help of mattock and rake. I grew small trial plots of wheat for harvesting by sickle which I ground with a ceramic mill after threshing and winnowing. I baked yeasted flat bread on a griddle over an open wood fire. During this period I used to take a sheaf of wheat to decorate the altar at St Michael's church, Talley, for the Harvest Festival.

As well as growing a wide range of fruit and vegetables we kept a small flock of goats and poultry to produce milk, cheese, yogurt and eggs. The animals also provided valuable fertility on otherwise poor soil. Wood ash from the hearth helped to balance the acid soil and compost was collected from the surrounding land. Water came from a nearby well and our clothes were washed by hand.

Y Llychau

We found that dried sphagnum moss made excellent nappy material for our baby, born naturally without the need of medical intervention in our thatched hut. (Sphagnum moss was used as a natural antiseptic dressing during the First World War). We spun local wool fleeces and knitted hard-wearing tunics which suited our life outside.



Birds would be constant visitors to our hut and lizards, shrews and even glow-worms would make an appearance. Frogs and toads also hopped in and out, along with squirrels, hedgehogs and bats. Using a sickle I cut a small paddock for hay and turned it with a pitchfork made from a forked branch take from a tree. Coppiced wood provided fuel for cooking and

heating, while bracken was used for animal bedding. Our bed rolls rested on sheepskins on a floor of cut rushes.

I found the simple life extremely rewarding and became intimately involved in the natural world around me and the cycles of the sun and moon through the seasons. Plants, animals and birds were my familiar friends and I bathed in the fast running stream throughout the year, sometimes having to break the ice. I felt truly born again into a new life of balance and harmony; a life that made space for contemplation, far from the pressures of the everyday world. I had given up owning a car and rarely left the valley, so that after many months working at home a trip to Llandeilo would seem like down town New York by comparison.

In retrospect, I consider my experiment was worthwhile in that I found it possible to replicate, to some extent, the economic model I had observed in traditional peasant cultures abroad. However, wider society has moved rapidly towards greater specialisation and technological complexity and the life of a British peasant hermit can be a lonely one.

Thirty years on, global warming and the destruction of this natural environment are now acknowledged facts. Low impact lifestyles incorporating biodegradability of materials and the use of renewable resources have even more to contribute to a better future for our grandchildren.

Francis Quirk

ST MICHAEL'S CHRISTMAS FAYRE

On what has now become the regular date for this annual function, St Michael's Christmas Fayre was held on the last Friday of November in Talley School. Thankfully this year the weather was kind – cold, but dry.

As soon as the children had finished their lessons for the day, the school was invaded by a small but dedicated team of parishioners to convert the classrooms into an area suitable for the Fayre. Boxes of assorted objects were carried in from cars. Tables were positioned, then rearranged and finally re-sited to achieve the desired effect.

Stalls were erected and stacked with a wide range of goodies, including books, Christmas Cards, seasonal items and bric-a-brac. The tombola table was well stocked with bottles and other prizes while the children's games area included a local quiz, a lucky dip bin and a genuine shove ha'penny board. When all was ready, a well-earned rest was taken before the frantic activity of the evening began.

At the appointed hour, the doors were opened for the anticipated revellers to enter. Although the numbers supporting the Fayre were lower than in previous years, those who did come enjoyed a pleasant event with convivial company in pleasing surroundings. The various stalls were well supported with customers as was the bar.

As usual, the evening concluded with the traditional auction of a wide selection of artefacts. In his inimitable way, auctioneer Geraint Davies managed to extract more money from the bidders than they had intended to spend. Not only were bids of "Ten pounds" interpreted by him as "Twelve pounds, thank you", but he even managed to persuade some people to raise their bid even though nobody had bid against their earlier offer. Under his expert guidance, customers bought objects that they had not realised they wanted.

Thanks to the generosity of those who supported it, the Fayre raised over £800 for church funds and put a broad smile on the treasurer's face.

On behalf of St Michael's, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all who supported the event, especially those who set it up, manned the stalls served the refreshments and cleared away afterwards.

Roger Pike

PUBLIC NOTICE

REGULATIONS FOR THE
ADMINISTRATION OF TALLEY
CHURCHYARD IN THE CARE OF
TALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
BURIAL BOARD

**NOTICE OF REMOVAL OF
REGUATION No 5 – 31st MARCH
2015**

*The Burial Board will accept grave
reservations subject to availability
and upon submission of the
appropriate fee.*

**NO FURTHER GRAVE
RESERVATIONS WILL BE TAKEN
AFTER 31st MARCH 2015**

HYSBYSIAD CYHOEDDUS

RHEOLIADAU ER GWEINYDDU
MYNWENT TALYLLYCHAU YNG
NGOFAL BWRDD CLADDU
CYNGOR CYMUNED
TALYLLYCHAU

**SYLW MYND YMAITH A RHEOL
RHIF 5 – 31af MAWRTH
2015**

*Fe fydd y Bwrdd Claddu yn caniatáu
l feddi gael eu cadw yn amodol are
u bod ar gael ac os fydd y ffi priodol
yn cael ei gyflwyno.*

**FYDD DDIM YN BOSIB I FEDDI
GAEL EU CADW YN AMODOL AR
ÔL 31af MAWRTH 2015.**

TALLEY SCHOOL

Talley School Harvest Thanksgiving service was held at St Michael's Church Talley. The children and Mr John Walford provided us with a special service. Thank you to Mrs Janet James for playing the organ and for the lovely tea we all received in the church hall.

YSGOL TALYLLYCHAU

Cynhaliwyd Gwasanaeth Dilchgarwch Ysgol Talyllychau yn Eglwys San Mihangel yn ddiweddar. Cafwyd gwasanaeth gan y plant ac anerchiad gan Mr John Walford i ddilyn. Diolchwn i Mrs Janet James gymeryd at yr organ a hefyd ir gwragedd am y te blasus cafom yn festri'r eglwys.



Y Llychau

Talley School pupils had a very busy day raising money for Children In Need with a cake stall on a wacky hair and pyjama day. A total of £104.00 was raised.



Cafodd Ysgol Talylychau diwrnod prysur iawn yn codi arian ar gyfer Plant Mewn Angen. Buodd y plant yn gwerthu cacennau, a cafwyd diwrnod gwisgo pyjamas gyda gwallt gwyllt. Codwyd £104.00 tuag at yr elusen.



Talley School pupils have been very busy preparing Christmas boxes for children out in Africa who are less fortunate than us. Thank you to the children and the parents for the contributions.

Buodd rhai o ddisgyblion yr ysgol yn brysur yn paratoi bocsys anrhegion Nadolig i blant sydd yn llai ffodus na ni allan yn Affrica. Diolchwn i'r plant ar rhieni am eu cefnogaeth.



Y Llychau

Congratulations to Ellie and Rory for being elected as The Bronze Sports Ambassadors for Talley School. Good luck with all the responsibilities.

Llongyfarchiadau mawr i Ellie ag i Rory am cael eu heddol i for yn Llysgenhadon chwaraeon Efydd Ysgol Talylychau. Pob hwyl iddunt efo'r cyfrifoldebau.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Did you know that Talley School is now 140 years old?
It first opened its doors to pupils on 1st December 1874.

THE REBECCA RIOTS

In the past, the Welsh people never took kindly to laws and rules that were made in England and then enforced in Wales. In the mid 19th century, opposition to one particular piece of English law led to what has become known as the Rebecca Riots. In 1839 an Act of Parliament was passed that allowed landowners who built roads across their land to levy charges, known legally as tolls, on all users of their roads. These were collected at toll-houses where a gate was put across the road and only opened on payment of the levy.

In the late 1830s and early 1840s, the agricultural communities of south Wales were in dire poverty. In 1837 and 1838 the whole country suffered from poor harvests, worse in the south west, where atrocious seasons of rain forced farmers to buy corn at famine prices to feed themselves, their animals and their families, which further eroded what little capital they had. Grain harvests collapsed and what slight income could be gained from selling butter, sheep and cattle was eroded when cattle prices slumped sharply in 1842. The blame was placed on the Government, and in particular Robert Peel's tariff measures which eased the importation of foreign cattle and meat. The farmers' economic position had therefore shifted from that of dire grain harvests with life supported by sheep and butter sales, to one where the price of their corn, even when the weather was favourable, was very low.

The farmers were faced with a drastic reduction in their income, but had no financial relief in similar reductions in their outgoings, mainly rents, tithes, county rates and the turnpike tolls. Although farm rents stayed mainly static, the tithes, tolls and rates increased. Seeing themselves as victims of 'tyranny and oppression', the farmers and their workers took the law into their own hands to rid themselves of these unjust taxes. The first institutions to be attacked were the hated toll-gates.

In the early 19th century many toll-gates on the roads in Wales were operated by trusts which were supposed to maintain and improve the roads, funding this from tolls. However, many trusts charged extortionate tolls and diverted the money raised to other uses. Even where this was not done, the toll-gate laws imposed an additional financial burden on poor farming communities. The 'oppression', felt by the farmers, began in the late 1830s, when a group of English toll-renters took over the region's trusts. This group was led by Thomas Bullin, an Englishman, who was hated by all who had to pay his tolls. The main reason for his dislike was the exacting method of the toll collection and the big toll increases of side-bars. (Side-bars were simple toll gates, away from the main trunk roads, placed strategically on by-roads to catch any traffic that had tried to bypass the main toll booths by using side lanes).

Because there were so many toll-gates on the roads in South Wales, the Toll-gate Laws imposed an additional and unacceptable financial burden on the poor farming community of the area. This was one piece of English legislation that the Welsh did not like at all and the people decided that 'enough was enough'. They determined to take the law into their own hands and gangs were formed to destroy the toll-gates. These gangs became known as the 'Rebecca Gangs'; taking their name from a passage in the Bible, (Genesis, chapter 24, verse 60 – 'And they blessed Rebekah and said unto her, Let your offspring possess the gates of their enemies'.)



Cartoon published in *Punch* in 1843

The first appearance of Rebecca, as the gang leaders called themselves, occurred in 1839. Although this precedes the economic events of 1842, the early appearances of Rebecca were sporadic isolated outbursts, with the true body of rioting not beginning until the winter of 1842. Although these early 'uprisings' were few and uncommon, they were the first appearance of mobs dressed in the guise of Rebecca. These gangs soon became known as *Merched Beca* ("Rebecca's Daughters").

Prior to destroying the toll gates, 'Rebecca' would call to his followers, who were also dressed as women, and perform a scene which often involved the following words.

Rebecca: "What is this my children? There is something in my way."

Rioters: "What is it, mother Rebecca? Nothing should stand in your way,"

Rebecca: "I do not know my children. I am old and cannot see well."

Rioters: "Shall we come and move it out of your way mother Rebecca?"

Rebecca: "It feels like a big gate put across the road to stop your old mother."

Rioters: "We will break it down, mother. Nothing shall stand in your way."

Rebecca: "Oh my dear children, it is locked and bolted. What can be done?"

Rioters: "It must be taken down. Rebecca and her children must pass."

This would then in turn lead to the destruction of the toll gates.

Although not all members of the mob would wear women's clothes, those that did, often in white gowns, would also blacken their faces or otherwise wear masks. The attacks were accompanied by much noise; and in the earliest attacks, a mock trial would also take place.

The accepted leader of the first protests, Thomas Rees, always wore women's clothes when leading attacks. Some versions of the story say that these clothes were borrowed from a woman called Rebecca living near his home at the foot of the Preseli Hills. The story goes that this woman was an old maid and her clothes were borrowed because she was the only woman tall enough and large enough in the village having dresses that would fit Rees.

The Rebecca Riots are often mistaken as a response solely against the toll gates, ignoring the other factors affecting the Welsh farming communities of the time. The main reason for the choice of toll gates as targets for Rebecca, was that the booths and gates were tangible representations of the system they so despised. The only other options for the rioters would be the union workhouses, as the Poor Law was as hated as the toll roads; but these could be easily defended and were often garrisoned by troops.

The first protests led by a "Rebecca" destroyed the toll-gates at Yr Efail Wen in two attacks in Carmarthenshire in 1839. Although it is said that Thomas Rees was the leader, he did not appear to participate in further riots when the attacks flared again three years later. Anglican clergymen from the established Church

in Wales were targets on several occasions. The Church of England could demand tithes and other ecclesiastical benefits even though most of the population of Wales were Nonconformists.

The next time the Rebeccas assembled was roughly three years later, when Tom Bullin was allowed to raise a tollgate by the Mermaid Tavern near St Clears. This was



Typical Tollhouse (now at St Fagans Museum)

an obvious 'trap' side-bar, and angered the locals, who destroyed it and two other gates. Other tollgates targeted included Bolgoed and Pontarddulais.

In mid-July 1843, letters were sent from representatives of the Rebeccas, to the landlords of farmers. These threatening letters warned the landlords to make reductions in the rent of their tenant farmers and the following summer saw farmers conducting open meetings demanding a lowering of rent by at least a third. The threats and the meetings had no effect; the rents remained the same.

The riots caused at least one fatality, in the small village of Hendy in 1843. A young woman gate keeper named Sarah Williams died. She had been warned beforehand that the rioters were on their way but refused to leave. On the night of her death she could be heard shouting "I know who you are" by a family living up the road who had locked their doors from the rioters. She called for help at the house of John Thomas, a labourer, to extinguish a fire at the toll gate, but when she returned to the toll house, a shot was heard. Sara returned to the house of John Thomas, and collapsed at the threshold of the house. Two minutes later she was dead.

From August 1843, local and open protest meetings were taking the place of riots. Partly due to the farmers scaling back on violent activity, and also due to the increasing presence of troop numbers. Another major factor that saw the riots reduce were the activities of a group of petty criminals masquerading as Rebecca operating near Llanelli. This group, led by known trouble-makers John Jones and David Davies, was eventually convicted and transported to Australia.

By late 1843, the riots had stopped. Although Rebecca had failed to produce an immediate effect on the lives of the farmers she had sought to serve, the very nature of a leaderless uprising of the downtrodden peasantry in an attempt to obtain justice from an unfair system, was an important socio-political event within Wales.

In the aftermath of the riots, some rent reductions were achieved, the toll rates were reduced (although destroyed toll-houses were rebuilt). The protests prompted several reforms, including a Royal Commission into the question of toll roads, which lead to the Turnpikes Act of 1844. This Act consolidated the trusts, and simplified the rates; furthermore it reduced the hated toll on lime movement by half.

Eventually the authorities had to concede defeat and most of the hated toll-gates were legally removed by 1850. These toll-gates never appeared in South Wales again!

Roger Pike

“THEY’LL NONE OF ’EM BE MISSED”

In the first act of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta *The Mikado*, Ko, the Lord High Executioner, performs his little list song. In it he lists individuals who would not be missed should he ever be called upon to act professionally – that is to cut off their heads. Such people whose demise would be a distinct gain to society at large. Similarly, in the television programme *Room 101* celebrities compete to have their pet hates consigned to oblivion and never seen again.

This got me thinking and wondering what I might wish to add to Ko Ko’s little list. Very close to the top of my list of pet hates would be committees and committee meetings. In my experience they achieve little except frustration and even irritation. They are democratic I suppose, but a benign dictatorship is likely to make more progress. It is, however, important to identify the right person as dictator!

In his book ‘Cabinet’ Peter Hennessy suggests – “Eleven is not a bad number for a committee, enough to get a wide cross-section of views and yet not so many that argument replaces decisions. Above that number the problems of the chairman grow at the same rate as the membership. Either several members have to take a vow of silence or meetings go on a long time. Decisions don’t come easily”.

If one is forced to go down the committee route then the fewer the members serving on the committee the better. After all, as often as not, committees are run by two or three people who have had a word together before the meeting takes place. There can be perks to be had from committee meetings. Even in the humblest committee room a supply of free pencils and note pads are often provided. To be avoided are those meetings where coffee and biscuits are served. They are a bad sign because they constitute an acceptance that the meeting is going to run and run. Most meetings are unnecessary and the only real agenda is the agenda itself, self-justifying and self-perpetuating.

Let us consider some committee members; why is it that those with the least knowledge of the subject being discussed, so often speak the longest? Thoughtless but rarely speechless. The wish to speak, often at length, is rarely inhibited by ignorance of the subject. Many years ago I was given a definition of a committee in the following terms “a committee is a means whereby a number of people who, alone, can do nothing, may meet together to arrive at a decision that nothing can be done”.

Enough said. It must by now be clear that I don’t like committees and attend such meetings with little enthusiasm.

John Walford

LOCAL REFUSE COLLECTIONS

USEFUL INFORMATION

**Please pull out this section and
keep for future reference.**

Household rubbish should be sorted into four containers: – Blue bags for recycling, black bags for non-recyclable items, green bins for food waste and grey bags for garden waste. The blue and black bags will be collected on alternate weeks and the food and garden waste weekly. To find out which colour bag will be collected on which week, see overleaf.

Food and garden waste is taken to a central composting facility at Nantycaws, Carmarthen, where it is turned into compost or soil conditioner to be reused. Blue bags are taken to the materials recycling facility in Johnstown, Carmarthen, to be sorted. For more information on this facility, visit www.cwmenvironmental.co.uk. The sorted materials are then taken to processing plants to be made into new products. All other waste that cannot be recycled or composted – that is, the contents of the black bags – is taken to the landfill site at Nantycaws, Carmarthen.

Recyclable Waste – (Blue Bags)

The following materials can be put in the Blue Bags

Biscuit wrappers	Food and drink cartons	Aerosols
Crisp packets	Cereal boxes	Plastic bottles
Newspaper / magazines	Ready meal sleeves	Yoghurt pots
Catalogues	Plastic film / cling film	Margarine tubs
Telephone directories	Cardboard boxes	Plastic punnets
Junk mail	Toilet roll tubes	Ready meal trays
Writing paper	Kitchen roll tubes	Plastic coat hangers
Envelopes	Egg boxes	Jam jar lids
Shredded paper	Food and drink cans	Foil

(continued on page 20)

WHAT COLOUR REFUSE BAG WILL

January 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

May 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

June 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

September 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

The weekly refuse collections in the

BE COLLECTED EACH WEEK IN 2015 ?

March 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

July 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

November 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2015

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Talley area are scheduled for **Fridays**.

(continued from page 17)

Non-recyclable Waste – (Black Bags)

The following materials should be put in the Black Bags

Tissues	Polystyrene	Wooden coat hangers
Kitchen roll	Wallpaper	Electrical items
Food soaked card	Paint tins	Video cassettes
Saucepans	Clothes / shoes	CDs / DVDs
Scrap metal	Glass	Nappies / Sanitary products
Plastic bags	Toys	Pet food pouches & trays

Food Waste – (Green Bins)

Cooked and uncooked food waste can be put in the Green Bin including:

Food scraps	Fruit and vegetables (including peelings)
Meat (including bones)	Egg shells
Fish (including bones)	Tea bags and coffee grounds

Householders are responsible for the cleanliness of their bins. To help keep containers clean either wrap the food (or line the bin) with newspaper or use compostable liners. These liners are available from various local shops and supermarkets as well as a number of online stockists. Please look out for this logo or use this reference number EN13432:2000. **DO NOT** put food waste in plastic bags (this includes biodegradable bags) as any plastic would contaminate the whole vehicle load which would then have to go to landfill.



Garden Waste

Home composting is one of the most environmentally-friendly and cost-effective ways of dealing with garden waste. (Compost bins can be purchased from the council for £10 including delivery – for details call Carmarthenshire Direct on 01267 234567). If you cannot compost at home, please use the nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre at Llangadog. If you cannot do either, garden waste can be collected weekly in pre-purchased county council bags (£3.50 for 20) available from the Llandeilo Council Office or Llandovery Post Office. (Please visit www.recycleforcarmarthenshire.com for a full list of places to purchase the bags).

THE APPLE

One Saturday in October 2014, an Apple Day was held in Cwmdu. A large crowd attended and some people had brought apples from their orchards for the attention of the experts who adjudicated, commented and gave some background knowledge, including interesting stories concerning some of the apples. In addition, many competitions, including apple bobbing, finding the longest apple peel and a cookery competition using an apple recipe were held. It was interesting to see so many Welsh apples being exhibited, apples such as Pig yr Ŵydd and Marged Nicolas from the Cwmdu Inn orchard.

Originally, the apples seen in Britain today, such as Granny Smith, Bramley and Cox's Orange Pippin were grafted Crab Apples and ancient apple trees from Europe. With great care a small tree can produce about 15kgs and a large tree almost 40kgs of fruit for more than 45 years. It takes about 100 days for an apple to become fully grown.

Before buying and planting an apple tree, care should be taken in choosing the correct variety with regard to size and type – i.e. a crisp sweet eating apple or a more acidic, hard, cooking apple and one which keeps well. A “self-sterile” tree should be chosen to assist pollination by bees. Ideally, a two

YR AFAL

Ar ddydd Sadwrn ym mis Hydref 2014 cynhaliwyd “Diwrnod Gŵyl Afalau” yn y Tafarn ym mhentref Cwmdu. Daeth nifer dda o bobol ynghyd gyda rhai wedi dod ag afalau o’u perllannau er mwyn eu dangos i’r arbenigwyr. Rhoddwyd beirniadaeth, sylwebaeth, cynghorion a rhywfaint o gefndir yr afalau yn cynnwys hefyd rhai chwedlau diddorol am rai o’r afalau. I ychwanegu fel hwyyl y diwrnod, cynhaliwyd gwahanol gystadlaethau fel “apple bobbing”, y pil hiraf a chystadleuaeth coginio gan ddefnyddio afalau. Diddorol oedd cael gweld digonedd o afalau Cymreig lleol yn cael eu harddangos, sef “Pig yr Ŵydd” a “Marged Nicolas” o berllan Tafarn Cwmdu.

Yn wreiddiol, afal crab wedi ei “graffto” a choed afalau o Ewrop, flynyddoedd mawr yn ôl yw’r coed afalau a welir ym Mhrydain heddiw e.e. Granny Smith, Bramley a Cox Orange Pippin. Gyda gofal manwl gall llwyn bychan gynhyrchu tua 15kgs a llwyn mawr hyd at 40kgs o ffrwyth a hynny am dros 45 mlynedd. Fe gymer tua 100 diwrnod i’r afal ddatblygu i’w lawn faint.

Cyn prynu a phlannu llwyn afalau dylid ystyried pa fath i’w ddewis fel ei faint, ai afal melys, crisp a meddal i fwyta, neu un sydd yn fwy asid a chaled i goginio, hefyd un sydd yn cadw yn dda. Dylid prynu llwyn sydd yn “self sterile”, fydd hyn rhoi modd

year old pot grown tree should be bought; a small tree should produce a fruit within a year and a large tree within three years.

Care should be taken when planting, ensuring that the ground is free draining and in a sheltered spot in order to avoid a frost pocket in the spring. The ground should be prepared a month before planting by digging well, ideally to a depth of 60cm and in an area of 2x2 metres square. Plenty of organic matter should be added and 250 gram of bone meal, ensuring that the soil is crumbly. A 'bareroot' plant should be avoided as the roots could be damaged during the process of planting leading to growth problems later on. Manure should not be added during planting as this could cause scorching of the roots and excessive plant growth, leading to a poor crop. 'Pot grown' plants should be planted from the end of October to early December and care should be taken to avoid damaging the roots in the process; in addition, the tree should be planted at the same depth in the earth as it was in the pot. The earth should be firmed by foot around the stem and a strong pole placed alongside it for support, plastic ties should be used for further support.

A metal wire should not be used as a support as the metal could cut into the stem, destroying it eventually. The plastic ties should be examined annually in case they need to be

i'r wenwynen i wasgaru'r pail o llwyn arall. Yn ddelfrydol dylid prynu llwyn afalau tua dwy flwydd oed mewn pot (pot grown); gellir ddisgwyl ffrwyth ymhen blwyddyn (llwyn bach), neu ymhen tair blynedd i llwyn mawr.

Dylid plannu yn ofalus, a gwneud yn sicr fod y ddaear yn disbyddu'n dda ,ac os yn bosibl, mewn lle cysgodol rhag "frost pocket" yn ddiweddar yn y Gwanwyn. Rhaid paratoi lle tua mis o flaen llaw, drwy balu yn dda, i tua 60cm ddyfnder, ac yn ddelfrydol fod yn sgwar mesur tua 2x2 mydr. Dylid ychwanegu digon o fater organig, a 250 gram o ludw esgyrn yn y broses, hefyd sicrhau bod cyflwr y pridd ar ôl hyn yn friwsionllyd. Os yn bosib dylid osgoi prynu llwyn "bare root", gan fod perygl i'r gweiddiau gael eu malurio, yn ystod y broses o blannu ac felly achosi problemau yn ddiweddarach gyda'r tyfiant. Ni ddylid ar un cyfrif ychwanegu gwraith yn ystod broses o blannu oherwydd gall hyn achosi'r gwreiddiau losgi, hefyd achosi gor dyfiant i'r llwyn ar gost y ffrwyth. Dylid plannu llwyn "pot grown" tua diwedd mis Hydref i ddechrau Rhagfyr a ,bod yn ofalus i beidio â niwedio'r gwreiddiau yn y broses, hefyd bod dyfnder coesgyn yn y pridd yr un dyfnder ag yr oedd yn y pot. Dylid ffyrmio y pridd o amgylch y coesgyn gyda'r droed i sicrhau cadernid ac yna ychwanegu "support" i'r goeden drwy fwrw polyn cryf i'r ddaear, a defnyddio "plastic ties" i' ddiogelu ymhellach.

Ni ddylid defnyddio gwifren fetal i

replaced by larger ties to ensure that there is plenty of free play so that the growth is not disturbed. The ties may be removed when the tree has grown sufficiently and is strong.

The apple tree requires minimum maintenance but the branches should be pruned regularly. When the apples begin to develop, they should be thinned to avoid a misshapen, small crop. Unless this is done, the crop may fail the following year. The middle apple the 'king apple' should be removed from each cluster and the cluster should be examined; if any damage is discovered or an apple appears shrivelled, it should be removed.

If the cluster appears crowded during the season, it should be thinned once more, so that the growth is given a chance. In general, 8-10cm should be allowed between each apple.

A crowded cluster puts a great deal of strain on the branches and could cause them to break under the weight of the apples.

When the apple drops freely into your hand after gentle twisting, then it is time to harvest the crop. To ensure that the apples keep well during the winter they must not be bruised as they are harvested. The apples should be kept in a dark, airy, slightly humid place; it should also be slightly cold, about 3°C.

The apple tree is prone to disease

glymu'r goeden, oherwydd gallai'r metal dorri i mewn i'r bonyn a'i ddifrodi gydag amser. Dylid archwilio cyflwr y "plastic ties" yn flynyddol rhag ofn bydd eisiau eu newid am rai yn hirach ond ar yr un pryd yn rhoi digon o "free play", i'r bonyn, heb amharu tyfiant .na thagu y bonyn. Os dymunir gellir torri y "ties" i ffwrdd, pan fydd y geoden wedi tyfu'n ddigon cadarn.

Nid oes llawer o waith cynnal a chadw ar y goeden afalau, ond serch hynny dylid tocio'r canghennau yn rheolaidd. Pan fydd ffrwyth yn dechrau datblygu, dylid teneuo afalau, er mwyn osgoi cnwd tew o afalau bach disiap. Os na wneir hyn, gall achosi'r cynnyrch i fethu y flwyddyn nesaf. Dylid tynnu'r afal canol allan o bob clwstwr h.y., "king apple", hefyd archwilio gweddill y clwstwr, ac os bydd rhai yn dangos nam, neu arwydd cynnar o grebachu, dylid tynnu rhain hefyd. Os bydd y clwstwr yn tewhau, fel mae'r tymor yn datblygu, dylid eu teneuo unwaith yn rhagor, er mwyn rhoi chwarae teg i'r tyfiant. Ar gyfartaledd dylid gollwng tua 8-10cm rhwng pob afal.

Dylid cofio bod clwstwr tew yn rhoddi gormod o straen ar y canghennau, a pherygl iddynt dorri o dan bwysau'r afalau.

Yr adeg mwyaf delfrydol i dynnu'r afalau yw cymryd afal yng nghledr y llaw, a'i twistio rhywfaint yn ofalus, os daw yn rhydd yn y llaw, yna fydd gweddill y clwstwr yn aeddfed ac yn barod i'w tynnu. Er mwyn sicrhau i'r

Y Llychau

and fungus and to avoid these, cleanliness should be assured in the tree and its surroundings by sweeping and burning leaves, branches and apples during the autumn. Diseases and insects can infest the surrounding area unless care is taken.

Here is a summary of common general diseases with the possible causes:

Symptom	Cause
Grey powder on the leaves and shoots	Mildew
Disfigurement in young shoots and leaves	Aphids
A ribbon shaped scar on the skin	Apple Sawfly
Holes in the leaves	Winter moth
Brown spots on the apple and leaves	Scab
Ugly spots on the bark	Canker

My mother would always ensure that there was a lovely red apple in my Christmas stocking along with the orange, sweets, nuts and a simple present. I was always pleased to receive these few gifts. How different is the attitude of today's children with their costly toys.

A Happy Christmas to you all.

Hywel Jones
(kindly translated by Janet James)

afalau gadw'n iach dros y gaeaf, dylid bod yn ofalus i beidio eu cleisio mewn unrhyw ffordd yn y broses o'u tynnu. Dylid cadw'r afalau mewn llecyn tywyll, un yn awyru'n dda, un sydd gyda lleithder ysgafn (slightly humid), ac un oeraidd, tua 3°C.

Mae'r geoden afalau yn agored i bla a ffwngau ac er mwyn osgoi y rhain dylid sicrhau glendid ar y llwyn ac oddeutu'r llawr, drwy ysgubo a llosgi unrhyw ddail, canghenau ac afalau yn ystod tymor yr Hydref, oherwydd mae rhain yn medru rhoi lloches i bryfed ac afiechydion dros dymor y gaeaf.

Dyma fraslun o arwyddion clefydau cyffredinol, gyda'r achos posib.

Symptom	Achos
Powdr llwyd ar y dail a'r egin	Llwydni. (Mildew)
Anffurf ar egin ifanc ac ar y dail	Aphids
Scar siap rhuban ar groen yr afal	Apple Sawfly
Tyllau yn y dail	Winter moth
Smotiau brown ar yr afal a'r dail	Scab
Smotiau diolwg ar risgl y goeden	Canker

Yn fy hosan Nadolig bob tro roedd Mam yn gofalu bod afal coch pert yn yr hosan gyda'r oren, y losin, y cnau ac anrheg fach syml. Roeddwn wrth fy modd ar gyn lleied. Mor wahanol yw agwedd plant heddiw gyda'r teganau costus.

Nadolig Llawen iawn i chi gyd.

Hywel Jones

THE OBSERVERS IN TALLEY FELT THE NUCLEAR BOMB BLASTS AND.....

When we first came to Talley, John Williams told us about the Royal Observer Corps in WW2 “tracking German bombers from a bunker, now under the bungalow that is SWN-Y-COED”. Recently we met the owner of the property, David Anthony, and together we unravelled a bigger story of Talley in World War 2 **and** the Cold War.

When WW2 began, the Observer Corps was an essential part of the air defence system. Radar was only sited on the coast and our defences needed to track aircraft as they flew inland. In Wales, where there were many training airfields, there was the additional need to track aircraft which were lost, particularly near high ground. The observers were mostly volunteers, fitting their duties in with other work.

From 3 September 1939 until four days after Victory in Europe, on 8 May 1945, observer posts were manned continuously. In Talley the MoD had a small plot of land on which they sited a hut, about the size of a garden shed, in which the Observers could shelter. We are told that members of the Home Guard also visited the hut but often found the Edwinstford Arms warmer. Our archive includes a photo of Gwyn Roberts, brother of Jac Roberts, who was a member of the Royal (from 1941) Observer Corps.

Observers in Talley would have seen German bombers heading north to Liverpool or Belfast and would telephone information to a Southern Command Control room, in the basement of the Lyric Theatre in King Street, Carmarthen.

In the mid 1950's the Royal Observer Corps gave up its role of spotting enemy aircraft and took on the task of monitoring nuclear blasts and the spread of fallout. In 1961 the MoD dug a bunker on the Talley site, just one of 1550 three-man monitoring posts designed to survive nearby explosions.

Little more than a small mound was visible, with a small hatchway (2ft x 2ft), an air vent and sensors to measure the bomb power. Underground there was a cramped work area, provision for bunk beds and a chemical toilet. It was calculated that nearly 50% of the posts would have been ineffective because they relied on over-ground telephone lines but the Talley bunker had underground links, confirmed by John Morgan who recalls a JCB digger cutting them. We cannot find that anyone from Talley manned this bunker; apparently they came from Llandeilo (the landlord of The Angel?) and Ammanford.

Happily the Cold War never went “hot” and the sites were all closed in 1991.

Y Llychau

In 1996 the land was sold by the MoD and a bungalow was built. Rather than dig up the bunker, the builders just built over it and incorporated the hatchway into the floor of one of the rooms. And so the bunker remains, still with the labelled clipboard pegs, a reminder of Talley's part in the real and anticipated terrors of the last century.

The following pictures of the bunker were taken at SWN-Y-COED.



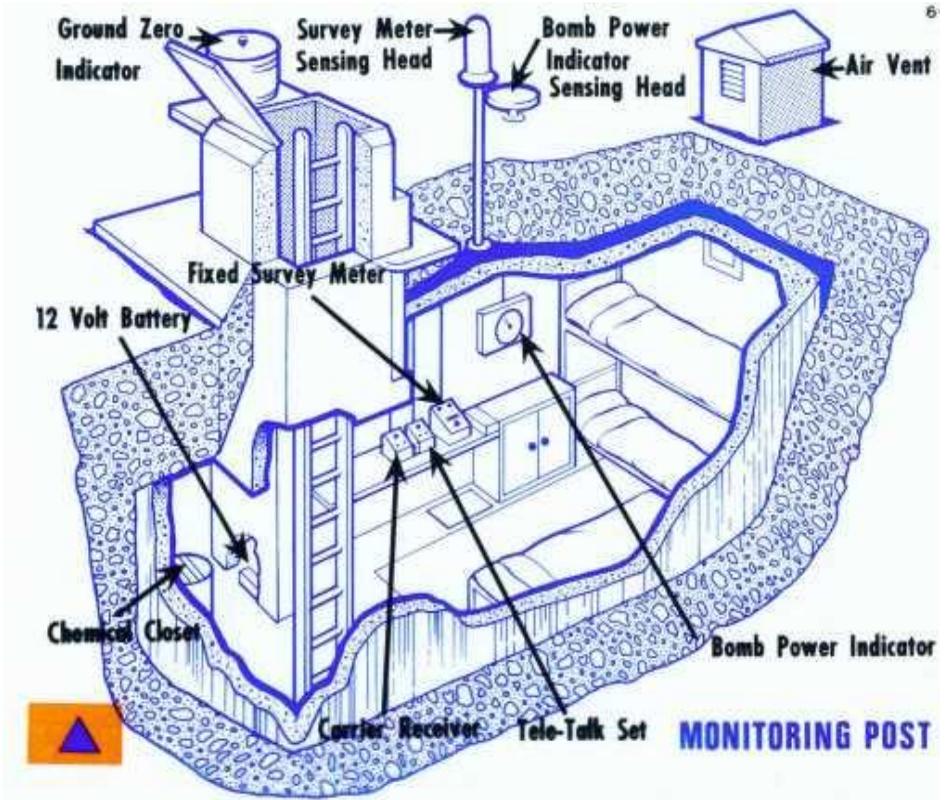


Diagram of the Talley Bunker.

Wyn Edwards,
on behalf of Talley Parish History Society

PAXTON'S TOWER

Paxton's Tower is situated on a hilltop near Llanarthney in the Towy Valley. The tower itself bears no date of construction. It was probably built sometime between 1805 and 1808 by Sir William Paxton, who owned the Middleton Hall Estate, now the home of the National Botanic Garden of Wales. The tower is 32 feet high and was probably designed by Samuel Pepys Cockerell, the architect of Middleton Hall. It is a triangular building with a turret at each corner, two storeys high, with a hexagonal castellated roof. On the ground there are three arches,



large enough to accommodate carriages. The next storey was a banqueting room and the upper storey housed a prospect room, having an upper apartment with stained glass windows showing Lord Nelson and scenes from his life.

Scottish-born William Paxton (1745-1824) came from Berwickshire but was raised in London to become a merchant and banker. He made his fortune while with the East India Company in Calcutta with Charles Cockerell, brother of the architect, and purchased the Middleton Hall estate in about 1790. (The Hall itself was destroyed by fire in 1931)

The reason for the building of Paxton's Tower is uncertain and several theories have been suggested.

In the General Election of 1802, Paxton stood for parliament and promised the inhabitants of the valley that he would build a bridge across the Towy if they voted for him. When the voters preferred his opponent (Paxton lost by 45 votes) it is said that he built the tower with the money and material had been put aside for the bridge. It is for this reason that the tower is a 'folly' sometimes called the 'Tower of Spite'. Paxton's proposal to build a bridge across the Towy near Dryslwyn was not just an election promise. The Dryslwyn Bridge was in fact part of a much larger scheme involving the construction of a new stretch of road between Llandeilo and Carmarthen, undertaken by the Three Commot's Turnpike Trust of which Paxton was the main sponsor. Paxton was prevented from building his bridge by hostile feelings among the local gentry so he probably had neither reason nor intention to build his tower to snub the Carmarthen electorate.

Paxton spent thousands of pounds on his election campaign and many believed that he had been ruined by the expense and that to silence such rumours he erected the tower as a prominent sign of his enduring wealth.

The inspiration for building the tower may have been provided by Nelson's heroic death at Trafalgar in October 1805. Paxton had spent the most formative years of his youth in the navy and he greatly admired the Admiral. Whilst in the office of mayor of Carmarthen, he may have met Nelson in person during the latter's tour through South Wales in the summer of 1802. Paxton dedicated the tower to the Admiral and originally the structure was named 'Nelson's Tower'. A marble tablet was fixed over each of the three entrances displaying the following text in Welsh, Latin and English:

“To the invincible commander, Viscount Nelson, in commemoration of deeds most brilliantly achieved at the mouth of the Nile, before the walls of Copenhagen and on the shores of Spain; of the empire everywhere maintained by him over the sea; and of the death while in the fullness of his own glory, though untimely for his own country and Europe, conquering he died; this tower was erected by William Paxton”.

Yet another suggestion for its construction was that the tower was built as a viewing platform from which Paxton would watch his favourite horses racing from Tenby to Middleton, but the most likely explanation is that it was simply a decorative feature – follies were the height of fashion at the time. It was probably built as a place for Paxton's guests to visit, to wine and dine whilst admiring the panoramic views.

The tower was sadly neglected after Paxton's death and in 1965 it was struck by lightning almost destroying one of its corner turrets. That same year the tower was given to the National Trust who undertook its repair four years later. The central tower roof was replaced with a flat concrete one and the battlements rebuilt, but by the late 1990's the concrete roof had deteriorated allowing water to penetrate the structure. Extensive works had to be carried out to restore the central tower and the three turrets using traditional materials and construction techniques. The windows of the prospect room are now bricked up and the glass panels commemorating Nelson have been taken from the tower to the Carmarthen Museum at Abergwili.

Paxton's Tower remains in the care of the National Trust and is open to visitors without charge. It is a grade II listed building.

Researched by Roger Pike

ST MICHAEL'S HARVEST SUPPER



In the UK, thanks have been given for successful harvests since pagan times. Since the sixteenth century, these Harvest celebrations were traditionally held on the Sunday nearest to the Harvest Moon. This is the full Moon that occurs closest to the autumn equinox (usually at the end of September or the first few days of October). The celebrations on this day usually include singing hymns, special prayers of thanks and decorating churches with baskets of fruit and vegetables, the occasion being known as Harvest Festival, Harvest Home or Harvest Thanksgiving.

Originally a harvest festival used to be celebrated at the beginning of the harvest season on 1st August and was called Lammass, meaning 'loaf Mass'. Farmers made loaves of bread from the fresh wheat crop and these were given to the local church as the Communion Bread during a special service thanking God for the harvest.

By the sixteenth century a number of customs seem to have been firmly established around the gathering of the final harvest, rather than at the start of

harvesting. They include the reapers accompanying a fully laden cart; a tradition of shouting “Hooky, hooky”; and one of the foremost reapers, dressed extravagantly, acting as ‘lord’ of the harvest and asking for money from the bemused onlookers.

Until the 20th century most farmers celebrated the end of the harvest with a big meal called the Harvest Supper, to which all who had helped in the harvest were invited. It was sometimes referred to as a “Mell-supper”, after the last patch of corn or wheat standing in the fields – known as the “Mell” or “Neck”. Cutting it signified the end of the work of harvest and the beginning of the feast. There seems to have been a feeling that it was bad luck to be the farm that was last to cut this final stand of corn. Farmers and their workers would race against the harvesters on other farms to be first to complete the harvest, shouting to announce they had done so. In some counties the last stand of corn would be cut by the workers throwing their sickles at it until it was all down, in others the reapers would take it in turns to be blindfolded and sweep a scythe to and fro until all of the Mell was flattened.

The modern British tradition of celebrating Harvest Festival in churches began in 1843, when the Reverend Robert Hawker invited parishioners to a special thanksgiving service at his church in Cornwall. Now almost every church and chapel has such a service, but as people have come to rely less heavily on home-grown produce, there has been a shift in emphasis in Harvest Thanksgiving celebrations. Increasingly, churches have linked Harvest with an awareness of, and concern for, people in the developing world for whom growing crops of sufficient quality and quantity remains a struggle. The produce used to decorate the churches reflects this.

In Talley, three events formed the annual Harvest Thanksgiving this year. On Thursday 2nd October the children of Talley School held a special service in St Michael’s church, followed by the traditional children’s “feast”. On Saturday 4th October the adults had their Harvest Supper and on the Sunday, Mr John Walford led a special service in church, after which the food used to decorate the church was taken to a local Old People’s Home.

At the Harvest Supper on the Saturday, two dozen people filled the Church Hall as they enjoyed Beef Casserole, Fish Pie and an assortment of desserts.

I would like to thank all those who supported our Harvest celebrations this year. Over £200 was raised from collections during the services and ticket sales for the Supper and this has been split between Christian Aid and Church funds.

Roger Pike

THINGS ARE STIRRING IN THE WOODS TONIGHT

The Annual General Meeting of the Talley Community Amenity Association (TCAA) was held in St Michael's Church Hall at the end of October. It was well attended and it is to be hoped that this resurgence of interest will be maintained in the coming year.

The Treasurer, Peter Knott, presented the accounts which revealed a decent surplus with income from the Forestry Commission (FC), now of course to be known as Natural Resources Wales (NRW), from grazing rental, and from a share of the income from the excellent Open Gardens Day. It was agreed that there should be an increase in the grazing rental as this had been fixed for a number of years and concern was expressed about whether the grazier was doing enough to look after the land.

Sadly Peter announced his resignation as Treasurer and Trustee, following the Knott's decision to move to Pembroke in the near future. Peter has done a splendid job as Treasurer and has been the driving force in the development of the Talley village website. It is to be hoped that a Talley resident will wish to take on the latter role, which provides much information for residents and for visitors who want to know what is going on in this corner of Carmarthenshire.

The plans to fell the stands of larch above the village were discussed and it was agreed that such felling was the inevitable consequence of living in an area of forestry. It was important that negative effects should be mitigated. Previous experience had shown that the then FC was sensitive to local concerns and Marie George, now of NRW, has agreed to attend the next meeting of TCAA to discuss impacts and how they may be minimised. These will include controls over timber lorry movement to avoid times when schoolchildren and their families are on the lanes, maintaining maximum access to woodland areas which are not being harvested, and keeping the roads clean during the proposed harvest starting in June 2015.

Details of this next meeting will be published in due course – please keep an eye open for details. One possible venue is the Tafarn in Cwmdu – combining support for our local pub with the pleasures of a large open log fire. Reactions on this idea?

Looking ahead, it was generally agreed that there was no vision for changing the woodland – those present were happy with what existed as a place for recreation and as an important background to the village.

Linda Tame and Colin Ward were elected as new trustees and Colin Ward (to universal acclamation) was elected as Treasurer to replace Peter Knott.

Things have been rather quiet on the TCAA front recently which in many ways is plainly what people want! The impact of the harvesting next year will undoubtedly make us think rather harder about the community woodland and it is hoped that it will spur other Talley residents to become involved. Please come to the meeting in the New Year – all thoughts will be most welcome.

John Rees
TCAA Chairman

SUDOKU SOLUTION FROM THE LAST ISSUE

6	2	9	8	1	7	5	4	3
5	1	4	3	9	6	8	2	7
8	7	3	5	2	4	9	1	6
4	5	2	7	3	1	6	8	9
9	8	1	6	5	2	7	3	4
7	3	6	9	4	8	2	5	1
3	6	7	4	8	5	1	9	2
2	9	8	1	6	3	4	7	5
1	4	5	2	7	9	3	6	8

PAST HAPPENINGS ON DAYS IN FEBRUARY

The next part of the series of historical events that happened on specific days lists some of the incidents that occurred on each day of February in years gone by. A list for another month will appear in the next issues of *Y Llychau*.

- February 1st Britain's first official Register of Historic Landscapes was published by CADW in 1998.
- February 2nd In 1988 the last British Rail passenger steam train (on the Vale of Rheidol line) ran between Aberystwyth and Devil's Bridge.
- February 3rd The Queen approved the red dragon on a green and white background as the official flag of Wales in 1959.
- February 4th At Pendine Sands, Sir Malcolm Campbell set a new world land speed record of 174.88mph in 1927.
- February 5th Two British supermarket chains (Safeways & Sainsburys) started stocking genetically modified tomato puree in 1996 – the first GM food to be sold in this country.
- February 6th Accession of Queen Elizabeth II in 1952.
- February 7th The four members of the *Beatles* arrived in New York at the start of their first tour of the United States in 1964.
- February 8th Three US astronauts returned safely to Earth after a record-breaking stay in the *Skylab* space station in 1974.
- February 9th The Provisional IRA ended its 18 month ceasefire and exploded a large bomb in London's Canary Wharf in 1996.
- February 10th American U2 spy plane pilot Gary Powers was freed from prison in the USSR in 1962 in exchange for a Russian spy jailed in the US.
- February 11th In 1990, leading anti-apartheid campaigner Nelson Mandela was freed from prison in South Africa after 27 years.
- February 12th RAF Valley in Anglesey was opened in 1941.
- February 13th The British Broadcasting Company made its first broadcast in Wales (from "Station 5WA" in Cardiff) in 1923.
- February 14th British figure skating couple Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean won the gold medal at the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo after dancing to Ravel's *Bolero* in 1964.
- February 15th After months of planning, Britain introduced the new decimal currency in 1971 replacing the old £sd system.

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- February 16th The “Toddlers’ Truce”, the controversial television close-down between 6.00 pm and 7.00 pm, was abolished in 1957.
- February 17th The ‘London Congestion Charge’ scheme designed to reduce traffic congestion in central London came into operation in 2003. Today it is the most expensive congestion zone charge in the world.
- February 18th Hunting with dogs in England and Wales was made illegal in 2005.
- February 19th In 1958, the government announced the closure of Sheerness, the oldest naval dockyard in the UK. It was established in the 17th century by Samuel Pepys, the first every Secretary of the Admiralty.
- February 20th Britain’s first public cinema opened in Islington in 1869.
- February 21st The first steam-hauled train on rails in the UK ran between Merthyr Tydfil and present-day Abercynon in 1804.
- February 22nd A sheep named Dolly was cloned by scientists in Edinburgh and was hailed as one of the most significant breakthroughs of the decade in 1997.
- February 23rd The ‘Gutenberg Bible’, the first Western book printed with movable type was published in 1455.
- February 24th Sachin Tendulka became the first Cricketer to score a Double hundred in a One Day International match in 2010.
- February 25th The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was launched in 1958 by Bertrand Russell.
- February 26th The UK’s oldest investment banking institute, Barings Bank, collapsed after securities broker Nick Leeson lost £900M by speculating in 1995.
- February 27th The Rt Revd Rowan Williams (Archbishop of Wales) was enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury in 2003.
- February 28th The first Gulf War ended after Iraq accepted all twelve UN resolutions in 1991.
- February 29th The song “We’ll Keep a Welcome” was performed for the first time (in the Forces’ Variety Show) in 1940.

Researched by Roger Pike

PLEASE SUPPORT

The Talley Community Players' production of

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

In St Michael's Church, Talley

At 7.30 pm on Saturday 10th January

Admission £5 to include a glass of wine in the Interval

THE NEWSLETTER

If you would like to contribute an article for inclusion in a future edition please contact the Editor. **PLEASE NOTE THE NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS.**

Roger Pike
Newsletter "Editor"

Bryn Heulog, Talley, Llandeilo, SA19 7YH

Tel: **01558 685741**

e-mail: **rogerbpik@outlook.com.**

THE NEXT ISSUE

Intended Publication Date – **Monday 2nd March 2015**

Copy Dates – Please submit all items for inclusion in the next issue
as soon as possible & BEFORE the dates below

For contributions written in **Welsh**

Saturday 24th January 2015 (to allow time for translation)

For contributions written in **English**

Saturday 31st January 2015.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

BLWYDDYN NEWYDD DDA