

# *Y Llychau*

**A NEWSLETTER FOR TALLEY & THE SURROUNDING AREA**

[www.talley.org.uk/y-llychau](http://www.talley.org.uk/y-llychau)

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## **SHEEP IN THE AUTUMN DRIZZLE**

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.

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

## THE EDITOR WRITES

Welcome to this the last edition of the Newsletter in 2015.

The more observant of you will notice that this issue contains a fair number of items written by me. This is because very few (of what would, I am sure, have been much more interesting) articles had been submitted by readers.

I was, therefore, faced with a choice. I could produce a Newsletter of just half a dozen pages or “pad it out” with a few contributions of my own. I chose the latter, but I am fast running out of ideas for things to write about so, to prevent you from becoming too bored in the future, I would like you all to consider writing something to include in the issues to be published next year. Why not make a “New Year Resolution” that you will compose at least one article for *Y Llychau* in the coming twelve months?

As you will see from my efforts, any contribution that you are able to produce need not be a literary masterpiece. Just write about something that is of interest to you and possibly to other readers as well. Although pieces about Talley or Cwmdy would be appreciated, I will be more than happy to accept articles on almost any subject. If you would prefer your composition to be anonymous, there is no need to have your name added – so there is no excuse for not writing something.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and I look forward to receiving masses of articles from you. My contact details are on the back page.

Roger Pike  
“Editor”

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## EVENTS IN TALLEY SCHOOL

Below is a list of some of the forthcoming events that will be held in Talley School.

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Friday, 27th November</b> | St Michael’s Christmas Fayre at 7.00pm.   |
| <b>Friday 4th December</b>   | Talley School Christmas show; afternoon and evening performance. A warm welcome to all. |
| <b>Saturday 5th December</b> | Talley School Christmas Fair.   |

## CHRISTMAS IN TUDOR TIMES

Christmas was by far the greatest festival celebrated by the Tudors, spanning twelve days from 25th December to 6th January. Most of these twelve days were Saint's Days with the most important ones being 25th December (Christmas Day), 26th December (St Stephen), 27th December (St John), 1st January (Circumcision of Jesus) and 6th January (Epiphany) which is when the greatest feasts and celebrations were held. Some fasting was required in preparation for the festival, in particular on Christmas Eve when no meat, eggs, or cheese would be eaten.

For centuries midwinter had always been a time for merry making by the common people. The root of the midwinter rituals was the winter solstice – the shortest day – which falls on 21st December. After this date the days lengthen and the return of spring, seen as the season of life, was eagerly anticipated. Bonfires were lit to help encourage the return of the 'Unconquered Sun'.

For Christians the world over this period is now used to celebrate the story of the birth of Jesus, in a manger, in Bethlehem. The scriptures however make no mention as to the time of year yet alone the actual date of the nativity. Even our current calendar which supposedly calculates the years from the birth of Christ, was drawn up in the sixth century by Dionysius, an 'innumerate' Italian monk to correspond with a Roman Festival.

Until the 4th century Christmas was celebrated throughout Europe at different times of the year. It was Pope Julius I who happened upon the idea of adopting 25th December as the actual date of the Nativity. The choice was shrewd – combining religion with existing feast days and celebrations. Any merrymaking could now be attributed to the birth of Christ rather than any ancient pagan ritual.

One such combination may have involved the 'Feast of Fools', In Tudor times it was the tradition to appoint a 'Lord of Misrule', who was like a mock King and would oversee entertainments (unruly events involving drinking, revelry, role reversal and general chaos). The person chosen to be Lord of Misrule was appointed by the head of the Parish, but the King had his own personal one. The "rule" ended on the Twelfth Night. The festival is thought to have originated from the benevolent Roman masters who allowed their servants to be the boss for a while.

Another example of role reversal which originated during the Tudor period was Barring Out. This involved students taking possession of their school and locking out the staff until their "ransom" demands were met.

Tudor society was very strictly organised and so the festivities of a Tudor Christmas served to release some of these pressures. Things were turned inside

out and upside down, allowing some sections of society unusual freedoms. One such tradition was the practice some communities had of electing a choir boy or altar boy as “boy bishop” during the period starting with St. Nicholas Day (6th December) until Holy Innocents Day (28th December). This practice was to show the boy the honour and dignity of Holy Orders. As boy bishop he would assume all the duties of the Bishop except taking Mass, but he would preach a sermon and go on parishioner visits. Many of the great cathedrals adopted this custom including York, Winchester, Salisbury, Canterbury and Westminster.

In 1541 Henry VIII banned the practice of Boy Bishops because he felt it was mocking church authorities and disrespectful to him as the head of the church. However, a few cathedrals, including Hereford and Salisbury, continue the practice today, albeit for just one day.

The burning of a Yule Log in the Tudor period is thought to derive from the midwinter ritual of the early Viking invaders, who built enormous bonfires to celebrate their ‘Festival of Light’. (The word ‘Yule’ has existed in the English language for many centuries as an alternative term for Christmas). Traditionally, a large log would be selected in the forest on Christmas Eve, decorated with ribbons, dragged home and laid upon the hearth. After lighting it was kept burning throughout the twelve days of Christmas. It was considered lucky to keep some of the charred remains to kindle the log that would be used the following year.

The Tudor Monarch had several obligations during the festive season. When the celebrations began on Christmas Day he was required to attend Mass three times and he was also expected to be wearing new clothes. He would proceed from his Privy Chamber to the Royal Chapel dressed in coronation robes and crown. During these masses, the genealogy of Christ was sung while everybody held lighted candles.

All sports were banned on Christmas day by Henry VIII in 1541. The exception to this was archery and, of course, jousting, which was very popular during the Christmas season.

Whether the word carol comes from the Latin caraula or the French carole, its original meaning is the same – a dance to a song. The dance element appears to have disappeared over the centuries but the song was used to convey stories, normally that of the Nativity. Carols flourished throughout Tudor times as a way to celebrate Christmas and to spread the story of the nativity. Celebrations came to an abrupt end however in the seventeenth century when the Puritans banned all festivities including Christmas. Surprisingly carols remained virtually extinct until the Victorians reinstated the concept of an ‘Olde English Christmas’ which

included traditional gems such as 'While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night' and 'The Holly and the Ivy' as well as introducing a plethora of new hits – 'Away in a Manger', 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' – to mention just a couple.

The twelve days of Christmas would have been a most welcome break for the workers on the land, which in Tudor times would have been the majority of the people. All work, except for looking after the animals, would stop, restarting again on Plough Monday, the first Monday after Twelfth Night. The 'Twelfths' had strict rules; one of which banned spinning, the prime occupation for women. Flowers were ceremonially placed upon and around the spinning wheels to prevent their use. During the Twelve Days, people would visit their neighbours sharing and enjoying the traditional 'minced pye'. The pyes would have included thirteen ingredients, representing Christ and his apostles; typically dried fruits, spices and of course a little chopped mutton – in remembrance of the shepherds.

Serious feasting, however, would have been the reserve of Royalty and the Gentry. Turkey was first introduced into Britain in about 1523 with Henry VIII being one of the first people to eat it as part of the Christmas feast. The popularity of the bird grew quickly, and soon, each year, large flocks of turkeys could be seen walking to London from Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire on foot; a journey which they may have started as early as August.

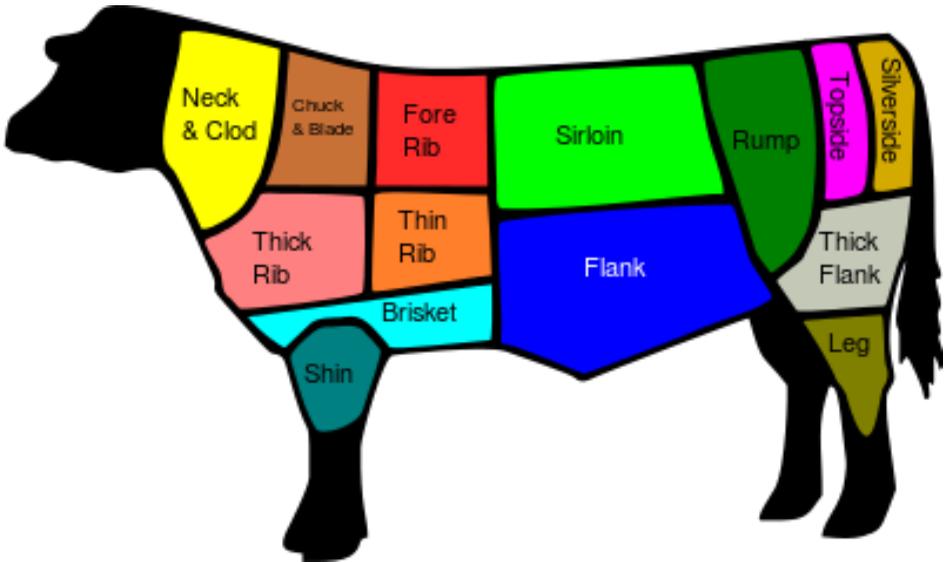
A Tudor Christmas Pie was indeed a sight to behold but not one to be enjoyed by a vegetarian. The contents of this dish consisted of a turkey stuffed with a goose stuffed with a chicken stuffed with a partridge stuffed with a pigeon. All of this was put in a pastry case, called a coffin, and was served surrounded by jointed hare, small game birds and wild fowl.

To wash it all down, revellers would have a drink from the Wassail bowl. The word 'Wassail' comes from the Anglo-Saxon 'Waes-hael', meaning 'be whole' or 'be of good health'. The bowl was a large wooden container holding over a gallon of punch made of hot-ale, sugar, spices and apples. This punch was shared with friends and neighbours. A crust of bread (called the toast) was placed at the bottom of the Wassail bowl and offered to the most important person in the room – the origin of today's toast as part of any drinking ceremony.

Unlike the modern tradition of exchanging gifts on Christmas Day, the Tudors had their gift exchange on New Year's Day. While friends and families gave each other small tokens; everyone of any importance was expected to offer the King a substantial gift and would, in turn, receive a small one.

Roger Pike

## CUTS OF BEEF



Beef varies tremendously in taste and quality depending on the age, breed, diet, lifestyle, slaughter and processing of the animal, so it is important that the cut is tailored to the dish to be cooked. Welsh Black and Aberdeen Angus are well-known good-quality breeds of beef, but there are dozens of other breeds native to Britain or established for centuries. These include the Highland, Lincoln Red, South Devon, Sussex and Hereford. Rare British breeds cover the Irish Moiled, Beef Shorthorn, Belted and Black Galloways, Red Poll, White Park, British White, Longhorn, Gloucester and Dexter.

A 'primal cut' is a piece of meat initially separated from the carcass of an animal during butchering. Different countries and cultures make these cuts in different ways, and primal cuts also differ between types of carcass. The British, American and French primal cuts all differ in some respects. For example, "rump steak" in Britain is commonly called "sirloin" in America. On the other hand, British "sirloin" is called "porterhouse" by Americans. Primal cuts may be sold complete or cut further into smaller pieces (the sub-primal cut).

The following brief descriptions of cuts of beef are those usually associated with animals that have been butchered in the "English way".

The beef **clod** or **neck** is one of the cheapest cuts of beef and is taken from the shoulder region of the animal. Beef clod consists of a large muscle system and some fat that covers the muscles. It can be prepared in a variety of methods, both dry and moist, but the most recommended method is to cook it with moist heat or braising. Long slow smoking also provides acceptable results.

**Chuck** steak is part of the sub primal cut known as the chuck. The typical chuck steak is a rectangular cut, about 1” thick and containing parts of the shoulder bones, and is often known as a “7-bone steak,” as the shape of the shoulder bone in cross section resembles the numeral ‘7’. This cut is usually grilled or broiled; a thicker version is sold as “chuck roast” and is usually cooked with liquid as a pot roast. The bone-in chuck steak or roast is one of the more economical cuts of beef. In the United Kingdom, this is commonly referred to as “braising steak”. It is particularly popular for use as ground beef, due to its richness of flavour and balance of meat and fat.

Short ribs (commonly known in the UK as **thin ribs** or Jacob’s Ladder) are a popular cut of beef. They are larger and usually more tender and meatier than their pork counterpart, pork spare ribs. Thin ribs are cut from the rib primal cut. There are numerous ways to butcher short ribs. They can be separated and cut into short lengths (typically about 2 inches long), called an “English cut”, or cut across the bones (typically about 1/2 inch thick) as a “flanken cut”.

**Brisket** is a cut of meat from the breast or lower chest of beef or veal. The beef brisket is one of the nine beef primal cuts, though the precise definition of the cut differs internationally. The brisket muscles include the superficial and deep pectorals. As cattle do not have collar bones, these muscles support about 60% of the body weight of the animal. This requires a significant amount of connective tissue, so the resulting meat must be cooked correctly to tenderize the connective tissue.

Butchers frequently refer to the section of meat below the rib cage, but above the rump as **loin**. Various names of meats further butchered from the loin section of cattle contain the name “loin” such as tenderloin and sirloin

The **sirloin** steak is a steak cut from the back of the animal. In British butchery, the word “sirloin” refers to cuts of meat from the upper middle of the animal. The T-bone and porterhouse are steaks cut from the sirloin (called the short loin in America). Both steaks include a “T-shaped” bone with meat on each side. T-bone steaks are generally considered one of the highest quality steaks and restaurant prices reflect this. In Britain, porterhouse refers to the strip steak side of a T-bone steak, while the tenderloin side is called the fillet.

The **flank** steak is a cut from the abdominal muscles of the cow. A relatively long and flat cut, flank steak is used in a variety of dishes including London broil and as an alternative to the traditional skirt steak in fajitas. It can be grilled, pan-fried, broiled or braised for increased tenderness. Flank steak is best when it has a bright red colour. Because it comes from a strong, well-exercised part of the cow, it is best sliced against the grain before serving, to maximise tenderness. This cut is frequently used in Asian cuisine and often sold in Chinese markets as “stir-fry beef”.

A **Rump** steak is from the area above the rear leg of the cow. This is a lean cut and it is moderately tough. The lack of fat and marbling makes the meat dry out when cooked with dry-heat cooking methods like roasting or grilling, so it is commonly prepared with slow moist-heat methods, including braising, to tenderize the meat and maintain moisture. If it is cooked by a dry-heat method, the steak is often served with a sauce to mask any dried-out meat.

**Silverside** is a cut of beef from the hindquarter of cattle, just above the leg. It gets its name because of the “silverwall” on the side of the cut; this is a long fibrous “skin” of connective tissue, which has to be removed as it is too tough to eat. Silverside is boned out from the top along with the topside and thick flank. It is a first-class roasting joint. It may be sliced into minute steaks or split in two to produce a “salmon-cut”. In Australia, Ireland and New Zealand, silverside is the cut of choice for making corned beef.

**Topside** is the tender meat between Rump and Silverside.

The **Shin** and **Leg** are cuts of beef from the upper fore leg and hind leg respectively. Due to the constant use of this muscle by the animal it tends to be tough, dry and sinewy, so is best when cooked for a long time in moist heat. It is an ideal cut to use for beef bourguignon. As it is very lean, it is widely used to prepare very low-fat ground beef. Due to its lack of sales, it is not often seen in shops, but when it is it is a very cheap ingredient for beef stock. Beef shank is a common ingredient in soups.

**Veal** is the meat of young cattle (calves), in contrast to the beef from older cattle. Although veal can be produced from a calf of either sex and of any breed, most veal comes from male calves (bull calves) of dairy cattle breeds. Generally, veal is more expensive than beef from older cattle.

Roger Pike

## PUZZLE PAGE

### SUDOKU

Complete the grid by placing one number between 1 and 9 in the empty boxes such that every horizontal row, every vertical column and each 9-box square contains all the digits from 1 to 9 inclusive.

The answer will appear in the January issue of the Newsletter.

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|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>9</b> |          | <b>7</b> |          |  | <b>5</b> |          |          |          |
|          | <b>6</b> |          | <b>4</b> |  | <b>2</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>8</b> |          |
| <b>4</b> |          |          | <b>9</b> |  |          |          |          |          |
| <b>3</b> |          |          | <b>8</b> |  |          |          | <b>2</b> |          |
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## TYPES OF PIPE

Basically, a pipe consists of an open-topped container (known as the bowl) and a narrow tube (the stem) used to draw the smoke from the burning material in the bowl into the mouth. Pipe smoking is the practice of tasting (or, more uncommonly, inhaling) the smoke produced by burning a substance, most commonly tobacco, in a pipe. It is the oldest traditional form of smoking. In fact, pipes and the remains of leaves have been found in Egyptian mummies believed to date from 2000 BC.

A number of Native American cultures had pipe-smoking traditions long before the arrival of Europeans on that continent. Tobacco was often smoked, generally for ceremonial purposes, though other mixtures of sacred herbs were also common. The narrow calumet, (made from a gourd and called a “peace pipe” by Europeans), was smoked to seal covenants and treaties, particularly between Indian tribes. The oldest pipe of this kind discovered by archaeologists has been dated to around 1500 BC.

By the 11th century the herb “Angelikarot” was being smoked in iron pipes in Norway. Tobacco was not introduced into Europe from the Americas until the 16th century, but after that its use spread rapidly around the world. In Asia during the 19th century, opium (which previously had only been eaten) was added to tobacco and smoked in pipes. Madak (the mixture of opium and tobacco) turned out to be far more addictive than orally-ingested opium, leading to social problems in China which culminated in the First and Second Opium Wars (1839–1842 & 1856–1860).

In many parts of the world, smoking was seen as a leisure activity that encouraged the reduction of workers’ productivity. So much so, that in 1630 the death penalty was introduced for people caught smoking in Turkey, Russia and China. However, the punishment was soon dropped when the rulers discovered the enormous amount of income that could be generated by imposing a tax on tobacco.

Over the years, pipes have been fashioned from an assortment of materials including briar, clay, ceramic, corncob, glass, meerschaum, metal, Calabash gourds, stone, wood and various combinations thereof. The size of a pipe, particularly the bowl, depends largely on what is intended to be smoked in it. Large western-style tobacco pipes are used for strong-tasting, harsh tobaccos, the smoke from which is usually not inhaled. Smaller pipes are used to inhale milder tobaccos or other substances. The shape of the stem can be either straight or curved and its length either long or short. Modern pipes tend to have a synthetic material mouthpiece at the end of the stem.

The majority of pipes sold today, whether hand made or machine made, are fashioned from briar (*Erica arborea*), which is a particularly well suited wood for the purpose. It is resistant to fire and has the ability to absorb moisture. The briar, which is native to the Mediterranean Basin, absorbs water in nature to supply the bush in times of drought and so will absorb the moisture that is a by-product of combustion. The wood from the Apple tree has similar properties and is also sometimes used to make pipes.



Meerschaum (hydrated magnesium silicate), a mineral found in small shallow deposits mainly in central Turkey, is prized for the properties which allow it to be carved into finely detailed decorative and figural shapes. It has been used since the 17th century and, with clay pipes, represented the most common medium for pipes before the introduction of briar as the material of choice in the 19th century. Meerschaum is a very porous mineral that absorbs elements of the tobacco during the smoking process and gradually changes colour from its natural white to a golden brown.



Ceramic pipes, made of moulded and then fired clay, were used almost universally by Europeans before the 18th century. The material is not very strong and the early varieties, which had long thin stems, were frequently broken, but were cheap to replace. The preferred material, known as pipeclay, fires to a white colour, although in North America many clay pipes were historically made from the more common terracotta-coloured clays. In 1580 clay pipes were mass produced and issued to mariners, although in 1625 sailors caught smoking on Danish ships were punished by keel-hauling.



Calabash gourds (usually with meerschaum or porcelain bowls set inside them) have long made prized pipes, but they are labour-intensive to make and, today, quite expensive. Because of this expense, pipes with bowls and stems made of wood (usually mahogany), but with the same classic shape, are sold as imitation

calabashes. Both wood and gourd pipes are functionally the same (with the important exception that the dried gourd, which is noticeably lighter, sits more comfortably in the mouth). Beneath the bowl is an air chamber which serves to cool, dry, and mellow the smoke. Calabash pipes are rather large and easy to recognize as a pipe when used on a stage in dramatic productions.



The specifically American style of pipe made from corn cobs is cheap and effective, although regarded by many as inelegant. The dried cobs are hollowed out to make a bowl shape, dipped in a plaster-based mixture and varnished or lacquered on the outside. Stems



made from pine wood are inserted into the bowls. Corncob pipes are popular today because they are inexpensive and require no “break-in” period like briar pipes, although they tend to retain the taste of stale tobacco from earlier use. Perhaps the most famous smoker of this pipe is the cartoon character Popeye.

Metal is an uncommon material for making tobacco pipes, but it is not unknown. Early Scandinavian pipes were iron, but today the most common forms of this type of pipe are those where the stem is made of aluminium, which serves as a heat sink. Mouthpieces are usually made of vulcanite or lucite. The bowls are removable, though not interchangeable between manufacturers. They are made of varying materials to allow the smoker to try different characteristics or to dedicate particular bowls to particular tobaccos. Perhaps the most well-known of these is the “Falcon” pipe.



A variety of other materials has also be used in pipe manufacture, such as pyrolytic graphite, phenolic resin, nylon and Bakelite; all of which allow higher temperatures in the bowl. They also permit aesthetic variations of colour and style. The Redmanol corporation



manufactured pipes with translucent stems in the 1920s and a series of pipes was manufactured by the Venturi Corporation from 1965-1975. After Venturi stopped making pipes, several companies continue to make them from from Brylon, a composite of nylon and wood flour, as a cheaper substitute for briar.

One of the most widely known pipe designs is the “Churchwarden”, with its distinctive long stem, often 16 to 18 inches in length. The pipe style dates from the late 18th or early 19th century. Although the origin of the name is not known, many believe that as churchwardens often had to maintain lengthy parish records, pipes with longer stems allowed an unimpeded view of the book without smoke getting into their eyes as they wrote. Others maintain that they are named after the wardens or night watchmen of churches in the time when churches never locked their doors. These “churchwardens” couldn’t be expected to go all night without a smoke, so they had pipes that were made with exceptionally long stems so the smoke and the pipe wouldn’t be in their line of sight as they kept watch. Churchwarden pipes generally produce a cooler smoke, due to the distance the smoke must travel from the bowl to the mouthpiece. However, the stem is more prone to breakage, especially on the older clay models. Long ago, churchwarden pipes were in common use by drinkers in taverns and sometimes a set of pipes would have been owned by the establishment and used by different clients, rather like other service items (plates, tankards, etc.).



A different type of pipe, the water pipe, is used in Turkey, the Middle East and India. Originating in Persia in the 16th century, these pipes bubble smoke through water to cool and wash it. There are two basic types, stationary ‘hookahs’ and portable ‘bongs’. By far the most popular is the stationary version. A hookah (with one or more long flexible drawtubes) is an instrument for vaporising and smoking flavoured tobacco (called shisha) in which the vapour or smoke is passed through a water basin — often glass-based — before inhalation. The health risks of smoking a hookah include exposure to toxic chemicals that are not filtered out by the water and the risk of infectious disease when hookahs are shared. Instead of the copper, brass and low quality alloys used in traditional hookahs, modern manufacturers increasingly use stainless steel and aluminium. Silicone rubber compounds are now used for hookah hoses instead of the original leather and wire. These new materials make modern hookahs more durable, eliminate odours while smoking and allow washing without risks of corrosion or bacterial decay.



Roger Pike

## **A MESSAGE FROM EBENEZER APOSTOLIC CHURCH,**

Continuing with the Proverbs theme (see the last issue of *Y Llychau*) I must tell you about this one – Proverbs 25 verse 11 “A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.” This is a very colourful and richly woven phrase that nestles alongside something quite simple. We should all be careful what we say as sometimes we can hurt our family or friends if we say something that causes hurt or inflicts a wound! However, the reverse can apply and our words can uplift someone who may be going through a bad time in their lives. I hope that we can all fit into the latter category.

This brings me neatly onto James, chapter 1 verse 19. “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.” Some interesting thoughts here and there are so many words of wisdom in the bible that can inspire and uplift us.

Come along to one of our services at Ebenezer Apostolic Church, Halfway. Each Sunday we have Morning Praise at 10.30 a.m. and a Gospel Service at 5.00 p.m. You will be very welcome. Find us on the Talley Road between Llandeilo and Talley. Post code – SA19 7YA.

Angie Davies

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## **DID YOU KNOW?**

Mount Everest was named after Welshman Sir George Everest from Gwernvale, Breconshire.

According to the last census only 21% of the entire population of Wales can speak the native language.

Wales has more castles per square mile than anywhere else in the world.

Welshman Pryce Jones from Newtown, Montgomeryshire, created the first Mail Order business in the World.

Robert Recorde of Pembrokeshire invented the “equal to” sign.

All the statues surrounding Cardiff Castle are of animals.

Lawn tennis first appeared in Wales in the 1800s.

Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwyll-llantysiliogogoch is the name of a town on Anglesey in North Wales which translates as “The church of St. Mary in the hollow of white hazel trees near the rapid whirlpool by St. Tysilio’s of the red cave”. It is believed to be the longest place name in the world.

Marconi’s first radio transmission in 1897 was between two points in Wales (from Flat Holm Island to Lavernock Point in Penarth, a distance of 6 kilometres).

The Millennium Stadium in Cardiff has the largest retractable roof of any sports arena in the World.

The legend of the mystical King Arthur started in Wales.

Rugby is regarded by many as the second most popular religion in Wales (Christianity is the first).

Wales is the only part of the UK not to be represented on the Union Flag.

Wales has a population of around 3 million people and over 12 million sheep.

Wales is the only country whose Patron Saint was a bishop resident in that country – the 6th century Saint David (“Dewi Sant”).

The Seven Wonders of Wales is a list of seven geographic and cultural landmarks in Wales, identified in the late 18th century in doggerel verse. All in North Wales, the “wonders” are:

- Snowdon (the highest mountain),
- the Gresford Bells (the bells in the medieval church of All Saints),
- Llangollen Bridge in Flintshire,
- the Wrexham (Wrecsam) Steeple,
- the Overton Yew trees,
- Pistyll Rhaeadr waterfall,
- St Winefride’s well, in Holywell Flintshire.

Researched by Roger Pike

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## **THE LEGEND OF WELSH CAKES**

The Welsh Cake, despite what its name seems to indicate, did not originally come from Wales. Actually, it constitutes a sign of the strength of the first Welsh settlers who arrived in Patagonia in the Argentinian Valley of the Chubut River and how they faced the difficulties the environment presented.

On 28th July 1865 a hundred and fifty three Welsh people landed on the coasts of the Chubut River after sailing on the tea-clipper 'Mimosa'. These men and women came from Madryn in Wales. They wanted to escape from the English harassment and to keep their traditions, culture and religion. The Argentinian government wanted to populate and to defend their large territory that was occupied by Indians and that was constantly threatened by the foreign invaders who came by sea and land. They saw these Welsh settlers as a way of keeping the territory safe.

Most of the new arrivals were families and were not rich. As had been arranged with the Argentinian government, a small delegation was waiting for them. The delegates had built some huts on the beach and some animals (cows and lambs) were given to the Welsh immigrants for their basic survival.

These early settlers had been motivated by special reasons. They were neither adventurers pursuing conquest nor erratic gold seekers driven by the promise of sudden wealth. They were not scientists striving for fame and new discoveries, but just a group of ordinary people wishing to protect a lifestyle that had become endangered in their native Wales. They were in search of a place in the world where they would found a new Welsh nation. They just asked for land and respect for their language, religion and traditions. In return, they would hoist the Argentine flag and submit themselves to that country's laws.

It has often been said that "when an Englishman arrives at a new place, the first thing he builds is a mission school; when an American arrives at a place, he builds a store, but when a Welshman settles, the very first thing he will do is to build a chapel". So it was with these people who had arrived on the Mimosa.

However, early life wasn't easy for the pioneers. They had to face, among many things, the lack of drinking water and the shortage of food. While the men travelled the surrounding area, looking for a place with drinkable water and shelter from the winds and possible attacks, the women tried to get by with the little food they had and plan how to make it last. Groups of families would contribute all the ingredients they had to hand – butter, flour, brown sugar, nuts, sweetened fruits, honey, milk etc. These ingredients were used to make a mixture that could be cooked. The result was a sort of cake that had two fundamental

characteristics: a high caloric value and it could be kept for a reasonably long time.

These early settlers in Patagonia had only basic cooking utensils, so making a cake that required baking was out of the question. No doubt after several attempts to discover how best to use the few ingredients they had, the decision was taken to produce something that was a cross between scones and pancakes that could be cooked on a bake-stone or griddle. Thus, after the initial problems when the settlers and their decedents finally felt at home in their new land, an extra tradition had been added to the ones they had brought from Wales – the famous “Welsh Cake”. Each family had its own recipe and their secret ingredient to give it a special flavour.

Gradually the population in the Chubut valley decreased as some families decided to move to other areas and it was because of this that it became important that more Welsh came from Wales. Some of the settlers went back to Wales in order to convince others to join them in their new life. It is thought that this is how the recipe for Welsh Cakes was introduced to Wales. As a result of these settlers returning to their homeland, there were two more immigrations to Patagonia in 1874 and 1876.

There is a tradition linked to the Welsh Cake that newlyweds follow in Chubut: when they prepare their wedding cake, the bottom layer is a Welsh Cake. On the day of the wedding party they eat the whole cake except for the bottom part, which is carefully wrapped and kept in a can. The couple then eat a slice of it every month during the first year as a symbol of overcoming difficulties.

Nowadays in Patagonia, every 28th July sees big celebrations by the Welsh community. It is known as “The Landing Day”. On that day, all the Welsh chapels in the valley hold ceremonies where tea is served and Welsh songs and poems are sung and read and Welsh Cake is eaten.

The modern Welsh Cake, which is different in taste and texture to both scones and pancakes, is sweet but not overly so. Made from simple pantry items like flour, sugar, milk and butter, Welsh Cakes are considered a special treat since they take a great deal of time and effort to make. Being griddled, they must generally be made by hand and this is why there are very few commercial makers of these cakes in the world. Traditionally they were cooked over a hot bake-stone but iron griddles were later used and are now the predominant method used to cook them.

Roger Pike

## STICKY TOFFEE PUDDINGS WITH TOFFEE SAUCE

(from Delia Smith's Christmas Book)

### Ingredients

#### For the Pudding

6oz (175g) stoned dates (chopped)  
6 fl oz (175ml) boiling water  
½ tsp (2.5ml) vanilla essence  
2 tsp (10ml) coffee essence  
¾ tsp (7.5ml) bicarb soda  
3oz (75g) butter  
5oz (150g) caster sugar  
2 eggs, beaten  
6oz (175g) SR Flour, sifted

#### For the Sauce

6oz (175g) soft brown sugar  
4oz (110g) butter  
6 tablespoons double cream  
1oz (25g) nuts (pecan or walnuts)

### Method

Put chopped dates in a bowl and add boiling water, vanilla, coffee essence and bicarb.

In a large mixing bowl, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. The add the eggs, a little at a time, beating well each time. Lightly fold in the sifted flour and then the date mixture. The mixture will be very sloppy.

*(Now that was Delia Smith's recipe but I just beat the butter until very soft and then throw in all of the other ingredients and mix really well. It seems to work and is much quicker)*

Divide the mix between eight 6oz pudding basins and bake in the centre of a preheated oven – Gas mark 4 or 350F or 180C for 25 minutes *(I cook mine for 15 – 18 mins)*.

Leave to cool for 5 minutes and then slide a palette knife around the sides and turn out to cool.

Make the sauce by heating all of the ingredients together gently. Pour the sauce over all of the puddings and grill for 8 minutes. The top of the puds should be 5-6 inches below the heat to prevent burning. Serve with pouring cream and enjoy.

These puddings can be frozen for later – when wanted, just defrost, cover with the sauce and reheat.

Pat Edwards

## A RECENT VISITOR TO TALLEY



Mrs Rose Saunders, who now lives in London, recently visited Talley after many year's absence. As a young girl, Rose was sent to Talley as an evacuee during the war years. She said that she really appreciated the time she spent in this area and used it to learn a lot about the wild life in the countryside. While here she greatly enjoyed looking at the stars in the night sky and says that she misses doing so now that she lives in the city.

During her stay in Talley, Rose lived in Rose Cottage opposite the church and the picture above, taken during her recent visit, shows her outside her war-time home. Seeing the cottage and the other sights in the village brought back so many happy memories of the time she spent here.

I have invited Mrs Saunders to write an article for *Y Llychau* about her experience of being an evacuee. I hope she feels able to do so.

Roger Pike

## **REMEMBERING THE SMALL FAMILY DAIRY FARMS OF CARMARTHENSHIRE**

When I became a dairy farmer in the mid 1970s there were about 40,000 dairy farms in Britain and West Wales was a major milk producing region. Almost every farm and small-holding had produced milk at one time, either for home consumption, butter, cheese making for market or liquid milk for sale to the creameries that were in almost every large town. Llandeilo Butter Market (now disused) on the corner of New Road and Carmarthen Street attracted buyers from far and wide. The Ffairfach creamery (now a motor garage) and then Llangadog creamery (now a pet food factory) received milk from local dairy farms to process into a wide range of products, including powdered milk and tinned rice pudding for major supermarkets until they closed. In the early 70s I worked in the St Clears creamery where we made an extensive range of cheeses. The milk arrived in 10 gallon churns which were collected by lorries from the milk stands at the ends of most farm tracks where the farmers placed them after morning milking every day. Some farmers left the lids tipped half open to cool the milk if they had not previously done so and so a man was employed at the creamery to inspect each churn as it arrived in case a cat had climbed into the open churns and then drowned. Some farms placed their churns in a stream to cool or used an in-churn cooler that had a water-filled paddle powered by water pressure. These methods required no electricity or expensive equipment, unlike the refrigerated bulk milk tanks that became compulsory with the phasing out of churn collection and the introduction of the tanker lorry in the late 1970s. This change alone prompted an exodus of farmers from dairying rather than converting their equipment at great expense.

Up until then a system of low input of capital and equipment had been the norm. Needs were met on the farm rather than bought in wherever possible. My neighbour, Dewi John, grew cattle cabbage and each cow received one every day through the winter months to maintain her condition. Another neighbour grew black oats which he cut while green (to save the need to mill) using a binder and he fed a sheaf of oats to each cow daily throughout the winter. Swedes and potatoes were also grown using a ridger and inter-row cultivator for home use and as animal feed. I grew a field of barley each year which I milled for cattle feed and I also grew a field of kale which I fed to my cows in winter behind an electric fence. In this way feed costs were kept down and the most use was made of the farm's resources.

In the days before the advent of big bale silage, hay making was the main way of conserving fodder. The smell of well-made meadow hay is truly wonderful; a bouquet of flowers bursts forth when the bale is opened at feeding time on a

winter's morning. Most farmers had old tractors without cabs. (These were not made compulsory until the late 70s). Many older farmers had used horses up until the 1950s and much of that equipment could still be found in the sheds on some farms. I had a working horse and used him for hauling logs, for harrowing and for muck spreading from a tipping cart. A common sight on the roads would be a herd of cows coming in or out from milking and returning to the fields with udders swaying and a cattle dog in attendance. In springtime farm houses, out-building walls and gateways were freshly lime washed using a mixture of water and hydrated lime, giving a smart clean appearance – particularly important in the cowsheds. Regular inspections were carried out so as to retain a licence to sell milk. The Milk Marketing Board gave a guaranteed price and market for every producers' milk wherever they lived or however much they produced, which gave stability and reliability to the farmer.

The sound of vacuum pumps that drove the milking machines could be heard across the valleys at milking time and the farmer calling to his or her cows would announce to all that milking was underway. Also the smell of the dairy steriliser hypochlorite would be carried on the wind as the equipment was later cleaned. Farmers used to wear clogs about the yard and I know the last clog maker who had a stall in the old Provision Market in Carmarthen. I once visited his workshop in Conwyl Elfed shortly before he retired. The uppers were made of leather on a wooden sole of alder which was harvested in Cwmdru amongst other places. Carmarthen Cattle Market (now St Catherine's Shopping Centre) was a busy scene on Wednesday mornings when dairy cows were presented for sale with great pride and much money offered by vendors to lubricate the sales. The dealers grew fat on their bonuses.

In the early 70s I had a neighbour, Mr Pury, who had a council small-holding and kept four Guernsey cows from which he sold one or two churns of milk a day. Now, over forty years later, the dairy industry (as it has become) has reached crisis point with very few dairy farmers left. Whereas 20 or 30 cows could make a living, today herds of several hundred cows are losing money. Gone are the days when a farmer knew each of his cows by name. Now, cows in the bigger dairies live their lives indoors throughout the year and management is controlled by computer. Economists call this progress, but I feel we have lost a precious and culturally rich way of life and community. Husbandry skills developed over thousands of years may be lost forever and the rural community will be more fragmented as farms have become little more than residences as people look for work elsewhere. So I look back fondly to a time when farms, many of which are no more, were busy productive places at the centre of the local community.

Peter Gardner

## THE HISTORY OF THE BICYCLE

Bicycles can be loosely described as vehicles intended for human transport, having two wheels and requiring balancing by the rider. They date back to the early 19th century, although the idea is much older. Gian Giacomo Caprotti, a pupil of Leonardo da Vinci, is reputed to have produced a sketch of a two-wheeled machine in 1493, although no record of it now exists. In 1791, Comte de Sivrac is said to have demonstrated a machine at the Palais-Royal in France. It supposedly had two wheels set on a rigid wooden frame and no steering. A rider was said to have sat astride the machine and pushed it along using his feet. Directional control was attained by the rider leaning to the side.

The first verifiable claim for a practically used bicycle belongs to a German Baron, Karl von Drais. He invented his Laufmaschine (German for “running machine”) in 1817. It was the first commercially successful two-wheeled, steerable, human-propelled machine, commonly called the ‘Draisine Velocipede’, but nicknamed hobby-horse or dandy horse. On his first reported ride on June 12, 1817, Karl von Drais covered 13 km (eight miles) in less than an hour. Constructed almost entirely of wood, the Draisine weighed 22 kg (48 pounds), had brass bushings within the wheel bearings, iron shod wheels and a rear-wheel brake. This design was welcomed by mechanically minded men daring to balance, and several thousand were built. Its popularity rapidly faded when, partly due to an increasing numbers of accidents, some city authorities began to prohibit its use on safety grounds.



The concept was picked up by a number of British cartwrights; the most notable was Denis Johnson of London who announced in 1818 that he would sell an improved model, which he patented as a “pedestrian curricule”. It was notably more elegant: his wooden frame had a serpentine shape, allowing the use of larger wheels without raising the rider’s seat. During the summer of 1819 Johnson’s version of the “hobby-horse”, thanks in part to his marketing skills and better patent protection, became the craze and fashion in London society, but riders complained that it wore out their boots surprisingly rapidly. The fashion ended within the year, after riders on pavements were fined two pounds.



In 1863 a French metalworker reputedly added rotary cranks and pedals to the front-wheel hub, to create a pedal-operated machine. He called it a “bicycle”, a name which stuck for this type of contrivance.

However, the first mechanically propelled 2-wheel vehicle is believed by some to have been built by Kirkpatrick MacMillan, a Scottish blacksmith, in 1839. Proponents of MacMillan’s invention associate it with the first recorded instance of a bicycling traffic offence, when a Glasgow newspaper reported in 1842 an accident in which an anonymous “gentleman from Dumfries-shire bestride a velocipede of ingenious design” knocked over a pedestrian in the Gorbals and was fined five shillings. A similar machine was said to have been produced by a Scottish draper, Gavin Dalzell of Lesmahagow (near Lanark), in 1845. A replica still exists today in the Glasgow Museum of Transport and claims the honour of being the oldest bicycle in existence today.

The first really popular and commercially successful bicycle design was French. Initially patented in 1863, by Lallement, its design was simpler than the Macmillan bicycle; it used rotary cranks and pedals mounted to the front wheel hub. Although pedalling made it easier for riders to propel the machine at speed, the design created stability and comfort concerns, which would later lead to the use of a large front wheel – and later the “penny farthing”. It was difficult to pedal the wheel that was used for steering. The use of metal frames reduced the weight and provided sleeker, more elegant designs. It also allowed mass-production. Different braking mechanisms were used depending on the manufacturer. In England, the velocipede earned the name of “bone-shaker” because of the effect its rigid frame and iron-banded wheels had on the rider.

In the early 1860s, the wealthy Olivier brothers, Aimé and René, were students in Paris. They recognised the potential profitability of producing and selling bicycles based on Lallement’s patent drawing and, in 1868, formed a company in partnership with blacksmith Pierre Michaux. This was the first company to mass-produce bicycles, replacing the early wooden frame with one made of two pieces of cast iron bolted together. Aimé Olivier created a diagonal single-piece frame made of wrought iron which was much stronger and, as the first bicycle craze took hold, many other blacksmiths began forming companies to make bicycles using the new design. Velocipedes were expensive, and when customers soon began to complain about the Michaux serpentine cast-iron frames breaking, the Oliviers realised that they needed to replace that design with the



diagonal one which their competitors were already using. The Michaux Company thus continued to dominate the industry in its early years.

Although still called “velocipede” in France, elsewhere the machine was known by the English description of “bone-shaker”. Later improvements included solid rubber tyres and ball bearings. Lallement had left Paris in July 1865, crossed the Atlantic, settled in Connecticut and patented the velocipede there. The popularity of the machine grew on both sides of the Atlantic and by 1869 the velocipede craze was strong in rural areas as well as urban. However, the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 destroyed the velocipede market in France, and the “bone-shaker” enjoyed only a brief period of popularity in the United States because American road surfaces were much worse than European ones and riding the machine on such roads was simply too difficult and too uncomfortable. The UK was the only place where the bicycle never fell completely out of favour.

The high-bicycle was the logical extension of the bone-shaker; the front wheel was enlarged to enable higher speeds (limited by the inside leg measurement of the rider), the rear wheel was shrunk and the frame became lighter. Frenchman Eugène Meyer is regarded as the father of the high bicycle, while James Starley of Coventry (who added the tangent spokes and the mounting step) is regarded as the father of the British cycling industry. Ball bearings, solid rubber tyres and hollow-section steel frames became standard, reducing weight and making the ride much smoother. Depending on the rider’s leg length, the front wheel could now have a diameter up to 60 in (1.5 m). The “penny farthing” was born.



This type of bicycle became the “ordinary” (since there were then no other kind). Although fast, they were unsafe. The rider was high up in the air and traveling at a great speed. If he hit a bad spot in the road he could easily be thrown over the front wheel and be seriously injured (broken wrists were common, in attempts to break a fall) or even killed. “Taking a header” (also known as “coming a cropper”), was not at all uncommon. The rider’s legs were often caught underneath the handlebars, so falling free of the machine was often not possible. The dangerous nature of these bicycles made cycling the preserve of adventurous young men.

In the United States, Bostonians such as Frank Weston started importing bicycles in 1877 and 1878, and Albert Augustus Pope started producing a version of the penny-farthing, which he called the “Columbia” high-wheelers in 1878. Pope gained control of nearly all applicable patents and lowered the royalty (licensing

fee) previous patent owners had charged. He often took his competitors to court over the patents. The courts supported him, and competitors either paid royalties (\$10 per bicycle), or he forced them out of business. There seems to have been no patent issue in France, where English bicycles still dominated the market. By 1884 high-wheelers were relatively popular among a small group of upper-middle-class people in all three countries, the largest group being in England. Their use also spread to the rest of the world, chiefly because of the extent of the British Empire.

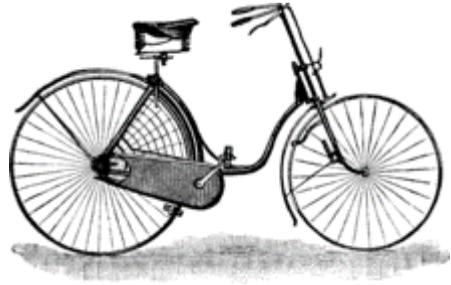
The development of the safety bicycle was arguably the most important change in the history of the bicycle. It shifted their use and public perception from being a dangerous toy for sporting young men to being an everyday transport tool for men — and, crucially, women — of all ages. Aside from the obvious safety problems, the high-wheeler's direct front wheel drive limited its top speed. One attempt to solve both problems was with a chain-driven front wheel (the "Kangaroo" bicycle). Another was a rear-chain-driven bicycle (nicknamed "The Crocodile"). Both had a huge front wheel and a small rear wheel and both failed in the market.

An English cycling enthusiast, John Kemp Starley produced the first successful "safety bicycle", the "Rover," in 1885 but it was never patented. It featured two (almost) equally sized wheels, the front wheel steerable and a chain drive to the rear wheel. Widely imitated, the safety bicycle completely replaced the high-wheeler in North America and Western Europe by 1890. Meanwhile John Dunlop's invention of the pneumatic bicycle tyre in 1888 had made for a much smoother ride. The diamond pattern frame and the chain drive improved comfort and speed, as the drive was transferred to the non-steering rear wheel which allowed for smooth, relaxed and injury free pedalling. With four key aspects (steering, safety, comfort and speed) improved over the penny-farthing, bicycles became very popular in Europe and North America in the middle and late 1890s.

As more manufacturers became involved in the production of bicycles, the "safety bicycle" evolved into a common design, the "Roadster". With minor modifications to the frame design the roadster could be made suitable for women to ride. The ladies' version had a step-through frame rather than the diamond frame of the gentlemen's model so that ladies, with their dresses and skirts, could easily mount and ride their machines. A skirt guard prevented skirts and dresses becoming entangled in the chain, rear wheel and spokes. Though they originally came with front spoon-brakes, technological advancements meant that later models were equipped with the much-improved coaster brakes or rod-actuated rim or drum-brakes.



Gentleman's Roadster



Ladies Roadster

Bicycle historians often call this period the “golden age”. By the start of the 20th century, cycling had become an important means of transport and an increasingly popular form of recreation. Bicycling clubs for men and women were established in great numbers. Since women could not cycle in the then-current fashions for voluminous and restrictive dress, the bicycle craze led to a movement for so-called rational dress, which helped liberate women from corsets and ankle-length skirts and other encumbering garments.

Although the ladies' version of the roadster largely fell out of fashion in England and many other Western nations as the 20th century progressed, it remains popular in the Netherlands; this is why some people refer to bicycles of this design as Dutch bikes. In Dutch the name of these bicycles is Omafiets (“grandma’s bike”).

Cycling steadily became more important in Europe over the first half of the twentieth century, but it dropped off dramatically in the United States between 1900 and 1910. Automobiles became the preferred means of transport there. From the 1920s, bicycles gradually became considered children’s toys, and by 1940 most bicycles in the USA were made for children. In Europe cycling remained an adult activity and bicycle racing became a popular activity.

Bicycles continued to evolve to suit the varied needs of riders. The derailleur gear system was developed in France between 1900 and 1910 and was improved over time. Only in the 1930s did European racing organisations allow racers to use gearing; until then they were forced to use a two-speed bicycle. The rear wheel had a different sized sprocket on either side of the hub. To change gears, the rider had to stop, remove the wheel, flip it around, reposition the chain on the other sprocket and remount the wheel. When racers were allowed to use derailleurs, racing times immediately improved.

Although multiple-speed bicycles were widely known by the 1930s, most military bicycles used in the Second World War were still single-speed.

In Britain, the utility roadster declined noticeably in popularity during the early 1970s, as a boom in recreational cycling caused manufacturers to concentrate on lightweight, affordable derailleur sport bikes. Also in the 1970s teenagers in the state of California wished to imitate their motocross heroes so BMX bikes with smaller, wider wheels were specially designed for them. In the decade that followed, the BMX craze spread to Britain. In the 1980s, U.K. cyclists continued to shift from road-only bicycles to all-terrain models such as the mountain bike, whose sturdy frame and load-carrying ability gave it additional versatility as a utility bike. By 2000, mountain bike sales far outstripped that of racing, sport/racer and touring bicycles.

The 21st century has seen a continued application of technology to bicycles: in designing them, building them, and using them. Bicycle frames and components continue to get lighter and more aerodynamic without sacrificing strength, largely through the use of computer aided design.

Roger Pike

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## **ON THE LIGHTER SIDE**

Two cyclists stopped at a village pub for a drink. Unfortunately, the locals there had a habit of picking on strangers. When the cyclists had finished their drinks, they went outside and found their bicycles were missing.

They went back into the bar and removed their jackets, which revealed shirts that told everyone they were boxing champions. They clenched their fists, took up a threatening posture and asked with surprising forcefulness, “Which one of you morons stole our bikes?”

No one answered.

“All right then” they said “we’ll have one more drink and if our bikes aren’t back when we’ve finished, we’ll have to do what we did in Swansea and we don’t want to have to do that here”.

Some of the locals shifted restlessly.

The cyclists finished their drinks, went outside and their bicycles were back. They mounted and were about to ride off when the landlord came out and asked “Before you go, tell me, what did you do in Swansea?”

They replied “We had to walk home.”

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## ST MICHAEL'S HARVEST SUPPER



For days before the planned event, the Vicar's Warden could be seen slaving away in his kitchen preparing an assortment of dishes for consumption at the St Michael's annual Harvest Supper. For the past six years the day before the Harvest Thanksgiving service in church has been marked by a gathering of parishioners and friends to share some simple food and drink in (hopefully) convivial company.

This year was no exception, so on Saturday 26th September nearly thirty people sat down in St Michael's Church Hall in Talley to a supper of baked potatoes with a variety of fillings, ranging from Coronation Chicken, Tuna & Sweetcorn, Chicken Tikka, Chilli Concarne, Egg Mayonnaise, Beans & Cheese to Coleslaw and all washed down with glasses of red or white wine, efficiently served by John Walford, the wine waiter for the evening.

As if that wasn't enough the main course was followed by a choice of puddings – Blackberry & Apple Crumble, Sticky Toffee Pudding, Old Fashioned Bread Pudding and Soft Scoop Ice Cream. The meal was rounded off with cups of tea and coffee accompanied by much genial conversation.

Although the supper is basically intended to be a social occasion, it also raises a little much-needed money for church funds. This year's event raised over £100 and I would like to thank all those who helped to make the evening such a success.

Roger Pike

## DID YOU SEE THIS?

Did you spot the story below on the television news at the end of August?

Dyfed-Powys Police have a mobile police station that is often located in the centre of Haverfordwest. A passer-by spotted it with a parking ticket under the front windscreen wiper. She photographed it and posted the picture on the social media.

The post proved popular and attracted a large number of comments, ranging from “Good, there can’t be one rule for them and another for us” to “Disgraceful. These guys have a hard enough job. I hope those on here making negative comments don’t need to call 999 anytime soon.”



A statement from for Pembrokeshire County Council said: “Vehicles are exempt if they are being used in an emergency for fire and rescue, ambulance or police purposes. This vehicle was not being used in an emergency and was unattended and unoccupied for some time in a loading bay in Castle Square, Haverfordwest, in contravention of the parking regulations. The Civil Enforcement Officer on duty at the time correctly issued a ticket”.

A spokesman from the police press office said “Police in Haverfordwest can confirm a police vehicle parked in a loading bay has received a parking enforcement ticket. The vehicle has been removed and the fine will be paid”.

Roger Pike

## TALLEY SCHOOL

## YSGOL TALYLLYCHAU



Pupils from Talley School foundation phase class have been taking part in different activities with Forest Schools at Talley community field. The pupils will also be attending Brechfa Forest during the next 6 weeks.

We are very grateful for the use of the community field; thank you also to the parents that have helped with the sessions.

Disgyblion cyfnod sulfaen Ysgol Talyllychau yn cymeryd rhan mewn gweithgareddau Ysgolion Goedwig yn cae cymunedol y pentref.

Bydd y disgyblion yn gwneudn y gweithgareddau yma am 6 wythnos, gan hefyd mynychu coedwig Brechfa.



## A CHRISTMAS QUIZ

### Bible Questions

1. What guided the three wise men to the infant Jesus?
2. Where did Herod send the three wise men?
3. How old were the infants that were slain under the orders of Herod?
4. Where did Joseph and Mary go to flee from Herod?

### Christmas Carol Questions

From which carols do the following lyrics come

5. 'The cattle are lowing'?
6. 'Tis the season to be jolly'?
7. 'Holy Infant so tender and mild'?
8. 'And the running of the deer'?

In which carols are these the first letters of each word in the first line

9. OIRDC?
10. DDMOH?
11. OLTOB?
12. ITBMW?

### Christmas Film Questions

13. What was the name of the department store in the film 'Miracle on 34th Street'?
14. Who starred as the British Prime Minister in 'Love Actually'?
15. 'Little Women' was a film about four girls called Jo, Amy, Meg and Beth. What was their surname?
16. What is the name of the famous Christmas song in the film 'Meet Me in St. Louis'?

### Christmas Trivia Questions

17. Which popular Christmas song was actually first written to celebrate American Thanksgiving?
18. If you received all of the gifts listed in "The Twelve Days of Christmas" song how many presents would you get?
19. What were the names of the original eight reindeers? (Rudolf came later!)
20. "A Christmas Carol" was written by Charles Dickens in 1843. How long did he take to write it?

*The answers will be in the next issue of the Newsletter.*

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## MINING IN WALES

There had been small-scale mining in Wales in the Iron Age but it was not undertaken on an industrial scale until the Roman period. After the Romans had completed their conquest of Wales in AD 78, substantial quantities of gold, copper and lead were extracted, along with lesser amounts of zinc and silver. Generally mining would continue until the process was no longer practical or profitable, at which time the mine would simply be abandoned. The extensive excavations of the Roman operations at the Dolaucothi Gold Mine bear witness to their high level of technology and engineering expertise.

Although mining of these minerals was widely undertaken in the first and second centuries, it was the production of coal and iron which later provided the most significant source of income to the economy of Wales. Industrial development from the mid 18th century was stimulated by the arrival of English entrepreneurs and financiers and advances in technology. The growth of iron smelting made the South Wales Valleys a natural industrial location during the Industrial Revolution. The increased demand for metals and coal was generated first by war and later by the advent of steamships and railways.

The northern rim of the South Wales Coalfield, particularly around Merthyr, became Britain's foremost iron-producing district in the second half of the 18th century, while the south-western part of the coalfield, around Swansea, emerged as an important centre of non-ferrous metal smelting and tinplate production. Metallurgical industries required ever increasing quantities of coal, which was initially largely mined for this purpose. However, coal mining for sale developed in earnest from the mid 19th century and this was to become the signature industry of the region, transforming the economic and social landscape of the South Wales Valleys.

Although a much smaller industry than coal, the slate industry in Wales became the world's largest supplier in the 19th century and had an enduring impact on the landscape of North Wales. At its height in the 1890s, there were dozens of quarries employing around 15,000 men, although they suffered from the 'boom and bust' nature of the construction industry. As most of the workforce were drawn from rural, Welsh-speaking communities, slate quarrying was described by one historian as "the most Welsh of all Welsh industries".

During the 19th and early 20th centuries Wales was famous for its high quality coal from the South Wales Coalfield, especially from the Rhondda and other South Wales Valleys. By 1913 Barry had become the largest coal exporting port in the world, with Cardiff a close second, as coal was transported down by rail. Northeast Wales also had its own coalfield and the Tower Colliery, near Hirwaun was regarded by many as the oldest open coal mine and one of the largest in the

world.

Early coal production in Wales was by Open-Cast mining (where the coal is extracted from the surface after removal of the top soil) or by Drift mining (where the coal is accessed via a horizontal tunnel in the side of a hill). Later, shafts were sunk to take the miners underground to the coal seams. Although some deep mining took place as early as the 1500s (in North East England, and along the Firth of Forth) deep shaft mining in Wales only began to develop extensively in the late 18th century, with rapid expansion throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries when the industry peaked.

The oldest Welsh Open-Cast mine for which records exist was on the banks of the River Dee at Mostyn in Flintshire, where mining was recorded in 1261. The Blaenavon Colliery in Monmouthshire (now the Big Pit National Coal Museum) dates from the early 14th century.

In South Wales, the miners showed a high degree of solidarity. They lived in isolated villages where the miners comprised the great majority of workers. There was a high degree of equality in life style; combined with an evangelical religious style based on Methodism. They forged a “community of solidarity” – under the leadership of the ‘Miners Federation’, which later became the National Union of Mineworkers. The union first supported the Liberal Party then, after 1918, Labour, with some Communist Party activism at the fringes.

During the first half of the 19th century, mining was often at the centre of working-class discontent in Wales, and a number of riots, such as the Merthyr Rising of 1831, against employers were a characteristic of the Industrial Revolution in Wales. The Chartist Movement and the 1839 Newport Rising showed the growing concerns and awareness of the work force of their value to the nation. Although the Factory Acts of the 1830s and resultant Mines Act of 1842 were meant to prevent women and boys under 10 years of age from working underground, it is believed they were widely ignored. To replace female and child labour the use of pit ponies was more widely introduced. Much later, in the middle of the 20th century, mining was still a hazardous enterprise, resulting in many accidents and the long term ill-health of miners.

Incorporating the existing Coity colliery and Kearsley’s pit (sunk in 1860), the Big Pit was opened in 1880, so called because it was the first shaft in Wales large enough to allow two tramways. At the height of coal production, there were over 160 drift mines and over 30 shafts working the nine seams in Blaenavon. Big Pit alone employed some 1,300 men digging a quarter of a million tons of coal a year. Large amounts of coal were needed to supply the local ironworks, as it took three tons of coal to produce one ton of iron. Blaenavon ‘steam’ coal was of high quality and it was exported globally. Burning hotly while leaving minimum ash, it

was ideal to power steam engines in Royal Navy ships and steam locomotive railways across the world.

The need to maintain coal supplies (a primary energy source) had figured in both world wars. As well as an energy supply, coal became a very political issue, due to conditions under which colliers worked and the way they were treated by colliery owners. However the economic situation and politics after World War 1, the General Strike of 1926, the Depression in the 1930s, the Nationalisation of Coal in 1946 and the Miners' Strike of 1984-5 all took their toll and all the smaller pits were either abandoned or swallowed into Big Pit's encroaching search for new seams. Finally in February 1980 the coal ran out and even Big Pit, then the oldest remaining mine in Wales, had to close.

There is a well-known mining song part in Welsh and part in English.

I am a little collier and gweithio underground  
The raff will never torri when I go up and down  
It's bara when I'm hungry And cwrw when I'm dry  
It's gwely when I'm tired And nefoedd when I die

The complete English translation is

I am a little collier and working underground  
The rope will never break when I go up and down  
It's bread when I'm hungry And beer when I'm dry  
It's bed when I'm tired And heaven when I die

Technological development throughout the 19th and 20th centuries helped both to improve the safety of miners and the productive capacity of the collieries in which they worked. In the late 20th century, improved integration of coal extraction with bulk industries such as electrical generation helped coal maintain its position despite the emergence of alternative energy supplies such as oil, natural gas and, from the late 1950s, nuclear power used for electricity. More recently coal has faced competition from renewable energy sources (wind, solar, wave etc.) and bio-fuels.

Mining has always been especially dangerous, because of explosions, roof cave-ins and the difficulty of underground rescue. During the period 1850 to 1930 the South Wales coalfield had the worst disaster record. This was due to the increasing number of mines being sunk to greater depths into gas-containing strata, combined with poor safety and management practices. As a result there were nearly forty underground explosions in the Glamorgan and Monmouthshire areas of the coalfield during this time. Most of the explosions were caused by firedamp ignitions followed by coal dust explosions. Deaths were mainly caused

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by carbon monoxide poisoning. Each accident resulted in the deaths of twenty or more workers – either directly in the explosion or by suffocation by the poisonous gases formed. The total death toll from these disasters was 3,119 people

The worst single disaster in British coal mining history was at Senghenydd in the South Wales coalfield. On the morning of 14th October 1913 an explosion and subsequent fire killed 436 men and boys. Only 72 bodies were recovered. It followed a series of many extensive Mining accidents in the late 19th century. Other major accidents in Wales were:

290 deaths at the Albion Colliery in Cilfynydd, Glamorgan, in a gas explosion on 25th June 1894.

272 deaths at the Prince of Wales Colliery, Abercarn, Monmouthshire, in an explosion on 11th September 1878.

266 deaths in the Gresford Disaster near Wrexham in North Wales on 22nd September 1934.

Morfa Colliery, near Port Talbot, and Black Vein Colliery, Risca, Monmouthshire, suffered three disasters before they were closed as being unsafe.

As well as disasters directly affecting mines, there have been disasters attributable to the impact of mining on the surrounding landscapes and communities. The Aberfan disaster in 1966 buried a school in South Wales when a huge slag heap collapsed, killing 116 children and 28 adults.



The Big Pit National Coal Museum

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Below is an alphabetical list of Welsh coal mines:-

- Abercynon Colliery (closed 1988)
- Aberpergwm (anthracite coal, drift mine, closed in 1985 then reopened in 1996 after being purchased by an American company)
- Bedwas Navigation Colliery (closed 1985)
- Bersham Colliery (closed 1986)
- Big Pit (closed 1980) Now the Big Pit National Coal Museum
- Black Vein Colliery, Risca (closed 1921)
- Blaenant Colliery (closed 1990)
- Cefn Coed (closed 1968) Now the Cefn Coed Colliery Museum
- Celynyn South Colliery in Abercarn (closed 1985)
- Cynheidre Colliery (closed 1989)
- Deep Navigation Colliery, Treharris (Closed 1991)
- Ffos-y-fran (open-cast mine closed in 1980) Now part of the Merthyr Land Reclamation Scheme
- Gresford Colliery (closed 1973)
- Lady Windsor Colliery in Ynysybwl (closed 1988); linked underground to Abercynon Colliery
- Mardy Colliery in Maerdy (closed 1990), linked underground to Tower Colliery
- Morfa Colliery, Port Talbot (closed 1913)
- Mostyn Colliery (closed 1887 after flooding)
- Nantgarw Colliery (amalgamated with Windsor Colliery in 1974, closed 1986); deepest pit in the South Wales Coalfield when sunk in 1915
- Nine Mile Point Colliery at Cwmmfelinfach (closed 1964)
- Oakdale Colliery at Ty Mellyn in the Sirhowy Valley (closed 1989; linked to Markham and Celynyn North)
- Prince of Wales colliery in Abercarn (closed 1959)
- Point of Ayr (closed 1996)
- Senghenydd, (converted to a ventilation facility for Windsor Colliery and then closed in 1988).
- Seven Sisters (anthracite; closed 1963)
- Tower Colliery (closed 1994 and re-opened after an employees' buy-out 1995; closed again 2008 after exhaustion of the seam, but with plans to build an open-cast mine in its place)
- Windsor Colliery in Abertridwr, Caerphilly; (closed 1986)
- Wyllye Colliery in the Sirhowy Valley (closed 1968)

Researched by Roger Pike

## QUARTER DAYS

In British and Irish tradition, the quarter days were the four dates in each year on which servants were hired, school terms started and rents were due. They fell on four religious festivals roughly three months apart and close to the two solstices and two equinoxes.

The dates of the English Quarter Days (also observed in Wales) are

- Lady Day (25 March)
- Midsummer Day (24 June)
- Michaelmas (29 September)
- Christmas (25 December)

There is a mnemonic for remembering on which day of the month the first three quarter days fall (Christmas being easy to recall): the first digit is always 2 and the second digit of the day of the month is the number of letters in the month's name. So March has five letters so Lady Day is 25 March; similarly June has four letters and September nine, thus Midsummer Day and Michaelmas fall on the 24th and 29th respectively.

Quarter days have been observed at least since the Middle Ages and they ensured that debts and unresolved lawsuits were not allowed to linger beyond that date. Accounts had to be settled, a reckoning had to be made and publicly recorded on the quarter days, except that in December Christmas Eve was considered a more suitable day for business.

Lady Day was also the first day of the year in British dominions (excluding Scotland) until 1752, when it was harmonised with the Scottish practice of 1st January being New Year's Day. The British tax year still starts on "Old" Lady Day (the 6th April under the Gregorian calendar corresponds to the 25th March under the Julian calendar).

The cross-quarter days were four holidays falling in between the quarter days: Candlemas (2 February), May Day (1 May), Lammas (1 August), and All Hallows (1 November), when servants were given a day off.

The significance of quarter days is now limited, although leasehold payments and rents for some land and premises in England are often still due on the old English quarter days. Many school terms used to start on Quarter days and that which started on 29 September was known as the Michaelmas Term – and still is at some of the more traditional universities.

Roger Pike

## PAST HAPPENINGS ON DAYS IN DECEMBER

The series of historical events that happened on specific days concludes with a list of incidents that occurred on each day of December in years gone by.

- December 1st The small village of Ystradfellte in Powys was connected to mains electricity in 2005 – the last settlement in Wales to be wired.
- December 2nd During the *Manhattan Project*, scientist initiated the first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction in 1942.
- December 3rd The National Trust bought Dinefwr Park in Llandeilo, including the deer park, in 1987.
- December 4th Pan American World Airway went bankrupt after 64 years of operations in 1991.
- December 5th The first motorway in the UK, the 8¼ mile M6 Preston By-pass, was opened in 1958 by Prime Minister Harold Macmillan.
- December 6th The Open University began offering courses in the Welsh language in 1989.
- December 7th The National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth was brought into use in 1916.
- December 8th Former Beatle John Lennon was shot dead outside his New York apartment in 1980.
- December 9th The first episode of the world's longest-running television soap opera, *Coronation Street*, was broadcast in 1960.
- December 10th The first UK youth hostel of the Youth Hostels Association opened in North Wales in the Conwy valley in 1930.
- December 11th Cardiff Airport at Rhoose was opened by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh in 1972.
- December 12th Four holiday homes in rural Wales were the target of arson attacks by Welsh Nationalist political activists in 1979.
- December 13th In 1958 a new road bridge across the River Conwy at Conwy (to replace Telford's 1826 Suspension Bridge) was opened.
- December 14th For the first time, home rule for Wales was included in the manifesto of the Labour Party in 1918.
- December 15th New speed limits were introduced on UK roads to save fuel in 1974. They were 70 mph on Motorways, 60 mph on Dual Carriageways and 50 mph on other roads.

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- December 16th Her Majesty opened “The Queen’s Building”, part of the new central terminal area built to accommodate the increasing numbers of air passengers at Heathrow Airport in 1955.
- December 17th The new Royal Mint plant in Llantrisant was officially opened in 1968 and acquired the nickname “The Hole with the Mint”.
- December 18th The River Severn was re-channelled in 1967 to prevent Newtown (Montgomeryshire) being further damaged by floods.
- December 19th The first Girl Guide company in Wales was formed at Carmarthen in 1910.
- December 20th Cardiff was declared the official capital of Wales in 1955.
- December 21st A bomb exploded on board Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 in 1988.
- December 22nd Berlin’s most famous landmark, the Brandenburg Gate, was reopened in 1989, after almost three decades, thus effectively ending the division between East and West Germany.
- December 23rd Dr Beeching, who instigated controversial changes to the rail network, resigned as Chairman of British Railways in 1964.
- December 24th The Apollo 8 spacecraft and its crew of 3 astronauts became the first manned space mission to orbit the Moon in 1968.
- December 25th In 1952 British and Commonwealth listeners heard the Queen’s first Christmas radio broadcast since her accession to the throne.
- December 26th An earthquake under the Indian Ocean triggered a tsunami that killed over 10,000 people in southern Asia in 2004.
- December 27th The Rotary Club opened its first branches in Wales, at Cardiff and Llanelli, in 1917.
- December 28th During a storm in 1879, the Tay Bridge collapsed taking a train into the Firth of Tay at Dundee, killing 75 people.
- December 29th Thomas à Beckett was martyred in 1170 in Canterbury Cathedral.
- December 30th Electronic detectors to indicate the presence of harmful gasses in coal mines replaced canaries in 1986.
- December 31st Donald Campbell broke the world water speed record in 1964, the only man to break both land and water speed records in the same year.

Researched by Roger Pike

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## AN APPEAL FOR HELP

For a variety of reasons it has not been possible to translate into Welsh any items in this edition of *Y Llychau*. Articles are normally received for inclusion in the newsletter less than a fortnight before they have to be assembled into the format necessary for printing. During this time they also have to be translated.

To prevent a repetition of this situation in the future, it is essential that (a) more contributions are received in good time and (b) we find more people prepared to translate. If **YOU** can help in this way, please contact me. The more volunteers we have, the less work each has to do. **Without more translators there will be less Welsh in each issue in future.**

Roger Pike  
Newsletter "Editor"

**Bryn Heulog, Talley, Llandeilo, SA19 7YH**

Tel: **01558 685741**

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

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## THE NEXT ISSUE

Intended Publication Date – **Saturday 2nd January 2016**

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 22nd November 2015** (to allow time for translation)

For contributions written in **English**

**Saturday 29th November 2015.**

**A JOYFUL AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL**

**NADOLIG LLAWEN I CHWI I GYD**