

Y Llychau

A NEWSLETTER FOR TALLEY & THE SURROUNDING AREA

www.talley.org.uk/y-llychau

Issue 62
Rhifyn 62

January 2017
Ionawr 2017



THE BISHOP-ELECT OF ST DAVIDS

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 FRONT PAGE

The picture on the front page shows the Reverend Canon Joanna Susan Penberthy outside St Davids Cathedral just after the announcement that she had been elected as first woman in Wales to be a bishop. Jo, as she is affectionately known in the Talley area, will be the 129th Bishop of the Diocese. We wish her well in her new position. Please see the article on page 4.

THE EDITOR WRITES

A very Happy New Year to you all.

Welcome to the first edition of *Y Llychau* in 2017. It is not often that I am able to report good news about our little Newsletter, but on this occasion I am delighted to tell you of not one but two items that gave me pleasure as I was compiling the contents of this issue, our 62nd.

Firstly, as many of you will know, it was when Jo Penberthy was vicar of Talley that *Y Llychau* was launched back in 2008. She was not only a regular contributor to its pages in the early days, but she never failed to give her support to me as “editor”. Without her enthusiasm the Newsletter project would never have started. Her appointment as bishop recognises the important parochial work she did in Talley and the other parishes in which she served as vicar since leaving us eight years ago.

The second item of good news is that on this occasion I have obtained sufficient articles from readers to fill our target of 40 pages, In fact so many contributions were received that some have had to be held over for inclusion in the next issue, due to be published in March. To those readers whose pieces are in this edition I say a heart-felt “Thank You” and to those whose articles will not appear until March, I apologise, but I am very appreciative of the way you responded to my pleas for contributions. I am indebted to you all for your support.

I also acknowledge with gratitude the financial contributions that I have received to enable *Y Llychau* to carry on being produced. I will do my best to ensure that the Newsletter continues to contain articles of interest, but that mainly depends on the continuing contributions from its readers.

Roger Pike

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OUR NEW BISHOP

The Right Reverend Wyn Evans retired as Bishop of St Davids on his seventieth birthday in October 2016 after eight years in the post. His successor was chosen the following month. On Tuesday 1st November the 47 members of the Electoral College, under the leadership of the Archbishop of Wales, the Very Reverend Dr Barry Morgan met behind the locked doors of St Davids Cathedral to elect the new bishop. At mid-day on Wednesday 2nd November, the Archbishop emerged to announce their decision. The Reverend Canon Joanna Susan Penberthy had been elected to be the 129th Bishop of St Davids.



She is the first woman to be appointed bishop in the Church in Wales, following the Governing Body's decision in September 2013 to enable women's

ordination to the episcopate. Her election was confirmed at a Sacred Synod of the Church in Wales on 30th November and her consecration as a bishop will follow in Llandaff Cathedral on 21st January. She will then be formally enthroned in St Davids on 11th February.

Following the announcement, Canon Joanna said she was “immensely humbled and honoured” by the trust placed in her. “I am very much looking forward to returning to St Davids and serving God’s people as their Bishop” she said “and as the first woman to be elected to episcopal orders in the Church in Wales, I hope that my ministry will be an expression of our common calling to live Christ.”

The Archbishop of Wales described the result of the election as “an historic moment for the Church in Wales” This was the first episcopal election in Wales in which women were eligible. “But,” he added, “what is really important to stress is that Joanna wasn’t elected because she is a woman but because she was deemed to be the best person to be a bishop. She has considerable gifts – she is an excellent preacher and communicator, can relate to all sections of the community, is a warm, charismatic, caring priest and someone who is full of joy.”

Joanna Susan Penberthy was born in 1960. In 1981 she obtained a BA from Newnham College, Cambridge and a MA in 1985. After theological training in Nottingham and Durham, she was made a Deaconess in 1987 and served in Durham before working in that role in Cardiff. Her ordination training had to be done in England because, at that time, women were barred from undertaking it in Wales.

She became a priest in 1997, among the first group of women to be ordained priests in Wales. After serving as a non-stipendiary minister in the dioceses of Cardiff, St Asaph and St Davids, in 1999 she was appointed priest-in-charge of Caio, Llansawel and Talley. In 2001 she was made Vicar of these three parishes and in 2002 took on the role of Training Tutor for Lay Readers in the diocese before she became the first female Canon of St Davids cathedral in 2007. In 2010, Jo left Wales to serve as a Vicar in the English diocese of Bath & Wells, but returned to the principality five years later to take up the position of Rector of the Glan Ithon benefice, the group of parishes centred on Llandrindod Wells in Powys. I am sure that her parishioners there will be as sorry to see her leave them as we were when she left Talley six years ago – but we’re delighted to have her back!

Roger Pike

JANUARY IN WALES

Hen Galan

Most people in the UK and the western world celebrate New Year on 1 January, following the Gregorian calendar. However in the Gwaun Valley near Fishguard in Pembrokeshire people celebrate the New Year on 13 January, following the older Julian calendar. The Julian calendar was controversially abolished in 1752 and replaced with the Gregorian calendar, which had been adopted by Pope Gregory XIII nearly 200 years earlier, but the inhabitants of the small wooded valley of Cwm Gwaun resisted the change.

To mark their resistance, in true Welsh tradition, the children of the area still go from door to door singing in Welsh on 13 January to wish residents a happy and healthy New Year. In return the children receive their 'Calennig', or New Year gifts (usually sweets, fruit and money).

However, it is not only the young people of the valley that celebrate the New Year two weeks later than the rest of us. The day has become a traditional family feast day in the area. At mid-day, roast turkey or roast duck form the basis of the large celebratory meal in many homes, usually followed by singing, dancing, party games and (much to the delight of the children) the exchange of presents.

In 2014, the local school reported almost empty classrooms on that day. I wonder why? These days schools in Cwm Gwaun are closed on 13 January.

St Dwynwen's Day

Each year on 25 January Welsh people celebrate St Dwynwen's Day, or 'Diwrnod Santes Dwynwen'. Dwynwen was Wales' patron saint of lovers, and this day is really the Welsh equivalent of St Valentine's Day. However, being a romantic country, they also celebrate St Valentine's Day itself on 14 February!

The story of Dwynwen dates back to the 5th century, when Dwynwen fell in love with a Prince called Maelon Dafodrill. However, her father was determined that she would marry another man. Dwynwen was devastated that she would not be allowed to marry her true love and begged God to make her forget Maelon. In response to her plea, an angel is said to have visited Dwynwen to give her a potion, which was supposed to make her have no memory of Maelon and turn him into a block of ice.

The angel also granted Dwynwen three wishes. Firstly she wished for Maelon to be thawed, secondly that God meet the hopes and dreams of true lovers and

thirdly she wished that she would never marry. She devoted the rest of her life to God's service, founding a convent on Llanddwyn, an island off Anglesey in North West Wales. The remains of the church she is said to have established on the island can still be seen today.

Also on the island there is a well, where, according to legend, a sacred fish swims. It is said that the fish can predict the happiness of relationships. Visitors still go to the well today, hoping that the water will boil, meaning that love and good luck will follow them.

Lovespoons

Welsh Lovespoons make an ideal gift for a loved one on St Dwywen's Day. The giving and receiving of lovespoons between lovers, friends and family is a Welsh custom that dates back to the 17th century. Traditionally a lovespoon was made from wood and carved by a young man to present to the woman he loved as a token of his affection. The earliest surviving Welsh lovespoon dates back to 1667 and is kept at St Fagans Museum of Welsh life, although the custom was widespread long before that date.

Today lovespoons are still popular, being gifts given to celebrate many occasions such as births, Christenings, weddings, anniversaries and retirement. Visitors to Wales often take home a lovespoon to have something uniquely Welsh to remind them of their visit to the Principality.

A lovespoon is usually decorated with traditional symbols, with each one having a certain significance and meaning. Here are some of them:

- Bell – weddings, anniversaries
- Ball(s) in cage – number of children
- Cross – faith
- Diamond – wealth, good fortune
- Heart – Love
- Horseshoe – good luck
- Key/Keyhole – security, home
- Celtic knot – everlasting, together forever
- Dragon – Protection, symbol of Wales

Roger Pike

HOUSE HUNTING

We never intended to come to Wales. Our sights were firmly set upon Scotland, or failing that, East Anglia. Every weekend for the better part of two years we piled into the car and headed out full of hope and optimism and armed with maps (this was long before sat-navs, dear reader) and sheaves of paper supplied by the estate agents we had contacted. We rarely ended up where we were headed. We saw a myriad properties we had initially scorned and very few that we had deemed likely. Our wants were few. A large, old house in need of TLC and isolated from neighbours who might harbour noisy appendages such as dogs and children. If this sounds harsh and unreasonable do bear in mind that we had lived twenty years in a North London town house with paper-thin walls and a shared frontage.

The vast majority of the houses we viewed sank without trace, but a handful are indelibly printed on my memory. Mainly because I still wonder how their owners ever thought they could sell them on in the condition in which we found them. There were houses with boarded-up windows, partial roofs, situated cheek-by-jowl with bell towers and iron foundries, nestling by deep ponds and fast-flowing rivers – one actually in a pond – and there was, for example, Henrietta, a boundlessly enthusiastic young woman who was justly proud of her impeccable stable block (had we known there was one we wouldn't have come) and its sleek, well-groomed inhabitants. Her actual house, on the other hand, was a lop-sided hovel whose upper floor was supported by iron jacks around which we were obliged to weave as we progressed from room to room. The bake-oven – a 'feature' – was spewing thick ash and clinker over the kitchen floor and every sink appeared to be full of water in which floated headless plastic dolls. We counted four, possibly five, small daughters (impossible to tell since they wouldn't keep still) who were anything but sleek and groomed and all sporting names like Portia and Hermione.

There was one place in Yorkshire, tucked at the bottom of a one-in-four hill, which proved absolutely full of ancient fire-arms arranged in patterns like the hall of a National Trust castle but whose living-room had no windows as such, merely horizontal slits along the edge of the ceiling beneath which someone had thoughtfully provided a high ledge so that one could just see out by standing on tiptoe upon it and craning upwards. Another Yorkshire property we viewed was quite ordinary until one happened on the kitchen, a cavernous space with an iron walkway, accessed by a spiral stair, encircling a glass ceiling dome, presumably a converted Victorian conservatory.

As we headed up what is now 'our lane' for the first time, my father, constitutionally incapable of backing a car – he was no great shakes at parking, either, having learned to drive in a tank – said he didn't think we could possibly live here because of the very real possibility of meeting another vehicle on the way in. He then took exception to the retaining wall at the rear of the property; he just *knew* it was about to tumble down and engulf the entire building. It is, naturally, still doing its duty undeterred by the relentless Welsh rainfall which alone at our house appears to have no obvious discernible means of draining away. Everyone else has drainage pipes and ditches. We do not. Then if the wall spared us, he was persuaded the trees would not, doubtless crashing through the roof in the first high wind. In short, he didn't want to live here. Reluctantly, we told the lady of the house that we could not consider buying her house and sped off down the lane lest we meet anyone bent on coming up it. Three days later, we made a successful offer, packed up our belongings and headed west. For the record, during all our car-owning years we never, ever met anyone coming towards us up the lane.

S Shawe

TALLEY OPEN GARDENS DAY

Since the first Talley Open Gardens day in 2010, this annual function has become an accepted part of the life of the area on the second Saturday of June. Originally envisaged as a one-off event for a few keen gardeners to visit each other's gardens and share the occasion with local residents, it has evolved into a very pleasant social experience, attracting visitors from outside the area. In fact, the gardens that usually open on these occasions now include Cwmdru as well as Talley.

Although few visitors manage to visit every garden that is open in the six and a half hours allocated – 10.00am to 4.30pm – the variation of garden designs and the vast range of plants and other garden contents on display make for a very interesting day. Many of those who visit the gardens are curious to see how the many different uses of the land, normally hidden behind private homes.

This 2017 Talley Open Gardens Day will be on **Saturday 10th June**. If you would like your garden to be included this time, please contact me for an application form. My contact details are on the back page.

Roger Pike

THE TALLEY DINNER

The annual Talley Community Dinner this year will be on

FRIDAY 10th FEBRUARY

at THE WHITE HART, LLANDEILO

7.00 pm for 7.30 pm

For more years than some of us care to remember, this popular annual event has been splendidly organised by Geraint, ably supported by his wife Jean. Not only is it a well-liked social event it also raises a lot of money for local charities. However, Geraint has announced that this year will be the last time that he will be organising the dinner. On behalf of the whole community I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation of Geraint's involvement in this event over so many years. His organisational prowess will be sadly missed.

Ed

“ALTERNATIVE” NEW ZEALAND

Part 1

In 1989 I visited New Zealand. This wasn't a few weeks in holiday mode seeing the sights and bungee jumping etc. but a year long quest to see if New Zealand could provide a new home as an alternative to the depressing mood of 80's Britain. A 'cheap flight' on Garuda Indonesia Airlines took 36 hours and four stops without any sleep, so I arrived at the other end of the world the worse for wear.

I took the first bus out of Auckland, which dropped me off on the Coromandel peninsular on the north-east coast of North Island. I was immediately struck by the abundance of bird life as I walked along the coast road. Where in Britain one might see a few birds, here there were thousands. The land, the sea and the air all felt fresh and clean and the sky was clear and bright. I was given a lift by a young man who offered to put me up in his home – this proved to be typical Kiwi hospitality.

When I had recovered from my journey I was taken further up the coast to a place called Wilderland, a community of 'alternative' types set up many years before by a now elderly couple, Dan and Judith. Dan had been injured as a young man and was confined to a wheelchair, but that had not stopped him from creating

what I can only describe as a paradise on earth. His community of 180 acres and, perhaps, 40 people overlooked a tidal estuary and the well wooded land produced an incredible range of organically grown crops.

There were 200 bee hives, a pumpkin barn which stored hundreds of pumpkins and squashes, orchards of mandarin oranges, kiwi fruit, sweet avocados, passion fruit, apples, pears, tree tomatoes, pine nuts and macadamia nuts as well as a full range of vegetables, including the mauri sweet potatoes known as Kumara – to name just some of the crops grown. There was sufficient to feed the community with the surplus being sold in their own shop on the main road.

Residents lived in wooden cabins scattered among the trees. They met and shared meals and social events in the community hall, below which was a store full of such products needed by, but not produced by, the community which were provided free of charge. Thus the community was not dependent on support from outside as the sale of produce provided sufficient income to pay any outgoings.

Below the settlement was a jetty where boats were moored and one could sail or row to town on the tide past an island covered in mangroves. At night the sound of Morepork owls would be heard. Opposite the town of Whitianga was an old Mauri fort at the mouth of the estuary and one day, as we approached the beach below the fort by boat, a fish in the shallows leapt out of the water onto the sand in front of me. It was called a John Dory and we had it for dinner. It was the easiest catch I ever made.

Along the coast was a beach, called Hot Water Beach, and there you could dig a hollow in the sand which would fill up with hot water. After warming yourself in the pool you could run into the surf for a refreshing swim. This place truly was a paradise – but with one catch. Dan's spinal injury was caused when a man whose lorry Dan was mending drove over him not realising he was underneath. The man was smoking a cigarette at the time and Dan blamed the man's distraction on this fact. So the Wilderland community had a strict no drugs rule, which included tobacco and alcohol. Even tea and coffee were frowned upon. After many months enjoying the abundance and beauty of Wilderland, we and some others shared a bottle of wine and were told to leave.

This prompted us to travel to the South Island and further adventures.

(To be continued)

Peter Gardner

THE CASTLES OF CARMARTHENSHIRE

(part 3)

This concluding part of this short series covers the last four of the ten castles in our county.

DRYSLWYN CASTLE

Many early Welsh castles were similar in design, consisting of a strong tower and a defended ward, the size of which was dictated by the location. They occupied defensible positions on hilltops, overlooking valleys, and the similarity between the layouts of Dryslwyn and nearby Dinefwr supports the theory that they were both



built by the same person. The earliest castle at Dryslwyn was probably constructed during the second quarter of the 13th century and the first reliable documentary reference to it, in 1246, mentions a siege by the steward of Carmarthen on behalf of its 'rightful owner', but no indication of the outcome is given nor the name of the 'rightful owner'.

There were many additions to the castle in the years which followed. In the mid 13th century, another tower and a second ward were added, virtually doubling the overall size of the stronghold. Rhys ap Maredudd, who had been rewarded for his loyalty to the Crown in the war of 1282-83, probably used the wealth he derived from his new lands to invest in the extensive building programme at Dryslwyn. By 1287 Rhys had made Dryslwyn one of the largest masonry castles ever raised by a native Welsh lord; a structure impressive enough to rival any raised by Anglo-Norman and English lords of the March.

Rhys ap Maredudd was soon involved in a series of bitter disputes and in 1287 he suddenly attacked and captured the castles of Dinefwr, Carreg Cennen and Llandovery. Their constables were slaughtered and many defenders left for dead. The English response was swift and immensely powerful. An army of some 11,000 men under the command of the king's cousin, Earl Edmund of Cornwall, was raised from various parts of England and Wales and they laid siege to

Dryslwyn Castle, where Rhys had established his headquarters. The castle fell after just three weeks, during which time Dinefwr had also been retaken. Rhys himself fled, but after a few more years of resistance he was captured in 1292 and executed at York for treason.

During the English occupation of the castle after the 1287 siege, although much repair work was undertaken, there was very little new building work done. The castle was very deliberately decommissioned by the English in the early 15th century – passages and gateways were walled up, doors were removed and some stairways blocked or damaged – presumably to prevent the site from ever being held again by any hostile forces.

LAUGHARNE CASTLE

Laugharne village, south of St Clears, is perhaps best known today for its associations with Dylan Thomas, but centuries ago it was renowned for its castle mansion. There was probably a Norman castle on a low cliff overlooking the estuary of the river Taf by the early 12th century. Laugharne may be the castle mentioned in 1116 as the castle of



Robert Courtemain, but the first definite reference to the Norman castle is in 1189 when, after the death of Henry II, it was seized by the Lord Rhys, prince of Deheubarth.

The original castle was probably a ringwork, but remodelled in the second half of the 12th century It again attracted hostility from the Welsh in 1215 when it was destroyed by Llywelyn the Great and later, in 1257, when it was again taken and burnt. By this time it was in the ownership of the de Brian family who rebuilt it as a strong masonry castle, part of which remains today. The de Brians remained the lords of Laugharne until the end of the 14th century. In 1349 the lordship was inherited by the distinguished Guy de Brian VII, who greatly improved the overall standard of accommodation within the castle. Guy de Brian's death in 1390 was

followed by a long period of decline and in the late 15th and early 16th century only parts of the castle were occupied. However, a real change came about in the castle's fortunes when, in 1575, Elizabeth I granted it to Sir John Perrot (said to have been the illegitimate son of Henry VIII), who converted the old medieval castle into a comfortable Tudor mansion. Unfortunately for the castle, Perrot became too powerful for Royal comfort, and in 1592 he was sentenced to death for high treason, although he died of natural causes, in the same year before the sentence could be carried out.

During the Civil War, Laugharne was captured by Royalists in 1644, but was quickly re-taken by besieging Roundheads. The castle was partially destroyed soon afterwards and gradually fell into decay. It was left as a romantic ruin during the 18th century and at the turn of the 19th century the outer ward was laid with formal gardens. The gazebo overlooking the estuary was used in the 1930s and 40s by the author Richard Hughes, who leased Castle House during this period.

NEWCASTLE EMLYN CASTLE

The castle at Newcastle Emlyn, 10 miles South-East of Cardigan, stands on a picturesque, grassy site overlooking a loop on the River Teifi. It was probably founded by Maredudd ap Rhys around 1240 and is one of the few castles built by the Welsh in stone. His son, Rhys ap Maredudd, held the castle in 1287, but it changed hands



three times during his successful revolt against the English crown from 1287 to 1289. After Rhys had finally been defeated and killed, the castle became crown property and remained so until 1349.

In 1403 the castle was taken by Owain Glyndŵr, but was described as being in ruins by 1428. Sir Rhys ap Thomas, friend of Henry VII, acquired and repaired it in about 1500. It again changed hands a number of times before the Civil War, during which it was held by Parliament until its capture by Sir Charles Gerard in 1644. Major-General Rowland Laugharne besieged it for Parliament in 1645, but

was routed by Gerard in a fierce engagement below the castle walls. After the general surrender of the Royalists, the castle was blown up to make it indefensible and, according to a source of 1700, the castle was plundered and then neglected.

While a crown property, an impressive twin-towered gatehouse was added to the west side of the triangular inner ward. Its construction was begun in the reign of Edward II (1307-27) but it was not completed until 1349. Much later, Sir Rhys ap Thomas inserted large windows in the towers, as by then comfort was more important than defence. His alterations were intended to make Newcastle Emlyn a county seat rather than a military post.

CASTELL MOEL

Nothing is known about the history of the worn motte and bailey known as Castell Moel located about 500 metres south of a late medieval masonry castle of the same name.



This later Castell Moel (also known as Green Castle or Castle Mole) was really of a 16th century fortified manor house approximately 2½

miles south-west of Carmarthen. It stands on a plateau overlooking the River Towy and, although called a castle, is really a medieval L-plan hall house, once owned by the Rede family. The walls of the structure once supported a crenelated parapet, although it is doubtful that the building was ever intended for serious defensive purposes.

A report of 1917 stated that the remains of a motte and bailey castle were easily traceable, and that it became known as the 'old castle'. A more recent (1992) report by the Dyfed Archaeological Trust could find no trace of the older castle. Today the ruins are much overgrown and are located on private property.

Roger Pike

ELIZABETH ANDREWS

In the coal mining valleys of South Wales at the beginning of the 20th century, life was hard, not only for the miners but for their wives as well. Like the men who worked down the pits, the women's lives revolved around the miners' shift patterns. They needed to be on hand to provide hot baths and food for their husbands and sons when they came in from work. Very few (if any) homes in which miners lived had bathrooms or hot water, so galvanised metal baths had to be brought in and the water heated either in kettles on the fire or in pots on the cooker.

The task of lifting and pouring boiling water was relentless and physically exhausting work normally carried out by the women of the house. With no domestic appliances to make light of the work, cooking and cleaning also fell to the women. In the early 1900s, when it was normal for a married woman in Wales to spend around 15 years having children, wives were also expected to take care of the youngsters, who often suffered a range of illnesses because of the poor living conditions.

A report at the time in the Pontypridd area showed that, in the 20-40 age range, the death rate for women was significantly higher than that for men. Clearly, domestic labour could be more dangerous than working down a pit. Child mortality was also high, especially in the mining valleys. In the Rhondda, 10% of babies died before their first birthday. At that stage there were no trained midwives and no National Health Service to provide infant care and advice. The welfare needs of working class women (and their children) were ignored in the male-dominated world of politics and it was evident that improvements could only be brought about through political means.

It took a local girl to produce the changes necessary to enhance the living conditions of miners' families.

Elizabeth Andrews, née Smith, was born in 1882 into a mining family in the Cynon Valley (between the Rhondda and the Merthyr Valleys), one of eleven children (two of whom died during childhood). As the oldest daughter, she was obliged to leave school at the age of twelve, in order to help out at home.

Ten years later, she wrote a letter to the local press in support of Evan Roberts, a leading figure of the 1904–1905 Welsh Christian Revival movement and this gained her some attention. She was a supporter of the Women's Suffrage movement, so she joined the suffragettes and became a member of the Labour Party.

Y Llychau

In 1919 the “Sankey Commission” was set up to examine the future of the coal mining industry and consider the issues of miners’ working conditions, wages and hours. Elizabeth Andrews was one of three women who gave evidence before the Commission. As a member of the Labour party, she was also invited to make a speech in the House of Lords. She stressed the strain placed on the women of South Wales by lifting and carrying hot water every day at the end of each shift, and her evidence led to the installing of pit-head baths at collieries. Elizabeth highlighted how the introduction of these baths could save lives; and she got results – by 1924 they had become compulsory in all pits in England and Wales.

Her pioneering work did not stop there. As soon as women received the vote, the Labour Party appointed four female organisers, of whom Elizabeth Andrews was one. During the Depression years of the 1920s and 30s, she was responsible for 800 children from the South Wales valleys being temporarily adopted by wealthier families in London, Birmingham and Swindon.

She campaigned tirelessly for health and education services. One of her great successes was the opening of the first nursery school in Wales in the Rhondda in 1938. She encouraged many birth control campaigners to come to South Wales. In most miners’ homes money was tight and an extra mouth to feed at the table added extra financial strain on the whole family. Abortion was illegal until the 1960s, and women put themselves in huge danger by turning to untrained people to carry out abortions.

She was awarded the OBE in 1948 for her social work and her services as a Justice of the Peace..

Elizabeth Andrews died in 1960, but in 2006 her book ‘A Woman’s Work is Never Done’, which had originally been published 1952, was reprinted following a revival in her work by Glenys Kinnock.

Roger Pike

SOME GOOD NEWS FOR TALLEY?

For years Talley has suffered the gradual reduction of services and activities which is typical of villages throughout Wales, the rest of Britain and indeed many countries across the world. Talley’s historical records and the memories of long term residents remind us of a time when the community was more self-contained and social life tended to be much more localised than it is today.

In the last decade we have seen the run-down and final closure of the Edwingsford Arms, as its owners hoped to make a quick buck at the expense of the village. Years passed and most potential buyers ran a mile when they saw the problems associated with reopening the old Edwingsford and developing houses for what seems to have been a very quiet, slow moving market.

The shop and post office are also long gone and the smart refurbishment of the building confirmed that Talley shoppers would have to travel further or rely on the ubiquitous Tesco and Asda delivery vans. In many ways of course shopping in a village like Talley has improved immeasurably in the past decade. A click of the button to place an order and in no time at all our friends from Hermes, Yodel, DPD and of course the posties bring us goods from across Britain and beyond. Friends from ‘the city’ are often surprised how easy and convenient it is. Fortunately the revitalised Cwmdu shop provides local shopping– worthy of broad support (as of course is their pub)!

St Michael’s Church has suffered as the diocese was unable to find an effective successor to Jo Penberthy (now Bishop elect of St Davids) and Talley and other local parishes had come to rely on the indefatigable efforts of John Walford, who went way beyond the call of duty as Lay Reader. His retirement was a great blow.

[Editor’s note – As a mark of appreciation of John’s support for local churches over many years, the congregations of Talley, Caio, Llansawel and Abergorlech gave him a small gift to express their gratitude.]

The problem is, of course, that everyone wants a church (for Christmas Eve, weddings and other occasional events), a pub (for when visitors come), a shop (for when you run out of sugar) and indeed a school – it’s wonderful that Talley School is thriving and that there are more young families in the village.

So where is the good news? You will probably be aware that the old Edwingsford is now a house, gradually and painstakingly being restored by Lloyd and Emily, after years of neglect. The ‘new’ Edwingsford, i.e. the barns, has gradually been deteriorating due to lack of maintenance, heating or any other measures to prevent their inevitable final ruination. So it is excellent to be able to report that at the time of writing (end Nov 2016) an offer has been made and accepted. The buyer, from Trapp, wants to build some houses, including ‘affordable’ properties in the rear car park, and reopen the barns as a community facility/pub.

So watch this space – and if given the chance get involved in supporting a new strand to life in Talley.

John Rees

LOCAL REFUSE COLLECTIONS

USEFUL INFORMATION

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

At the start of November 2016, Carmarthenshire County Council made some changes to household refuse collections. The changes were introduced because of the new refuse collection vehicles to be used and the revised collection routes across the county. The new vehicles and routes are designed to provide an improved service, increase efficiency and help achieve the county's recycling targets. The changed refuse collection routes will include several homes that have never received a recycling service in the past.

The new vehicles have a separate compartment to keep food waste separate from the blue and black bags, which will continue to be collected on alternate weeks. As now, food waste will be collected weekly, but as it will now be segregated on the vehicle, food bin liners need no longer be used. However, the current collection of garden waste bags ceased at the end of October to be replaced by a new scheme in April 2017, full details of which will be announced nearer the time.

For a few local residents the new scheme meant that there was a change of collection day. You can check on which day refuse will be collected from your house by visiting ilocal.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/my-house. Simply enter your postcode, select your address and click 'go'. In some cases the revised routes may mean a different time of collection, but rubbish should continue to be put out by 6.00am (but NOT before 6.00pm on the day before).

It remains the responsibility of the household to provide suitable **BLACK** plastic bags for rubbish that cannot currently be recycled, but the **BLUE** bags for recyclable items will still be supplied by the County Council. Additional rolls of bags can be ordered at ilocal.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/my-house by clicking the 'request' tab.

continued on page 22

WHAT COLOUR REFUSE BAG WILL

January 2017

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 2017

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 2017

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	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			

June 2017

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	

September 2017

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

October 2017

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				

BE COLLECTED EACH WEEK IN 2017 ?

March 2017

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 2017

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

July 2017

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

August 2017

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	31		

November 2017

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 2017

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

continued from page 19

Household rubbish should be sorted and placed in bags before being put out for collection: – Blue bags for recycling, black bags for non-recyclable items.

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	Aluminium Foil

Non-recyclable Waste – (Black Bags)

The following materials should be put in the Black Bags

Tissues	Polystyrene	Wooden coat hangers
Kitchen roll	Wallpaper	Small 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

A MESSAGE FROM EBENEZER APOSTOLIC CHURCH

I seem to be fascinated by the strong and wonderful animals that God created in those first seven days and this month I am going to focus upon horses. Now, what can you say about horses? Well, I have always enjoyed horses and recently I came across a note that when I was a teenager, I rode a pony called “Scrounger” whilst on holiday in Barmouth, north Wales. Isn’t it special how horses whinny their way into one’s affections hoping for an ear tickle or maybe nuzzle into a generous pocket for a tasty morsel!



I note the way that the bible teaches us that the horse is a strong creature! Job 39 verses 19–22 reinforces this. “Job, are you the one who gives the horse its strength or puts a flowing mane on its neck? Do you make the horse jump like a locust? It scares people with its proud snorting. It paws wildly, enjoying its strength, and charges into battle. It laughs at fear and is afraid of nothing; it does not run away from the sword.” Putting this into an “easy to understand theme” – with God, we have nothing to fear, if we would only look upon Him for this security.

Ebenezer is situated in the Talley valley and I would like to invite you all to come along to one of our services and discover for yourself the truths within the pages of the bible. We have Morning Praise at 10.30 a.m. and a Gospel Service at 5.00 p.m. We have a cup of tea after our evening service and you will be very welcome. We are based near the villages of Cwmdy and Talley! Post code – SA19 7YA. Further details of our services are available from Pastor Eric Horley on 01269 593214.

Please also visit our website <http://www.apostolicchurchcwmdy.co.uk/>

Angie Davies

WELSH CONNECTIONS

I was born in New Zealand in 1953, the youngest of three children. My father was born and raised in NZ but my mother (Hannah) was born in Swansea, Wales, in 1921 and arrived in NZ with her mother (Rachel) when she was around two years old. My grandfather was a New Zealander and met Rachel when he was in the UK at the end of WW1. The story was that they married, my mother was conceived and then my grandfather had to return home and later sent for Rachel and Hannah. My aunt was born in 1924 in NZ. We were always aware that my grandfather had been married before but knew no more than that. My grandfather died in 1965 and Rachel died in 1969.

Roll forward to 1978 when I arrived in Swansea and started looking up my Welsh relatives – there were quite a few of them including an elderly brother and sister of my grandmother. As well as meeting relatives I also met my future husband (Paul). I introduced one of my mother's cousins to Paul and it turned out that Paul's family was from the same area in Swansea as many of my grandmother's family.

Paul's grandfather was a rugby fanatic and had been secretary of his local rugby club (Stepney). The cousin was very interested, particularly when he found out that Paul's grandfather had a team photo of the Stepney Rugby Club from 1911. Paul borrowed the photo from his grandfather (who was 90 at that time) and lent it to the cousin to see if he recognized anyone. He returned it but didn't comment on any of the team members.

Roll forward to 1987. Our daughter, named Rachel after my grandmother, had been born in 1981, Paul's grandfather had died in 1982 and my father had recently died in NZ. My brother and sister paid for my mother (Hannah) to come to Wales and stay with us for a few months. My sister sent off to Somerset House for Mum's birth certificate in order to apply for a passport for her. She noticed that there was no father's name on the birth certificate. She chose not to alert Mum at that stage as she had been through a difficult few months, so she just went ahead and applied for the passport. Mum stayed with us over the summer of 1987. She met up with cousins (the elderly aunt and uncle had died a few years before). She talked to them about her mother's early years but learned little new of her past life in Wales. Mum returned to NZ in that October.

While Mum had been in Wales my sister did some investigating and discovered that my grandfather was back in NZ at the time my mother was conceived in Swansea so he could not have been her father. I approached one of the cousins

still alive and he told me the story.

My grandmother was born in 1892; one of around 19 children and led a sheltered life until she met the NZ serviceman at the end of WW1. They married in Swansea. All should have been well except that he was already married with a family in NZ. He was arrested and returned to NZ to serve a jail sentence for bigamy. Rachel didn't know whether she was still married or not. She met (or possibly already knew) Anton Evans, a talented young rugby player. They had an affair and my mother was born in 1921. Rachel and Anton didn't marry (she still considered herself married) and the shame she brought on her family was such that when her now divorced "husband" was released from jail and sent for her and my mother, she went. Welsh was her first language which must have added to the difficulties she faced when she arrived in this strange country, 12,000 miles away from home. She and my "grandfather" married again in NZ and they went on to have a daughter together in 1924. They took their secret to their graves.

When my cousin finished his story, he turned to Paul and said "your family have a photo of Anton Evans". He recalled seeing the photo of the Stepney Rugby Club when Mum's other cousin borrowed it in 1978. Paul's grandfather is standing at the end in his role as secretary and my actual grandfather (Anton Evans) is standing just along from him as one of the players. We were able to copy the photo to send my mother – but the co-incidence didn't end there.

At that same time the South Wales Evening Post published a small story entitled "50 years ago" and it was taken from the Sport section of the Post in around 1938. It told the story of the Welsh International rugby player Anton Evans who started his rugby career at the Stepney Rugby Club. We later found out that Anton had never married and when he died in 1959, he had a photo of his young daughter in his pyjama pocket.

It still gives me goose bumps when I tell the story. It is amazing to think that two people born and brought up 12,000 miles apart turn out to be connected through their grandfathers. It is also quite possible that our grandmothers knew each other as our mothers were born within 3 weeks of each other with only a few streets separating them. The sad thing is that Paul's grandfather had a great memory right up until when he died at the age of 92 and would have been able to fill in some of the gaps in the story if only we had known about it earlier.

Sharon Baker (Porthselu) but living in Gower



**AAHHA! ME HEARTIES!
IT'S PANTOMIME TIME
AGAIN!**

OH, YES IT IS!

**TALLEY COMMUNITY
PLAYERS PRESENT**

**SINBAD AND THE
PIRATE TREASURE**

**ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH
SATURDAY JANUARY 28th
6.00 PM**

**COME AND ENJOY A
TRADITIONAL FAMILY
PANTOMIME,**

COME DRESSED AS A PIRATE, TO ADD TO THE FUN.

TICKETS £5 TO INCLUDE A GLASS OF WINE OR FRUIT JUICE

CHILDREN ADMITTED FREE

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION COMPULSORY,
CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION COMPULSORY,
OR YOU'LL ALL BE MADE TO WALK THE PLANK!**

**"IF YOU THOUGHT LAST YEAR WAS BAD, YOU AIN'T SEEN
NOTHING YET!"**

**TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM JEANETTE & RICHARD ON 685710
AND VARIOUS CAST MEMBERS**

ALL PROCEEDS TO ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, TALLEY

TALLEY SCHOOL

Talley CP School pupils and staff wore poppies and observed two minutes of silence as they remembered those who have lost their lives when fighting. Well done to all children for supporting the appeal and for showing such respect towards the remembering.

YSGOL TALYLLYCHAU

Buodd plant a staff Ysgol Gynradd Talylychau i gyd yn gwisgo pabi a chael 2 funud o dawelwch wrth iddynt hwy gofio am y bobl a chollwyd eu bywydau wrth ryfela. Da iawn i'r plant i gyd am gefnogi'r apêl ac am eu parch tuag at y cofio.



DID YOU KNOW?

The first Monday after Epiphany (6 January) is called Plough Monday. In the 15th and 16th centuries, it was the day that farmers returned to work after the twelve days holiday celebrating Christmas.

It was also known as St Distaff's Day because woman returned to work with their distaff (an old word for spindle) on that day.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Thank you to everyone who came or made cakes for the Macmillan World's Biggest Coffee Morning held in the Church Hall on Tuesday 4th October. It was a lovely friendly time spent with lots of tea, coffee and loads of chocolate cake.



Our new dogs came to make friends with everyone and Rocky even convinced someone to give him some Lemon Drizzle Cake.

At one point there were more cakes than people so the extra cakes were taken to the staff and children at the school.

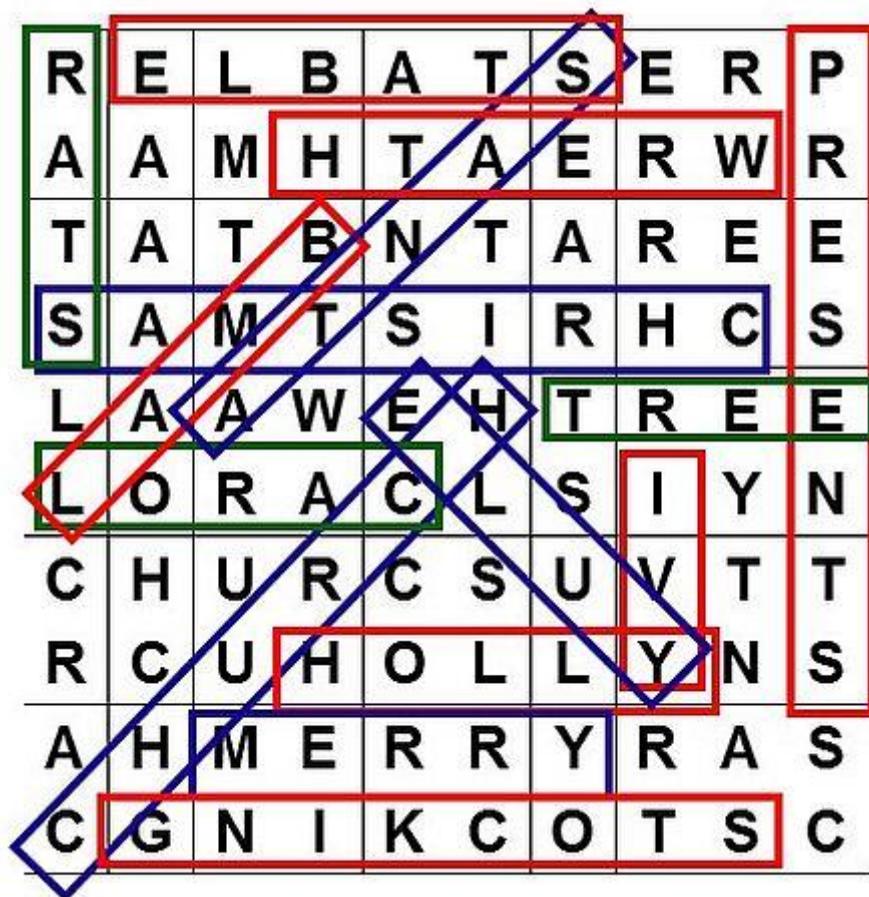
We raised a wonderful total of £225, this could run an information and support centre for a day, helping people with cancer and the people close to them.

If you would still like to donate, it's not too late, so please contact Angie Hastilow at angiehastilow@gmail.com or call on 01558 685086.

Thank you for your support.

Angie Hastilow

SOLUTION TO WORD SEARCH IN LAST ISSUE



A BRIEF HISTORY OF BRITISH MONEY Part 2

Banknotes in England and Wales

The first recorded use of paper money was in the 7th century in China. However, the practice did not become widespread in Europe for nearly a thousand years after that. In the 16th century many goldsmith-bankers began to accept deposits, using them to make loans or to transfer funds. They also gave receipts for cash (gold coins) deposited with them. These receipts, known as “running cash notes”, were made out to the name of the depositor and promised to repay him on demand. Many of these receipts also carried the words “or bearer” after the name of the depositor, which allowed them to circulate in a limited way.

In 1694 the Bank of England was established in order to raise money for William III’s war against France. Almost immediately the Bank started to issue notes in return for deposits. Like the goldsmiths’ notes, the crucial feature that made Bank of England notes a means of exchange was the promise to pay “the bearer” the sum of the note on demand. This meant that the note could be redeemed at the Bank for gold or coinage by anyone presenting it for payment; if it was not redeemed in full, it was endorsed with the amount withdrawn.

These notes were initially handwritten on special Bank paper and signed by one of the Bank’s cashiers. They were made out for the precise sum deposited in pounds, shillings and pence. However, after the re-coinage of 1696 reduced the need for small denomination notes, it was decided not to issue any notes for sums less than £50. Since the average income in that period was less than £20 a year, most people went through life without ever coming into contact with a banknote.

During the 18th century there was a gradual move toward fixed denomination notes. From 1725 the Bank was issuing partly printed notes for completion in manuscript. The £ sign and the first digit were printed but other numerals were added by hand, as were the name of the payee, the cashier’s signature, the date and the note’s serial number. Notes could be issued for any amount, but by 1745 they were only being part printed in denominations ranging from £20 to £1,000.

In 1759, gold shortages caused by the Seven Years War forced the Bank to issue a £10 note for the first time. The first £5 notes followed in 1793 at the start of the war against Revolutionary France. This remained the lowest denomination until 1797, when a series of runs on the Bank, caused by the uncertainty of the war, drained its bullion reserve to the point where it was forced to stop paying out gold for its notes. Instead, it issued £1 and £2 notes.

The Restriction Period, as the latter part of the 18th century was known, lasted until 1821 after which gold sovereigns took the place of the £1 and £2 notes. The Restriction Period prompted an Irish playwright to refer to the Bank as “an elderly lady in the City”. This was quickly changed by cartoonists to the “Old Lady of Threadneedle Street”, a name that referred to the Bank of England and has stuck ever since.

The first fully printed notes appeared in 1853 relieving the cashiers of the task of filling in the name of the payee and signing each note individually. The practice of writing the name of the Chief Cashier as the payee on notes was halted in favour of the anonymous “I promise to pay the bearer on demand the sum of ...”, which has remained unchanged on notes to this day. The printed signature on the note continued to be that of one of three cashiers until 1870, since when it has always been that of the Chief Cashier.

The First World War saw the link with gold broken once again; the Government needed to preserve its stock of bullion and the Bank ceased to pay out gold for its notes. In 1914 the Treasury printed and issued 10 shilling and £1 notes, a task which the Bank took over in 1928. The gold standard was partially restored in 1925 and the Bank was again obliged to exchange its notes for gold, but only in multiples of 400 ounces or more. Britain finally left the gold standard in 1931 and the note issue became entirely fiduciary, that is wholly backed by securities instead of gold.

The Bank of England has not always been the sole issuer of bank notes in England and Wales. Acts of Parliament in 1708 and 1709 had given it a partial monopoly by making it unlawful for a company or a partnership of more than six people to set up banks and issue its own notes.

The ban did not extend to the many provincial bankers – the so-called “country bankers” – who were all either individuals or small family concerns. However, the Country Bankers’ Act of 1826 allowed the establishment of note issuing joint-stock banks with more than six partners, but not within 65 miles of London. The Act also allowed the Bank of England to open branches in major provincial cities, which gave it more outlets for its notes.

In 1833 the Bank’s notes were made legal tender for all sums above £5 in England and Wales so that, in the event of a crisis, the public would still be willing to accept the Bank’s notes and its bullion reserves would be safeguarded.

It was the 1844 Bank Charter Act which was the key to the Bank of England achieving its gradual monopoly for the issue of banknotes in England and Wales.

Under the Act no new banks of issue could be established and existing note-issuing banks were barred from expanding their issue. Those, whose issues lapsed, because, for example, they merged with a non-issuing bank, forfeited their right of issue. The last private bank notes in England and Wales were issued by a Somerset bank – Fox, Fowler and Co in 1921.

Banknotes issued by the Bank of England had always been printed on special paper. Over the years several various techniques had been introduced to the paper making process in an attempt to make it difficult for forgers to copy. These have included the use of paper made from specific components, the incorporation of complicated watermarks, the inclusion of metallic strips and, more recently, they have employed holograms.

In 1712, Henry Portal founded his Portal's Paper Mill at the Bere Mill, on the River Test between Overton and Whitchurch, in Hampshire. He added Laverstoke Mill to his enterprise seven years later and this allowed him to win the contract to make Banknote paper for the Bank of England in 1724.

Portal's significantly expanded in the 20th Century with the development of a new Overton Mill near Quidhampton in 1922 and the Bank of England relocated a significant number of employees to the area during World War II. It was because the banknote paper made at Quidhampton was used for £1 notes, that the £1 became known as a "Quid". The term is still used, even though the pound note has been replaced by a pound coin.

Papermaking is still undertaken within the village at the Overton Mill, however the Portal's business is no more, as in 1995 the firm was sold to De La Rue. As well as banknote paper for use in the UK, Overton Mill now produces high-security paper for over 150 other national currencies. The old Laverstoke Mill is now used by Bombay Sapphire as a Distillery and visitor centre.

With the announcement that the paper £5 note will be replaced in 2017 with a plastic note, there will be a reduced demand for UK banknote paper. This will be further diminished when plans to replace the £10 and £20 notes with plastic ones are implemented over the next few years. Although no announcement has been made concerning £50 notes, it is widely expected that these too will become plastic – depending on how the smaller value notes react in use. These changes will inevitably result in a modification to the way in which British bank notes are manufactured in future.

Making British Coins

The process of making coins is known as ‘minting’. Coins usually have a head (or principle design) on one side, known as the ‘obverse’, with a simpler design on the other, known as the ‘reverse’. The basic minting process – melting and casting metal, cutting blanks from that metal and pressing the blanks between a pair of dies – is essentially timeless, but the manner in which the various stages of this process have been carried out has changed beyond recognition over the centuries.

Up until the 1660s, English coins were struck between a pair of hand-held dies. The lower die, called the ‘pile’, had a spiked back to enable it to be driven firmly into a block of wood; a blank was placed on top of the pile and above it was held the upper die, called the ‘trussel’. The trussel was struck several times with a hammer, causing the blank to be impressed with the obverse and reverse designs. Dies were produced on average at the rate of two trussels to one pile, because the trussel sustained greater wear from the hammer blows. It was the custom for the trussel to bear the reverse (simpler design) because it was easier to replace than the royal portrait which normally appeared on the obverse. Both dies were originally constructed by hand using small chisel-like punches in the shape of crescents, pellets, wedges or bars.

Written accounts of the minting process from Medieval Times are few and far between but a document of 1606 lists the 16-stage process used in Britain:

1. melting and casting the ingots,
2. annealing, or heat treating, the ingots to soften them,
3. hammering the ingots,
4. another annealing,
5. cutting the ingots into blanks,
6. annealing the blanks,
7. hammering the blanks thinner,
8. another annealing,
9. another hammering of the blanks,
10. another annealing,
11. a third hammering of the blanks,
12. rolling the blanks
13. hammering the edges to make the blanks rounder,
14. another annealing,
15. blanching to clean the blanks
16. and then finally coining, using the dies.

When the new Royal Mint on Tower Hill opened in 1810, it was equipped with steam-powered machinery. Eight massive presses, separated by columns of oak, stood in the Coining Press Room, operated by a ten-horsepower steam engine. They were each capable of striking about 60 coins a minute and when all of them were at work the noise must have been deafening. In the 1880s the Coining Presses were replaced by a double line of smaller presses, which were much faster and quieter. With improvements becoming almost continuous, the old steam engines were finally replaced by electricity in 1907.

Perhaps the most significant development around the turn of the 20th century was the much increased use of the 'reducing machine' in the production of master tools. Instead of having to hand-engage life-size designs for use on the dies, an artist prepared a low-relief plaster model – usually around 12 inches in diameter. A mould was taken from the plaster model and then electroplated with nickel and copper, yielding a reproduction in metal, known as an 'electrotype'. The electrotype was mounted on the reducing machine where its details were scanned by a tracer and communicated to a rotating cutter which copied them at coin size into a block of steel. The resulting master punch would then be used to make additional tooling which would ultimately make the coining dies. Reducing machines continued to be used at the Royal Mint for most of the 20th century.

The modern method of manufacturing blanks for coins in homogeneous alloys, such as cupro-nickel and nickel-brass, is, in essence, quite simple. The appropriate metals required for the alloy are added to a charging furnace where they are heated to temperatures of up to 850°C. A sample is taken from the melt and analysed using an x-ray fluorescence spectrometer to ensure that the composition is within the permitted tolerance. The melt is partially cooled and drawn out between graphite dies in the form of a continuous strip which is wound into large coils weighing up to three tons. Casting impurities are removed from the surface of the strip in the 'scalping' machine, where rotating blades shear off half a millimetre from the upper and lower faces. In this way, the dull and grubby appearance of the strip becomes clean and shiny. When cast, the strip is around 16mm thick. It is passed through a series of heavy rollers to reduce the thickness, before the process is completed on a finishing mill, which reduces the strip to coin gauge.

Blank discs of metal of the appropriate size are then punched from the strip in the blanking press. The blanking plate, incorporating around 15-20 blank punches, operates 4-5 times a second, so a single blanking machine can produce up to 6000 blanks a minute. Having become work hardened, the blanks then

have to be annealed, or heat treated, in order to soften them. To achieve this, they are passed through an annealing furnace where they are heated at temperatures of up to 950°C. The blanks are cleaned in a pickling bath to remove any blemishes from the surface and after a final wash and dry, they are ready for striking.

To make the dies, an artist first prepares a low-relief plaster model of the chosen design. The plaster model is placed on a scanner where a probe slowly traces over the surface, recording the details of the design as a digital file on a computer.

Modifications can then be made to the design on-screen using a sophisticated Computer-Aided Design package. When the design has been finalised, the digital file is translated into a cutting programme and a series of XYZ co-ordinates instructs a computer-controlled engraving machine to cut the design into a soft piece of steel at coin size. The design is cut in two stages, a rough cutter removing the bulk of the metal and a fine cutter adding the detail.

Known as a 'reduction punch', the steel tool cut by the engraving machine bears the features of the design in relief, as on a coin. After it has been worked on by hand, to remove defects and strengthen features of the design, the reduction punch is hardened by heat treating. It is then sunk into another soft piece of steel to produce a tool, called the 'matrix'. More handwork follows before the matrix is hardened and sunk into a soft piece of steel to produce a working punch, which is hardened to make the dies for use in the coining presses.

In the Coining Press Room, the blanks are fed from a hopper into the press, each one being inserted into a slot in the dial plate. The dial plate brings each blank in turn to rest on top of the lower die, which moves upwards, pushing the blank into a restraining collar against the upper die with a pressure of around 60 tons. In this way the blank receives the impression of both dies, while at the same time it is forced outwards to take the design of the collar – plain or milled depending on the denomination. The upper die then moves downwards, pushing the struck coin out of the collar and back down into the dial plate which ejects the finished coin.

A modern coining press can strike coins at a rate of 850 a minute.

The coins are then packed and stored, ready for despatch.

Roger Pike

THE SIX NATIONS

The 2017 Six Nations competition fixtures have now been announced. Games will be played, as usual, over five week-ends. (All times are GMT).

Round 1

Saturday 4th February – Scotland v Ireland at Murrayfield – 2.25 pm
Saturday 4th February – England v France at Twickenham – 4.50 pm
Sunday 5th February – Italy v Wales at Stadio Olimpico – 2.00 pm

Round 2

Saturday 11th February – Italy v Ireland at Stadio Olimpico – 2.25 pm
Saturday 11th February – Wales v England at Principality Stadium – 4.50 pm
Sunday 12th February – France v Scotland at Stade de France – 3.00 pm

Round 3

Saturday 25th February – Scotland v Wales at Murrayfield – 2.25 pm
Saturday 25th February – Ireland v France at Aviva Stadium – 4.50 pm
Sunday 26th February – England v Italy at Twickenham – 3.00 pm

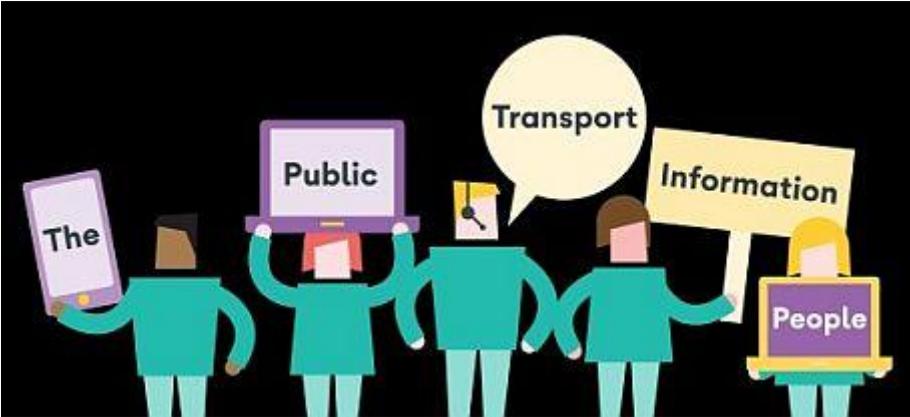
Round 4

Friday 10th March – Wales v Ireland at Principality Stadium – 8.05 pm
Saturday 11th March – Italy v France at Stadio Olimpico – 1.30 pm
Saturday 11th March – England v Scotland at Twickenham – 4.00 pm

Round 5

Saturday 18th March – Scotland v Italy at Murrayfield – 12.30 pm
Saturday 18th March – France v Wales at Stade de France – 2.45 pm
Saturday 18th March – Ireland v England at Aviva Stadium – 5.00 pm

TRAVELINE CYMRU



After considering recent feedback from their customers and following consultation with their partners, Traveline Cymru – The Public Transport Information People – have rebranded their suite of services. Their website, www.traveline.cymru has all the details of the new branding, which includes their new colours and icons, and describes all the services they now offer, as does their new free mobile app, available for iPhone and Android. It can be downloaded directly from the App Store and Google Play.

The website not only has a Journey Planner but also includes all the latest travel news for Wales. The News section has details of changes to timetables (bus and train) and an update on any temporary re-routing of services.

There is also a brand new Freephone telephone number **0800 464 0000**. It is completely free to call and the bilingual contact centre team will be on hand to help with any journey planning queries you may have. As the public transport information people their aim is to help callers plan their journeys by bus or train with ease, helping them find all the information they will need in one place.

Traveline Cymru say that they would love to hear your thoughts on the new brand, so please feel free to send any feedback to marketing@traveline.cymru. They will be happy to hear from you!

Information supplied by Hywel Jones

RECIPE PAGE

BAKED WELSH LEEKS

This is a traditional Welsh recipe for a side dish sent in by a reader. It goes well with roast Welsh Lamb, I'm told.

Ingredients

- 30g (1 oz) butter
- 4 tablespoons plain flour
- 350ml ($\frac{3}{4}$ pint) skimmed milk
- 50g (2 oz) grated Cheddar cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon garlic granules
- salt and pepper to taste
- 4 medium leeks, trimmed and halved lengthways

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200 C / Gas mark 6.
2. Grease a baking dish.
3. Melt butter over low heat. Stir in the flour until smooth. Gradually stir in the milk and cheese until the cheese is melted. Season with garlic, salt and pepper. Remove from heat.
4. Arrange the leeks in a single layer in the prepared dish and cover with the cheese sauce.
5. Bake for 30 minutes in the preheated oven, until leeks are tender and sauce is bubbly.

If you have a favourite Welsh recipe that you would like to share, I'd be pleased to hear from you.

Ed

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Cats and Dogs

The teacher was giving Johnny a chance to exercise his mental arithmetic.

Teacher: "If I gave you two cats and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven."

Teacher: "No, listen carefully... If I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven."

Teacher: "Let me put it to you differently. If I gave you two dogs, and another two dogs and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Six."

Teacher: "Good. Now, if I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?"

Johnny: "Seven!"

Teacher: "Johnny, where on earth do you get seven from?"

Johnny: "Because I've already got a cat!"



A Bad Day

A man was sitting at a bar, just looking at his drink. He stayed like that for half an hour. Then a big, roughly dressed brute of a man sat down next to him, grabbed the man's drink and drank it. The poor man started crying.

The big brute was shocked, "Come on man, I was just joking. Here, I'll buy you another drink. I just can't stand to see a man cry."

"No, it's not that," the man replied, wiping his tears, "This day is the worst of my life. First, I overslept and was late for work. My outraged boss gave me the sack. Then, when I left the building to go to my car, it had been stolen. The police said they can do nothing, so I had to take a taxi home. As I got out, the taxi driver grabbed my wallet and just drove off. Finally I went inside my home where I found my wife in bed with the gardener, so I left the house, come to this bar and just when I was thinking about putting an end to my life, you show up and drink my glass of poison."

THE NEWSLETTER

Y Llychau is published on behalf of the congregation of St Michael & All Angels, Talley, for the benefit of all local residents, but for it to continue it is important that contributions are received from as many people as possible. If you have a story to tell about the area or a memory that you would like to share with others, please put pen to paper and send it to me.

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THE NEXT ISSUE

Intended Publication Date – **Wednesday 1st March 2017**

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

For contributions written in English or Welsh that require translating
Sunday 22nd January 2017 (to allow time for translation)

For contributions written in either language (English **and/or** Welsh) that
do not need to be translated

Sunday 29th January 2017

HAPPY NEW YEAR

BLWYDDYN NEWYDD DDA