

Y Llychau

A NEWSLETTER FOR TALLEY & THE SURROUNDING AREA

www.talley.org.uk/y-llychau

**Issue 70
Rhifyn 70**

**May 2018
Mai 2018**



TALLEY LAKE

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 lake in Talley, frozen over after the severe weather in March this year.

THE VICAR WRITES

Friends, following the recent dark, cold, wintry days I'm really hoping that this Spring will bring us joy and hope as we enjoy warmer and sunnier times.

The church family at St. Michael's looks forward once again to our special Ascension Day service, this year to be held on Thursday 10th May at 7pm and, should the weather be kind, we will hold the service in the Abbey grounds. This will be followed by refreshments in the Church Hall and a time to socialise.

Ascension, is not as familiar as Christmas and Easter but for Christian it is a commemoration of Jesus' return to heaven following the events of the first Easter – His death on the cross and His resurrection.

John Wesley's Ascension Hymn "Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!" provides a vivid description of Christ's triumphant return to Heaven and is a clear explanation of what Christians believe its significance to be. Having accomplished the redemption of mankind, Jesus returns to His Father to mediate on our behalf and from His Heavenly throne at God's right hand He continues to love and bless us as He prepares a place there for each one of us.

And our response ...?

There we shall with you remain, Alleluia!
partners of your endless reign, Alleluia!
see you with unclouded view, Alleluia!
find our heaven of heavens in you. Alleluia.

Come along to the Ascension Day service and raise your voices to sing this wonderful hymn of praise.

Every blessing to you all,

Delyth Wilson

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

| Title | Author | Page |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| April Fool | Roger Pike | 10 |
| Changes | Roger Pike | 4 |
| Christian Aid Week | ----- | 13 |
| Did you Know? | ----- | 9 |
| Gwynnion Llethri (White Slopes) | Pat Edwards & George Lock | 27 |
| Haunted Houses of Wales (part 2) | Roger Pike | 6 |
| Hywel DDA Health Service Boat Race | Hywel Jones | 21 |
| In the Greenwood Forrest | Angie Hastilow | 19 |
| May Day | Roger Pike | 33 |
| Palm Sunday | Roger Pike | 32 |
| Recipe Page | ----- | 14 |
| Retirement | ----- | 5 |
| Revd Delyth Wilson | Roger Pike | 25 |
| Talley Community Council – Notices | ----- | 12 |
| Vicar Writes | Delyth Wilson | 2 |
| View from the Cab (episode 3) | Mynydd Du | 22 |
| Welsh Pirates (part 2) | Roger Pike | 37 |
| Ysgol Y Cwm – Newsletter | Patagonia Staff | 15 |

CHANGES

In 500 BC, Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher from Ephesus, said “Nothing is permanent, everything changes”. Much later, Winston Churchill insisted “There is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction”.

With these two quotations in mind, let me tell you of some forthcoming changes that will occur in my life. My wife, Shelley, and I have decided that it is time that we left Talley and returned to Berkshire to be nearer the children and grandchildren. Since moving to the village 13 years ago we have tried to play an active part in the life of the local community and our departure will inevitably mean other changes will need to be made.

Clearly, replacements will have to be found to take over the roles that we have undertaken in recent years. My time as Churchwarden and Church Secretary for St Michael’s must come to an end, as will Shelley’s work as the Church Treasurer and Electoral Roll Officer. We have been privileged to serve in these posts for several years, but the time has now come for other people to assume these responsibilities.

At the recent Easter Vestry Meeting of the church, elections were held (as they are every year) to elect people to fill various positions in St Michael’s. Despite a suggestion that Shelley and I could travel for two hours from Berkshire every Sunday to attend church – a proposal that we politely declined to accept – I am pleased to report that suitable replacements were found for most of the posts that we had previously filled. The new Church Treasurer will be Pat Edwards and the new Church Secretary and Electoral Roll Officer will be Jeanette Hughes. I wish them well in their new roles. The position of Churchwarden, however, proved more difficult to fill and I have agreed to remain in post temporarily until a suitable replacement can be found.

Since *Y Llychau* was first published in 2006, I have also had the honour of being its ‘editor’, but that too must soon come to an end with my leaving the area. With only six issues of the Newsletter published each year (and assuming that sufficient articles are submitted by readers for inclusion) the task is not too onerous. If you, or someone you know, would be willing to take this on, please let me know. I will naturally offer help and assistance to whoever volunteers to take over this interesting job.

The actual timing of our move will depend on several factors, so if a replacement volunteer to take over the editorial duties can be found soon, there will be time for me to show my successor exactly what the job entails. From comments I

have received, *Y Llychau* is generally appreciated by the majority of those who read it and it would be a great pity if it did not have a future. It may not be the most professional of publications, but I believe it serves a useful purpose in the local community and must not be allowed to die just because no one is prepared to keep it going.

As well as editing the Newsletter, I have also undertaken the job of formatting it into a form suitable for printing, acted as its 'proof reader' and taken responsibility for its delivery. These tasks could easily be shared among a small group of people if the new 'editor' feels that would make it more likely for him or her to offer their services. Please give this matter your most urgent and serious consideration. Don't be shy to come forward – the task is much more rewarding than I have made it sound.

Finally, I would just like to say that I have enjoyed my time in Talley and I will miss the area in so many ways. When I retired and we moved to Wales, I had thought that I could look forward to a life of quiet relaxation with nothing to do but enjoy the scenery and potter about doing all those things I never seemed to have found the time to do while I was working. However, things did not quite turn out that way. With all the little tasks that fell my way in the last decade or so, I wonder how I ever found the time to have a full-time job.

Roger Pike

RETIREMENT

A woman came home to find her retired husband waving a rolled-up newspaper round his head.

“What are you doing dear?” she asked.

“I’m swatting flies – I’ve got 3 males and 2 females so far” he replied.

“How on earth do you know which gender they were?” his wife enquired.

Her husband retorted “Easy – 3 were on my beer and the other 2 were on the phone”.

THE HAUNTED HOUSES OF WALES (Part 2)

This short series concludes with three more locations said to be haunted.

Point of Ayr Lighthouse

Point of Ayr is the most northern point of mainland Wales, just north of Talacre in Flintshire, at the mouth of the Dee estuary. The Point of Ayr Lighthouse, also known as the Talacre Lighthouse, is a grade II listed building. It was built in 1776 by the Major and Aldermen of Chester to warn ships entering between the Dee and the Mersey Estuaries. It eventually fell into disuse and was decommissioned in 1884. It is now a privately owned residential property.

When in use, the lighthouse once displayed two lights. The main beam shone seaward towards Llandudno and a secondary beam shone up the River Dee, on the English side of the estuary. Whilst in service, the lighthouse was painted with red and white stripes and had a red lantern housing. In March 2007, the structure was damaged by storms which resulted in the metal steps leading to the building becoming dislocated and a hole being created in its base. The cost of repairs was covered by the owners of a local caravan park who were involved in the ownership of the Lighthouse at the time.



There is a history of paranormal activity being recorded in and around Talacre Lighthouse. One incident involved the reported sighting of a person dressed in old fashioned naval clothes standing on the balcony of the lighthouse itself. There have also been reports of footprints in the sand leading to the building,

but none coming from it. One lighthouse keeper called Raymond contracted a fever and died in the lighthouse; his spirit is said to haunt the building and the surrounding area.

In August 2009 planning permission was sought to erect a “human sculpture” on the lighthouse gallery, inspired by the reported ghostly sightings on the balcony. A local artist constructed a 7 foot high stainless steel ‘lighthouse keeper’ after initial planning permission had been approved for a three year period. Permission was not sought to retain the structure after this time by the new owners.

Craig-y-Nos Castle

Craig-y-Nos Castle (‘Rock of the Night’ in English), is a Victorian-Gothic country house in Powys, beside the River Tawe in the upper Swansea Valley. Once the home of opera singer Adelina Patti, it is now a boutique hotel, with conferencing and entertainment facilities. The grounds of the castle are surrounded by a fine country park, which is now part of the Brecon Beacons National Park.



The main building was built in 1842 by Captain Rice Davies Powell. It was said that his family was cursed because Powell had tricked the Dutch Overbeek family out of an inheritance. Cholera took his younger son (in 1851) and his wife and younger daughter (in 1859) before he too succumbed to the disease in 1862. In 1864 his eldest son was killed in a hunting accident on the Isle of Wight. The estate was inherited by the eldest daughter, who sold it in 1876 after the sudden death of her husband.

The new owner, Morgan Morgan, cleared a large plantation of 80-year-old fir trees which stood between the castle and the quarries above, which were said to be home to a local population of red squirrels. In 1878 Adelina Patti purchased

Y Llychau

the castle and surrounding park land for £3,500 to develop it as her own private estate. The prima donna had reached the soaring heights of a spectacular career. She only left Craig-y-Nos to sing in the premier opera houses of Europe and the United States, captivating the world with her flawless soprano voice. After her second marriage, to French tenor Ernesto Nicolini, she embarked on a major building program at the castle, adding the North and South wings, the clock tower, conservatory, winter garden and a theatre.

After making her last public appearance in October 1914, when she filled the Albert Hall, she spent the rest of her life at Craig-y-Nos with her third husband and a devoted staff.

The castle is said to be haunted by the ghosts of Patti, her second husband and the composer Rossini. Unexplained appearances have allegedly been experienced by visitors at the castle. Nurses who worked at Craig-y-Nos while it was a war-time hospital reported many presences, including having walked past somebody on the stairs when nobody was there as well as unexplained noises and sounds of footsteps.

Visitors have also reported experiencing breathing difficulties and of feeling a lingering presence of patients who were hospitalised there while suffering from tuberculosis. The Children's Ward is the most active room in the castle. With the recovery rate of TB being so low, many children entered the castle at an extremely young age and never left. Many apparitions have allegedly been seen in this room and minor anomalies are regular occurrences, along with the sounds of children's footsteps, bouncing balls and childish giggles.

On one occasion a film crew was recording an interview in the theatre and while in the kitchen they were discussing the fact that Adelina Patti had never mastered the role of Carmen. Suddenly a heavy saucepan, resting on a large cooker, placed far enough away from the edge not to fall, flew onto the floor.

An investigation of an alleged dark semi-transparent lady on the stairs was discovered to be that of a statuette, situated on the roof of the castle which casts a shadow that resembles a lady when the sun starts to set.

The Captain's Wife

The Captain's Wife is a public house in the former fishing hamlet of Swanbridge, between Barry and Penarth. The pub was established in 1977 from a row of three sea houses. Notable smuggling operations once took place there and a

tunnel has been found connecting the houses to the sea. The pub takes its name from the wife of a sea captain who lived here and buried her in a nearby wood rather than confessing to her having died aboard his ship. The body of the wife was originally kept in a box that was mistaken for a treasure chest and stolen.



The public house is reputedly haunted by the ghost of the Captain's wife, who often appears as a dark shadow and disoriented. Another female spirit is said to pass through the bar doors and walk the length of the lounge before disappearing into the fruit machine. The ghost of a man with windswept hair who died at the age of 40 is also said to roam the bar area. A ghost of a young boy aged about five years is often heard in one of the upstairs bedrooms and another young boy has been seen regularly near the chimney in the bar area; it is believed he was trying to escape from his violent father and died there. Clearly it was not a happy family home!

Researched by Roger Pike

DID YOU KNOW?

The word 'ghost' originates from the Old English word 'gast'; meaning breath or spirit. Over time this became 'ghost' and became associated with a disembodied spirit or soul.

The verb 'to haunt' comes from the Old French word 'hanter'; meaning to inhabit or to frequent. It is associated with the Middle English word 'haunten'; which meant to go home, to reside or to inhabit.

APRIL FOOL

April Fools' Day (sometimes called All Fools' Day) is celebrated every year on 1st April by playing practical jokes and spreading hoaxes. The jokes and their victims are called 'April Fools', while those playing the jokes expose their prank by shouting "April Fool" afterwards. Even television channels, newspapers and magazines now report fake stories on 1st April, which are usually explained the next day. In the UK the joking popularly ends at mid-day.

The custom of setting aside a day for the playing of harmless pranks is recognised widely throughout the world. In Scotland, April Fools' Day was traditionally called 'Huntigowk Day', "gowk" being Scots for a cuckoo or a foolish person. In Italy, France, Belgium, The Netherlands and French-speaking areas of Switzerland and Canada, the day is often known as "April Fish day" This includes attempting to attach a paper fish to the victim's back without being noticed. Many French newspapers also spread false stories on April Fools' Day, where a subtle reference to a fish is sometimes given as a clue.

Below are some of the more well-known April Fools' Day "jokes".

On 1st April 1857, several people were tricked into going to the Tower of London to "see the Lions being washed". No such event took place.

In 1915 a French World War I pilot flew over the German lines and dropped what appeared to be a huge bomb. The German soldiers scattered, but nothing exploded. When they cautiously approached the bomb, what they found was a large inflated canvas football. Attached to it was a note that said "April Fish!"

In 1957, the BBC broadcast a film in its *Panorama* programme explaining that favourable weather and low numbers of the dreaded "spaghetti weevil" meant farmers in Switzerland were harvesting one of their best ever freshly grown spaghetti crops. The broadcaster was flooded with requests asking where they could obtain the plant.

In 1962, Swedish national television broadcast a 5-minute special on how one could get a colour TV picture by placing a nylon stocking in front of the TV screen. A rather in-depth description of the physics behind the phenomenon was included. Thousands of people are said to have tried it.

In 1965, the BBC purported to conduct a trial of a new technology allowing the transmission of odour over the airwaves to all viewers. Many viewers reportedly contacted the BBC to report the trial's success.

In 1976, the BBC aired an interview with an astronomer. He told listeners that at precisely 9:47 am on 1st April the planets Jupiter and Pluto would be in a rare alignment that would briefly diminish the earth's gravity. He added that if people leapt into the air at that exact moment, they would experience a fantastic floating sensation. Hundreds of people telephoned claiming they had felt it.

In 1978, an Australian grocery chain (Dick Smith Foods) had a giant, glistening iceberg towed into Sydney harbour. Radio stations covering the event christened it "Dickenberg 1" and told listeners that the iceberg would be cut up into small pieces to be sold for ten cents each. This pure Antarctic ice, they said, would make any drink taste noticeably better. Hordes of people lined the harbour to see it and buy some ice. The prank was blown when it began to rain. Being made of shaving cream and firefighting foam, the iceberg melted in minutes.

In 1986 New Yorkers were invited to an April Fools' Day Parade along Broadway. Although such a parade doesn't exist, thousands of people turned up, much to the consternation of the local police.

In 1989, on the BBC television sports show *Grandstand*, a fight broke out between members of staff directly behind Des Lynam who was commenting on the professionalism of his team. At the end of the show it was revealed to be an April Fools' joke.

Also in 1998 Burger King reeled in customers with a full-page advert in *USA Today* for its 'left-handed Whopper' – with all the ingredients rotated 180 degrees especially for left-handed diners. It resulted in restaurants being inundated with customers ordering the new burger. According to Burger King, thousands of customers ordered the "right-handed" version too. The fast-food chain later announced 'Everyone knows that it takes two hands to hold a Whopper!'

In 2008 the BBC caught viewers out by running a video clip of flying penguins, claiming the birds were flying to tropical rainforests in South America to escape the harsh Antarctic weather.

In 2011 Ikea made a fool out of many of its customers when it announced that it would be releasing a high chair for dogs, with smaller versions available for puppies.

Researched by Roger Pike

TALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

NOTICES

Last year Carmarthenshire County Council announced that they would be closing the public toilets in Talley. The County Council offered the Community Council the opportunity to take over the responsibility for running the toilets under a lease. Talley Community Council have taken legal advice and have decided that the cost and legal obligations would be too onerous and have decided not to take on this responsibility. It would also have entailed a rise in the precept. Therefore it is to be expected that Carmarthenshire County Council will close the toilets in the near future.

o o O O o o

Following the successful defibrillator training sessions organised by Talley Community Council we would like to thank everyone who attended. We would also like to thank the charity CARIAD for the training and their help and advice in the use of the defibrillators. The defibrillators are sited in Cymdu and Talley. We intend to organise further training in the future.

CYNGOR CYMUNED TALYLLYCHAU

HYSBYSIADAU

Y llynedd datganodd Cyngor Sir Gaerfyrddin ei bwriad i gau toiledau cyhoeddus ym mhentre Talyllychau. Derbynodd Cyngor Cymuned Talyllychau gyfle i gymryd cyfrifoldeb am y toilegau wrth lesio'r adeilad. Wedi derbyn cyngor cyfreithiol, penderfynnodd Cyngor Cymuned Talyllychau byddai'r cyfrifoldeb o redeg y toiledau yn rhy ddrud a rhy gymleth o safbwynt cyfreithiol. Byddai hefyd rhaid godi y praesept. Felly mae'n debyg fydd Cyngor Sir Gaerfyrddin yn cau y toiledau yn y dyfodol agos.

o o O O o o

Yn dilyn llwyddiant sesiwnau hyfforddiant diffibrilwyr wedi'i drefnu gan Cyngor Cymuned Talyllychau hoffem ddiolch i bawb a ddaeth i'r sesiwnau. Hefyd hoffem ddiolch i elusen CARIAD a ddarparodd yr hyfforddiant ac am eu cyngor ynglyn a'r diffibrilwyr. Mae'r diffibrilwyr wedi eu lleoli yng Nghwmdu a Talyllychau. Yr dym yn bwriadu trefnu rhagor o hyfforddiant yn y dyfodol.

To celebrate

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

There will be a bi-lingual

COMBINED ACT OF WORSHIP

in

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH TALLEY

at **7.00 pm** on

THURSDAY, 17th MAY, 2018

Followed by

Light Refreshments.

This is an event for all the family and is supported by

Providence Chapel, Cwmdau, Esgairnant Chapel, Talley,
Ebenezer Church, Halfway, St Michael's Church, Talley
Talley C.P. School

A WARM WELCOME IS EXTENDED TO ALL

RECIPE PAGE

Welsh Cheese and Potato Pie

Ingredients (to serve 4)

- 8 medium sized potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 medium sized onions, peeled and diced
- 3 tablespoons of milk
- 2 tablespoons of butter
- 6oz (175g) of grated mature Welsh Cheddar cheese
- 2 or 3 tomatoes, sliced (for garnish)



Method

- Put the diced potatoes and onions in a pan of water and boil for about 15 mins or until the potatoes are soft.
- Remove from the heat, drain and mash together with the butter and milk and slowly add 2/3 of the cheese (set aside the other 1/3).
- When everything has combined together, spoon the mixture into a baking dish and cover with the remaining cheese; add the tomato slices attractively on the top.
- Bake at 180 C / Gas mk 4 in the centre of the oven until the cheese has totally melted and is starting to turn a nice golden brown. (25-30 mins).

Recipe supplied by a reader who prefers to remain anonymous

YSGOL Y CWM

As you will recall, several people and organisations in the Talley area support Ysgol y Cwm, a school in Patagonia. Below is a copy of their latest newsletter.



March 2018

Dear Friends,

It's a brand-new school year for us here at Ysgol y Cwm and, as usual, there is lots of news to share! We waved farewell to 2017 with a graduation ceremony at Salon Central, the Town Hall, where the kindergarten pupils graduated to the first year of primary school at Ysgol y Cwm. Along with the many familiar faces who've returned to continue their journey with Ysgol y Cwm, there are many fresh faces – 30 to be exact, bringing the total of pupils at Ysgol y Cwm to 80. We keep on growing!

There are also new faces to be seen amongst the staff, with the addition of

Mawrth 2018

Annwyl Ffrindiau,

Mae hi'n flwyddyn ysgol newydd sbon yma yn Ysgol y Cwm ac, fel arfer, mae llond buarth o newyddion! Daeth 2017 i derfyn gyda seremoni graddio'r ysgol yn Neuadd y Dref, gyda disgyblion yr ysgol feithrin yn symud ymlaen i'r ysgol gynradd yma yn Ysgol y Cwm. Ynghyd a'r wynebau cyfarwydd sydd wedi dod yn ôl eleni wrth iddynt barhau ar eu taith gydag Ysgol y Cwm, mae 30 o ddisgyblion newydd sbon wedi ymuno a ni, sy'n golygu bod 80 o ddisgyblion bellach yn mynychu'r ysgol.

Mae yno wynebau newydd i'w gweld ymhlith y staff hefyd, ac rydym

Emyr Evans from Bancffosfelen and Judith Elis, from Trevelin. Emyr will be working with us this year as part of his role working for the British Council. He will also be teaching adults, as well as helping to organise social events. Judith will be working during the mornings with the primary school children. A big welcome to both!

As you know, Ysgol y Cwm had been hoping to employ a teacher from Wales for 2018 and had been fundraising to this end. The good news is that Nia Jones will be staying on for another year to work at Ysgol y Cwm, having spent the previous two years working for the British Council teaching Welsh in Esquel and Trevelin. We are all very happy that Nia has come back to work at Ysgol y Cwm!

The builders have been working tirelessly throughout the summer holidays on the new building, which stands behind the current school. Although there is still a considerable amount of work left to do, the structure has begun to take shape and has doubled the size of the school. The new building will eventually house the primary school, with spacious classrooms and an office for the headteacher. There will also be ample room for the children to play on rainy days.

Trevelin is at its glorious best in

eisoes wedi ymestyn croeso cynnes i Emyr Evans o Fancffosfelen, ac i Judith Elis o Drevelin. Bydd Emyr yn gweithio yn Ysgol y Cwm eleni fel rhan o'i swydd gyda'r Cyngor Prydeinig, tra bod Judith yn mynd i fod yn gweithio yn y boreau gyda Blwyddyn 1. Croeso cynnes i'r ddau!

Fel y gwyddoch, bu'r ysgol yn chwilio am athro neu athrawes arall o Gymru i ymuno gyda ni yn 2018, a'r newyddion da ydy bod Nia Jones am aros gyda'r ysgol am drydedd flwyddyn. Bu Nia yn swyddog gyda'r Cyngor Prydeinig yn dysgu Cymraeg yma yn yr Andes am ddwy flynedd, ac mae pawb yn hapus ei bod wedi dod yn ôl i weithio yn Ysgol y Cwm!

Bu'r adeiladwyr yn gweithio'n galed iawn dros y gwyliau haf i godi'r adeilad newydd sydd y tu ôl i'r ysgol bresennol. Er bod cryn dipyn o waith i'w wneud eto cyn y bydd wedi ei gwblhau, mae'n adeilad sylweddol sydd bron yn dyblu maint yr ysgol. Yn y pendraw, bydd yr adeilad yn gartref i'r ysgol gynradd, gyda dosbarthiadau helaeth a swyddfa newydd i'r brifathrawes. Bydd yno hefyd ddigon o le i'r plant gael chwarae dan do, pan nad yw'r tywydd yn caniatáu mynd allan i chwarae.

Mae Trevelin ar ei gorau dros y gwanwyn a'r haf, ac fe groesawyd nifer o ymwelwyr o Gymru. Mae'r ysgol yn atyniad difyr i'r Cymry sy'n

Spring and Summer, attracting visitors from Wales and elsewhere. The school is an interesting attraction for our friends from Wales, and we love being able to share our amazing story with whoever wants to come along to say hello. If you are planning a visit to Trevelin and would like to pop by to see us here at Ysgol y Cwm, feel free to get in touch through our e-mail address or Facebook page!

A piano was generously donated to the school over the Summer, courtesy of Lidia and Victor Williams and family – so a huge ‘diolch yn fawr’ to them for their generosity! The piano will provide a fantastic focal point for future school concerts, and it will also be of great use on a day-to-day basis, as Emyr the new teacher loves to strike a tune! The piano will have to undergo some maintenance and tuning before it can make its debut, and so we have set up a small fund to raise ARG\$18,000 (£630) to cover the costs. If you would like to contribute to Ysgol y Cwm’s Piano Fund, please visit our website (www.ysgolycwm.com), where you’ll find details of the school’s bank account (please note the reference as ‘School Piano Fund’).

Along with our fund for the piano, the school is also dependent on our friends in Wales and the rest of the UK for long-term support. This

mentro draw dros yr Iwerydd, ac rydym ni wrth ein boddau’n rhoi croeso a rhannu hanes yr ysgol gyda phwy bynnag sydd am ddod i ymweld – cysylltwch dros e-bost neu ein tudalen Facebook os ydych chi am alw heibio i ddweud helo!

Rhodddwyd piano i’r ysgol dros y gwyliau haf yn anrheg gan deulu Lidia a Victor Williams o Drevelin - diolch yn fawr iawn i deulu Williams am eu haelioni! Bydd y piano’n ganolbwynt gwych ar gyfer cyngherddau’r ysgol, a bydd hefyd yn hynod ddefnyddiol o ddydd i ddydd – yn enwedig gan fod Emyr ar athro newydd yn bianydd o fri! Mae’r piano mewn angen o ychydig o waith cynnal a chadw cyn y bydd yn barod i ddiddanu pawb yma yn Ysgol y Cwm, ac felly rydym wedi sefydlu cronfa fach i dalu am y gwaith o’i adfer a’i diwnio, sy’n dod at \$ARG18,000 (£630). Os hoffech chi gyfrannu at Gronfa Piano Ysgol y Cwm, ewch at ein gwefan (www.ysgolycwm.com), ble ceir manylion cyfrif banc yr ysgol (gan roi ‘Cronfa Piano’r Ysgol) fel cyfeirnod).

Ynghyd a chronfa ar gyfer y piano, rydym hefyd yn dibynnu ar ein ffrindiau o Gymru am gefnogaeth yn yr hir dymor. Mae’n parhau i fod yn hynod bwysig i ni yma yn Ysgol y Cwm, er mwyn cynnal yr ysgol o ddydd-i-ddydd, a hefyd cynllunio ar gyfer y dyfodol. Fe hoffai’r ysgol

support continues to be of the utmost importance to us here at Ysgol y Cwm, both as a way of securing the day-to-day running costs of the school and to help us plan for the future. The school would again like to thank all of those who have contributed and who continue to do so for their support. Diolch yn fawr iawn! If you are interested in supporting the school on a long-term basis, there is a downloadable standing order form on our website.

Fundraising here in Trevelin continued over the Christmas period, with Margarita's tasty scones and jam helping to raise a contribution to the teachers' wages over the holidays. Several cuddly toys of Stormi, the official school mascot, were also sold!

The Trevelin Eisteddfod is fast approaching (April 27 & 28) and Marilyn and Maria the music teachers have been busy practicing singing 'Bwrw Glaw yn Sobor lawn' and 'Y Siani Flewog' with the children, who've also been learning to recite 'Dau Gau Bach' and 'Ar Lan y Môr'. The coloured pencils and the paint pots have also been taken out of the cupboard – so good luck to everyone who's taking part!

You'll hear all about the Eisteddfod – and more! – in our next newsletter, by which time it'll be midwinter here in Patagonia. Hasta luego a tan y tro nesaf!

Everyone at Ysgol y Cwm

ddiolch unwaith eto i bawb sydd yn neu sydd wedi cyfrannu yn barod. Mae ffurflen archeb banc misol ar ein gwefan os hoffech chi gyfrannu fel hyn.

Ni fu seibiant o'r ymdrechion codi arian yma yn Nhrevelin dros gyfnod y Nadolig, gyda sgons a jam blasus Margarita yn helpu i gyfrannu tuag at gyflogau'r athrawon dros y gwyliau haf. Gwerthwyd sawl Sdormi (masgot swyddogol Ysgol y Cwm) hefyd!

Mae Eisteddfod Trevelin yn prysur agosáu (Ebrill 27 a 28) ac mae Marilyn a Maria'r athrawesau cerdd wedi bod yn brysur yn ymarfer canu 'Bwrw Glaw yn Sobor lawn' ac 'Y Siani Flewog' gyda'r plant, tra bod yr athrawon dosbarth wedi bod yn mynd dros 'Dau Gi Bach' ac 'Ar Lan y Môr' ar gyfer yr adrodd. Bydd y paent a'r pensiliau lliw hefyd yn cael eu cymryd allan o'r cwprdd – felly pob lwc i bawb sy'n cystadlu!

Cewch holl hanes yr Eisteddfod – a mwy! – yn y rhifyn nesaf, pan fydd gaeaf oer Patagonia wedi ein cyrraedd! Tan bryd hynny felly – hwyl fawr ac hasta luego!

Pawb yn Ysgol y Cwm

IN THE GREENWOOD FOREST

It's that time of year again, oh no it isn't, oh yes it is! We were whisked away to the Greenwood Forest for the evening of Saturday 3rd February to visit the long haired Robin Hood and his Merry Men. The well dressed and well-rehearsed cast gave a wonderful pantomime performance before an audience of 60, gathered in St. Michael's Church in Talley.



The story started with Maid Marion and her mother, Lady Lucy, running away from the evil Sheriff of Nottingham, where Allan-a-Dale and Will Scarlett found them in the forest and took them to Robin Hood's hideout, where they ate and danced the night away. This is where Robin and Marion fell in love and agreed to marry.



Walking through the forest, Will and Allan-a-Dale were scared by the black suited, Sombrero wearing, Felipe from Spain who had a message from King Richard; he was invited back to the camp and then escorted Marion, Lady Lucy and Friar Tuck on a shopping trip. Whilst in Nottingham visiting 'Ye Olde Wedding Dress Shoppe', Felipe revealed himself to be the Sheriff of Nottingham in disguise! He took Marion back to his castle as he wanted to marry her, not for love, but for money, insisting that the Friar performed the ceremony.



The Sheriff instructed Friar Tuck to get Lady Lucy from the dungeons so she could witness the marriage – he escaped the castle and raised the alarm with Robin Hood and his men. The Merry Men miraculously turned into the Flying Squad, flying around the church wearing their goggles and flying helmets, coming to save Marion.

Before they reached the castle the Merry Men gathered a children's army onto the stage to help with the impending battle, teaching them how to roar at the enemy and how to march. Robin and the Sheriff entered into a sword fight in the castle (it would have been bows and arrows if they had been available in Home Bargains), which Robin Hood obviously won!!



It turned out that Little John, one of the Merry Men, was actually in disguise as well; he was in fact King Richard, who had joined the Merry Men to find out what the Sheriff was really up to.

Once he had made an appearance (from the wrong side of the stage), he gave permission for Robin and Marion to wed. They were reunited and were married (very quickly) by the Friar. The Sheriff was banished to – yes, you've guessed it – Australia by the King because of his evil ways.

Then everyone lived happily ever after!!

Thank you to the crew, cast and especially Jeanette Hughes for a thoroughly enjoyable evening which raised almost £600 for St. Michael's Church.



Angie Hastilow (Panto Widow)

HYWEL DDA NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE BOAT RACE

The Hywel DDA NHS held a boat race on the River Towy from Carmarthen Quay to Llansteffan against a Japanese boat race crew. The Japanese won by a mile. A working party found the winners had eighteen people rowing and one steering, while the Hywel DDA NHS had eighteen steering and one rowing. So the Hywel DDA NHS spent £5 million on consultants and formed a restructured crew of four assistant steering managers, three deputy managers and a director of steering services. The rower was given an incentive to row harder. They held another race and lost by two miles. So the Hywel DDA NHS fired the rower for poor performance, sold the boat and used the proceeds to pay a bonus to the director of steering services.

Hywel Jones.

A VIEW FROM THE CAB:

Episode Three: Westward Ho!

In the previous instalment (published in issue 59 in July 2016) I described how I had tired of the flatlands of East Anglia and longed to return to the rolling hills and rolling rrrr's of the West Country. Thus I found myself scouting around a pair of rusty nissen huts at Dunkeswell Airport – a redundant WW2 fighter base on the Blackdown Hills of Devon – where I understood a haulage firm in need of a driver was located. An Atkinson Borderer, once the king of the road but now deposed by Scania and Volvo – the Scandinavian invaders – stood forlorn and neglected, its wing mirrors shivering in the arctic gale which blew across the airfield. Eventually in a small caravan, rocking in the wind, I found the boss, phone clamped to ear, fag to lower lip and right hand to stubby pencil wheezing instructions to some hapless driver. The caravan was furnished like every traffic office with a stifling paraffin heater, a calendar featuring a nude lady whose modesty was only to

the slightest degree protected by the large tyre upon which she leant, a litter of parking tickets and delivery notes and – essential throughout the trade – a crusted metal teapot that was surrounded by “the makings”, an open tin of condensed milk and busted packets of tea and sugar.



He wanted a driver and I wanted a job so the deal was quickly struck. There was no question of an interview or an examination of driving licences. He gestured towards the Atki “Ever driven a Gardner?” These were simply the best diesel engines ever produced in Britain – low revving, full of torque and ultra-reliable. However, persuading one to hit 50 mph was a very long process. “Well, just remember this – ‘Silent Sixth’ – out of cog. If I ever catch you at the bottom of a bank with the engine shot then you’re straight up the road”. From this I inferred that the lorry was equipped with a five-speed David Brown Gearbox and that I was instructed to roll downhill in neutral, no matter how steep the incline for fear

of over-revving the engine. Given that brakes were never a high priority for hauliers then this was to be an exciting prospect.

So that old Atki became my partner for the duration of the job. I quickly discovered that it had been the victim of a fitter's remedy: obviously at some point the heater matrix had started to leak and he had resorted to the usual fix of crimping the pipe which led to it. Result: no leak – but no heat. So freezing were the early starts that I cut the bottom two corners off an old sleeping bag into which I would wriggle, poking my boots through the two holes and tying the top under my armpits with a bit of baler twine.

Naturally, it wasn't long before I moved on. British Road Services, Avonmouth, was part of the nationalised haulage system which was closely controlled by the trade union. Every journey time was determined by an average of 28 mph. This had been agreed with the management before a single mile of motorway had been built and had seemed reasonable at the time. Now, in 1976, when the country was criss-crossed by a fast road network, it meant that half of one's "working" time was spent in transport cafés and laybys. To arrive back early would incur the wrath of an eagle-eyed shop steward who would berate you for "carving the job up". Being "sent to Coventry" was a very real threat in those days so poor old BRS remained stuck in the age of the traction engine.

I was allocated work on the brick contract. London was rebuilding at the time and a Bristol firm specialised in producing smoke-blackened bricks which matched their begrimed cousins who had spent their life in "The Smoke". The work could be hard. All unloading was by hand and the driver literally threw the bricks, four at a time, to the bricklayers and their mates. At 9000 bricks to an artic load this meant 2250 separate pick up and throws for the driver – and woe betide him if he botched a throw and the bricks landed on the toe of a burly brickly!

BRS was a classic haulage organisation and drivers were "shunters" who loaded or delivered consignments brought in by the "trunkers", who worked routes between the various depots locally, or "roamers", who spent all week away from home picking up and delivering loads wherever they occurred. Virtually all loads were covered by sheets (tarpaulins) and secured by ropes. A good knowledge of knots – round turn and two half hitches, reef, grocer's hitch and the all-important dolly – was essential. Because there was so much work involved in roping and sheeting it was necessary for all knots to be easy to undo. I recall a shunter walking into the traffic office with a large bag full of unravellable granny knots which he had simply cut off the ropes. Tipping them out onto the

counter he said “someone needs to teach the new bloke in Birmingham how to tie a knot!”

I liked the freedom of “roaming” or “tramping” as it was less romantically called. There were no bunks in lorries then, so sleeping in transport digs was a part of the job. Some of these were truly squalid – a dormitory of narrow beds above a “Greasy Spoon”, with drivers coming and going throughout the night dependent on their shifts. If you were unfortunate enough to land in one of these then it was wiser – and warmer – to sleep in your clothes. However, with experience every driver filled his little black book with good digs – often run by a widow seeking to make ends meet. Phones were rare then, so one just turned up on the doorstep and hoped that they weren’t full. If so, then “Mrs Brown at 61 may have a bed left” was often the response. One evening, after being passed to another house in the same terraced street I hastily washed, changed and borrowed a spare key, before heading to the local pub. There, I joined battle with the locals on the pool table. The contest went on all evening until “Time Gentlemen, please. Haven’t you homes to go to?”. Cheerfully victorious I headed back to my digs but on entering the street realised that I had no idea of the number of the house where I was lodged. At 11.30pm on a dark night every house seemed identical and I couldn’t remember a single detail. I was forced to surreptitiously try the key in every front door – ever fearing an irate resident “collaring” me for attempted burglary – until at last mercifully one lock yielded.

Sometimes “Cab Hotel” was the better option and most drivers had a complicated arrangement of planks and foam rubber to arrange across the engine between the seats. I had an ex RN hammock and would tie the rope ends over the top of the cab thus suspending it within the cab before slamming the doors and settling in for the night. Naturally there was no heating and it could get chilly. One freezing night in York when the temperature fell to minus 8 degrees every lorry in the park spent the night with the engine roaring – a stone or heavy boot on the accelerator – just to try to coax a little warmth into the cab.

“Sleeper” cabs with proper bunks were becoming more common but, fearful of losing their “night out money” (paid to cover the cost of digs but retained as a driver’s perk if “Cab Hotel” were chosen) were rejected by the Union at BRS. I fancied the freedom and the luxury of these sophisticated Scania, MANs and Volvos so it was time for me move on again.

Mynydd Du

REVD DELYTH WILSON

Delyth Anne Wilson became a licensed Lay Reader in the Church in Wales in 2007. In 2015 she was ordained a Deacon and a year later priested, to serve as Assistant Curate in our group of four churches – Caio, Llansawel, Talley and Abergorlech.

On 31 January 2018, she received the Lord Bishop's Licence to become **Priest in Charge** of these four churches.

Delyth's Licensing Service was held in St Sawyl's church, Llansawel, and was attended by the Lord Bishop of St Davids (Rt Revd Joanna Penberthy), the new Archdeacon of Carmarthen (the Ven Dorrien Davies), the Area Dean (Revd Canon Siân Jones), the Bro Dyfri Local Ministry Area Leader (Revd Ian Aveson) as well as other local clergy and lay representatives of neighbouring churches. The service itself was a mixture of Christian worship, legal procedures and symbolic acts. All the hymns used in the service had been chosen by Delyth herself.

After an introduction by the Bishop, prayers of penitential reflection and readings from the Old and New Testament, the Bishop gave an address in celebration of the new ministry that Delyth was about to embark upon. This was followed by the Area Dean formally presenting Revd Delyth Wilson to the Bishop with the request that she be licensed to serve in the four churches.

Churchwardens from each church then presented Delyth with Symbols of Ministry – a stole, a Bible, a baptismal candle and a communion chalice and paten – before the actual licensing. The Registrar read the Official Licence from the Bishop appointing Delyth as Priest in Charge of Caio, Llansawel, Talley and Abergorlech. (A copy of the Licence can be seen in Talley church).

The newly appointed Priest in Charge, passed the Bishop's mandate to the Archdeacon with the request that he induct and install her in her new post. Led by the churchwardens of her new four parishes, the Archdeacon took her to the church door, where she was formally welcomed before she ceremonially rang the church bell. (It has long been a tradition in the Anglican Church that the number of times the bell rings gives an indication of the minimum number of years the new priest is likely to serve in the parish. Delyth rang the bell six times).

Returning to the East end of the church, she was officially placed in her Stall by

the Archdeacon. With the legal requirements over, the service concluded with intercessions, prayers and a blessing from the bishop.

After leaving the packed church, the congregation made its way to the Village Hall to enjoy celebratory refreshments, kindly organised by the ladies of the parish. This gave all those present a welcome opportunity to chat informally with their new Priest in Charge and the bishop, as well as other clergy and parishioners, while partaking of cups of tea, sandwiches and slices of cake.

Everyone present agreed that it had been a very joyful and moving experience, with a perfect balance of worship and the necessary legal formalities.

Although licenced as “Priest in Charge”, by convention a person holding such apposition is referred to as “Vicar”.

We wish Delyth every success in the new ministry that awaits her as our vicar.

Roger Pike



GWYNNION LLETHRI (WHITE SLOPES)

In 2003 I began corresponding with Mr George Lock, who then lived in North Wales. In 1980, he had bought the farm, Gwynnion Llethri, and had written and sent to me his memories and photographs of his time there. These were added to the History Group archive at that time but, unfortunately, I received a letter in 2006 from George's daughter, who sadly wrote of his sudden death on 1 March earlier that year. I had hoped that the archive would be available on the website for everyone to see before now but this has proved very difficult to do and has not yet been done. I apologise to his family that these memories have not been publicised before now but hope that they welcome the inclusion in this copy of *Y Llychau*.

Pat Edwards

Gwynnion Llethri (by George Lock)

When I bought Gwynnion Llethri's 105 acres it was not with a view to a life of farming but simply to show that, after a score of years in professional practice, I could still roll up my sleeves and do a day's work. Talley was a beautiful and serene part of the world and my years there were some of the most interesting and certainly different of my life, with something new to learn every day, mostly from my mistakes. Like Gaul, Gwynnion Llethri was in three parts. A top reasonably drained plateau of 30 acres, a steepish bank based on shale of another 30 acres dropping down to the yard and main farm track and a partly drained peat bog of 30 acres.

The Ministry of Agriculture man came and as we walked the farm he became more and more discouraging, suggesting many things I didn't think had priority and being less than sanguine as to my plans for the peat bog, many had tried it but it was still there. Eventually I received a limited blessing and an unlimited supply of forms to apply for various subsidies and grants for a series of new drainage channels and grass seed and fertiliser, provided that Italian Ryegrass was chosen. I had a contractor, one Denzil James, recommended and when Spring came we did run some new channels, perhaps not quite as the Ministry of Agriculture would have chosen, and then just waited to see what happened.

Slowly the peat field dried out and eventually there developed a top crust, which seemed strong enough to take the weight of the tractor. I put on the spinner, attached a spike harrow and roller and for ten days trundled round the 30 acres, broadcasting grass seed and fertiliser. I was lucky and only got stuck once and a call to a helpful neighbour had me hauled out before I sank too far. Then came

six weeks of waiting; I had almost begun to accept, the Ministry of Agriculture's view, that the land wasn't fit, when almost imperceptibly the colour of the fields changed and I found I had a 30 acre parkland. It gave me almost half as much pasture again – increased the usable acreage by 40 – 50%, and moved the farm up into the fully viable Ministry of Agriculture bracket. Gwynnion Llethri was a proper farm again.

The house was smallish and gaunt if not downright ugly, rendered and whitewashed, and comprised an entrance porch, 30 ft kitchen with Rayburn, a front room or parlour with a striking Inglenook fireplace which would take a small tree, and upstairs two bedrooms, a wide landing and bathroom. Water came by gravity from a spring fed tank in the bank behind. The house, facing north, looked directly onto the yard, with a modernish 6 tie cowshed adjoining, the yard itself of undressed shale flanked on either side by two traditional asbestos or corrugated iron roofed sheds, completely gutted, one having a concrete apron, the other not. All very basic. Behind the buildings on one side was a 2000 bale Dutch hay barn and on the other a 50 ft corrugated 'siló' and a sheep dip.

Approach to the farm was a tarmacked lane with a 1:6 pitch up from the main Talley – Pumpsaint Road, then an undressed track cut into the face of next door's bank, over a cattle grid and down a slope to the yard, continuing along to a smallholding which might once have been a foreman's house. When I took over I think there were five working gates and an awful lot of other gateways in the ragged hedgerows: it came very close to free range and anyone who has to do it with sheep will know what that can mean.

All at once there was a tremendous amount to do. A visit to Pumpsaint & District Co-op for almost every known commodity, and directed from there to Pumpsaint garage where they agreed to make a strong tractor box: in fact they made such a robust job that 20 years after, it was still in use. Contact made with the Ministry of Agriculture so that I could be duly registered and an advisory officer sent out to discuss my plans. A cow to be milked and butter and cheese made, and the dogs walked around the farm so that they could learn the boundaries and the lie of the land and at the same time I could have a proper look at what I had bought.

A Guernsey cow gives a lot of creamy milk, and if a full time dairy products regime was to be avoided, something had to be put in position to consume it. Accordingly off to market and bought two heifer Fresian cattle which the Ministry of Agriculture were advocating. Calves were a glut on the market and there were many very good ones going for very small pennies: their destination was either people like me going into beef production or the veal trade.

The immediate consequence of this was meeting the vet because they contracted salmonella. If Mr Ian Percy is still with us, I send my regards. The possibility that Gwynnion Llethri may have produced a disproportionate amount of his income for two years was due entirely to my inexperience. He proved a fount of information and advice, was marvellous with the animals and always entirely reliable; if asked he came, day or night, fine weather or foul. On one occasion when the road was impassable he left his car and walked over a mile in the middle of the night, carrying his gear. A professional 'par excellence'.

My Welsh collie bitch was pure professional, dedicated to sheep, and the human relationship limited to the working world. Nell was the normal black and white with a touch of red here and there which the Welsh say denotes Scottish ancestry and to be sought after. She was smallish and light boned, quick, and with just one purpose in mind, to work sheep as required and as often as possible. At her age she was practically untrained, possibly having been out with her mother when she was working and had learned from example but nothing more. The day 300 mature and variegated ewes were delivered on the top fields I walked with her up the track and went through the gate quietly. These were sheep which had lived their lives on the mountain, a rough, tough lot who had seen dogs come and dogs go, and they collected in the middle of the field, stamping their feet and showing truculent aggression.

I stood still and Nell sank low and inched towards them without a sound and as they say 'gave them the eye'. It was a battle of wills and in ten minutes it was over and victory complete: just for practice we turned the flock around and walked them round the 20 acres, stopping and starting them from time to time. And this was a raw young dog and even rawer shepherd, neither of whom knew the right commands. As time went on we developed a sort of wordless communication, almost telepathic, and could perform all sorts of complicated operations, like separating a particular ewe without disturbing the flock, and were even in occasional demand from the neighbours.

I can't recall how the Hippies came on the scene. I have a feeling they just wandered onto the yard and into the kitchen out of curiosity and on the lookout for congenial casual work and ready cash. They solved many problems. Some jobs I had subcontracted, but some I couldn't by their very nature. There is hardly a more discouraging sight than a hayfield littered with bales, all needing to be stacked in blocks of 5 in case the weather worsened, then to be loaded 120 at a time on a trailer, transported gingerly half a mile over a rough track and only then put in the hay barn. It was daunting but they pitched in and somehow

a couple of thousand bales were stored for the winter, and the animals would be fed. My way of life, with its rapidly growing and somewhat haphazard menagerie, seemed to meet with their approval: though pitying me for having fixed myself with the permanent responsibility which went with it: while they wandered free as they pleased and at the end of the day went back to their tepees and benders and free range children. Most of them were more travelled and better educated than I, their commune was clean and tidy and the children utterly unselfconscious and socially integrated, without a thought of formal schooling. I think we developed a sort of mutual respect society and I was sorry to lose them but very pleased to have met them.

March came and with it lambing time, and for six weeks it rained solidly. A cold rain, which went through everything, night falling early and lasting forever. Surface water poured down the saturated bank and the peat bog where, if one didn't actually sink in, there was ankle-deep water in places, dark and invisible at night until one stepped in it. Came April and the rain eased off and the Brecon Boys came over for a couple of weeks – 40 miles each way – and laid the hedge down the bank. Then I was able to start hedging along the lane and a new gate was installed, the first. The cycle moved on and hay making time arrived, and the poor weather returned. My young neighbour came with his mower and the grass was cut. Then came a period of sporadic showers, and every time I took the tedder through and shook it up to let the air get at it the skies would open and the whole lot was wet and lying flat again. At last the weather relented and it was baled, and with hippies help it was all stacked and carried down to be loaded in the barn. Then onto the next thing, like getting the lambs to market, duly graded and sold. The first actual fruits of my labour, months of work and care, put in pens and disposed of in less than two minutes.

Taking advantage of a relatively quiet time, one of the sheds was refurbished with stalls and drainage channels. A lot of concrete, but at last cattle could be tethered which made handling much easier. And then came shearing time, and for two days my young neighbour ensconced himself in the shed corner whilst ewes were caught, rendered up to him for clipping and released to outside, the fleeces rolled and put into the large containers provided by the Wool Marketing Board to await collection. The second fruits harvested.

Of the individual animals there are many memories. When Blondie, the original Charolais heifer came of age, my mentors and I studied the Charollais stud book, finally deciding for conformity on the bull Clovis. Understandably, Blondie didn't think too much of the AI man with his plastic gloves and syringe but when

the final day arrived and the vet had done his midwifery, she was over the moon with what she had produced. The calf was pure white, large and well formed by any standards, and was named Snowman from his colour and the farm's name. When the time came to remove his horns I kept one and have it mounted on my bookshelf.

He grew up to be an enthusiastic father, throwing well formed white calves. In fact he was too enthusiastic. Unthinkingly I had kept the young age group stock together in one shed for ease of feeding and management. The scheme worked very well, the animals all of an age and forming well into a group, and was peaceful, but just like children, the time to take notice is when they are too quiet, and one day the vet had to visit and abort seven heifers who, like Snowman, were really too young. He was separated and installed between his mother and Buttercup, the herd seniors, who duly kept him in order. The neighbour's approved of him too. One day I had a call to fetch him back home as he was with their cows. There was no grumbling or recriminations and I never did discover how he managed to get through the boundary fence. However, I called him and all one ton of him followed me home very quietly, obviously very happy with the day's outing.

The other time it snowed was just before I left. I had been to Lampeter and booked a package holiday for Christmas in Spain, bought a couple of suitcases and my first tidy clothes for three years, had Belinda, the last of the Labradors, put down from age and infirmity. The sheds and fields were all empty, the animals and machinery gone. Nell had gone back to my Brecon mentors along with the tractor box which they still use. A few hundred bales of hay awaited the new owners. It was very still and quiet and the yard full of ghosts. It was time to be away. The morning Pickfords were scheduled to arrive I woke up to a funny light and a 10 ft snowdrift across the yard, eave high. The temperature had dropped and the Rayburn having been left to go out the water had frozen. The storm had taken out the electricity and telephone and the world was very quiet.

An empty fridge is an empty fridge, a Rayburn without fuel gives no warmth or comfort and an Inglenook fireplace without a burning log is like a hole in the wall with a fierce down draught. Later I discovered it was a freak blizzard, as unexpected as the hurricane in years to come. It was very cold, even with burning books and bits and pieces, which only seemed to intensify it. After a couple of days the wind blew the snow from the yard as suddenly as it had arrived and Pickfords, who had booked into the pub so as to make an early start on the scheduled day, arrived. No one hung about and the house was packed

into the van in record time. No time to clean the house, or say my farewells to the neighbours, who would have enough on their hands anyway. At the bottom of the lane they turned off for Cardiff and I decided to make a beeline for Llandeilo and the London train, simply leaving the car outside the station. Not quite as planned.

I think I smelled like an old sheep for the compartment I was in emptied and stayed empty. Arrived at Paddington, I went along the platform to the Great Western Hotel where I think they let me in because my suitcases were tidy, and sat in the bath with a plateful of sandwiches and revived. It was all cut a bit fine, but I just had time to take my daughter to the Ritz for a cream tea before the flight time to Spain. Gwynnion Llethri had lived up to its name. And I had made yet another mistake.

PALM SUNDAY

The Sunday before Easter, known as Palm Sunday, is the start of Holy Week, a time when Christians recall the events leading up to the betrayal, arrest, trial, crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Palm Sunday marks the time when Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey to great acclaim by the crowds that assembled to witness his arrival – the same crowds that roared for his crucifixion on the first Good Friday.

According to the biblical account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, many of the on-lookers strewed his path with palm branches. As a symbolic reminder of this and of Jesus' death on a cross, during the service in church everyone present was given a palm cross to take home.

Before the Palm Sunday service in Talley, members of the congregation walked along the road to church with a donkey, who later attended the service with them. Although palms were not thrown on the road in front of the animal, those who processed to church did sing joyful hymns as they walked. A true procession of witness.



Roger Pike

MAY DAY

In many countries in the northern hemisphere May Day is a public holiday, usually celebrated on 1st May, considered as the first day of summer. In the UK the holiday has now been transferred to the first Monday in May. Traditionally dances, singing and the eating of cake were part of the celebratory festivities.

As Europe became Christianised, the old pagan holidays lost their pseudo-religious character and May Day changed into a popular secular festivity. However, a significant festival on May Day still occurs in Germany when St. Walburga, credited with bringing Christianity to Germany, is widely celebrated. The secular versions of May Day, observed in Europe and North America, used to be best known for their traditions of dancing around the maypole and crowning the Queen of May. In the nineteenth century a popular activity was the giving of "May baskets," small baskets of sweets or flowers, usually left anonymously on a neighbour's doorstep.

In the early twentieth century, May Day was chosen as the date for International Workers' Day by the Socialists and Communists to commemorate the 'Haymarket Affair' in Chicago. The Haymarket affair was the aftermath of a bombing that took place at a labour demonstration on 4th May, 1886, at Haymarket Square in Chicago. It began as a peaceful rally in support of workers striking for an eight-hour day and in reaction to the killing of several workers the previous day by the police. An unknown person threw a bomb at the police as they acted to disperse the public meeting. The bomb blast and the ensuing gunfire resulted in the deaths of seven police officers and four civilians, with scores of others being wounded. In the legal proceedings that followed, eight anarchists were convicted of conspiracy. Seven were sentenced to death and one to a term of 15 years imprisonment. The death sentences of two of the defendants were later commuted to terms of life in prison and another committed suicide in jail rather than face the gallows. The other four were hanged the following year.

In the UK, May Day has been a traditional day of festivities throughout the centuries, mostly associated with towns and villages celebrating springtime fertility (of the soil, livestock and people) and involving revelry in the form of village fetes and community gatherings. Seed sowing had been completed by this date and it was convenient to give farm labourers a day off. Perhaps the most significant of the traditions is the maypole, around which traditional dancers circle with ribbons. The spring bank holiday on the first Monday in May

was created in 1978 to replace May Day and in February 2011, the UK Parliament considered scrapping it all together, replacing it with a bank holiday in October, possibly coinciding with Trafalgar Day (21st October), to create a “United Kingdom Day”. The idea was dropped when it failed to get a majority of MPs in favour of it. However, May Day had previously been abolished and its celebration banned by Puritan parliamentarians during the Interregnum following the Civil War, but reinstated with the restoration of Charles II in 1660. 1st May, 1707, was the day the Act of Union came into effect, joining England and Scotland to form the Kingdom of Great Britain.

In Oxford, it is a centuries-old tradition for May Morning revellers to gather at Magdalen College at 6.00am to listen to the college choir sing traditional madrigals from the top of the Great Tower as a conclusion to the previous night’s celebrations. Since the 1980s some people then jumped off Magdalen Bridge into the River Cherwell, but for some years now the bridge has been closed on 1st May to prevent people from jumping, as the water under the bridge is only two feet deep and leaping from the bridge had resulted in serious injuries in the past. Later in the day, the celebrations continue in the city with exhibitions of Morris dancing.





At Kingsbury Episcopi, near Yeovil in Somerset, the annual May Day Festival celebrations on the May bank holiday Monday have grown in popularity in recent years, with thousands of revellers from all over the south-west coming to enjoy the festivities. These include traditional Maypole dancing and Morris dancing, as well as contemporary musical performances.

In Kent, at Whitstable and Rochester, and at Hastings in West Sussex, more traditional May Day festivities are held. As well as Maypole dancing and Morris dancing, the 'Jack in the Green' festival has been revived. During the 16th and 17th centuries in England, people would make garlands of flowers and leaves to mark the May Day celebration. After becoming a source of competition between Works Guilds, these garlands became increasingly elaborate, to the extent that they actually covered the man entirely. Such a costumed man became known as a 'Jack in the Green'. (For some reason the figure became associated particularly with chimney sweeps). Jack is a colourful figure, almost nine feet tall, covered in greenery and flowers. He is accompanied by two attendants, who are completely disguised in green rags, vegetation and face paint. The attendants play music, dance and sing as they guide Jack through the streets to celebrate the coming of summer. Revivals of the custom are also occurring in various parts of England; Jacks in the Green can now be seen in

Bristol, London, Oxford and Knutsford, among other places. Jacks also appear at some May Fairs in North America.

Eastern Bloc countries such as the Soviet Union and most countries of central and eastern Europe that were under the rule of communist governments held official May Day celebrations in every town and city, during which party leaders greeted the crowds. Workers carried banners with political slogans and many companies decorated their company cars. The biggest celebration on 1st May usually occurred in the capital of a particular communist country and usually included a military display of personnel and equipment in the presence of the President and Secretary General of the local Communist Party.

May Day was celebrated illegally in Russia until the February Revolution authorised the first legal celebration in 1917. The following year, after the Bolshevik seizure of power, the May Day celebrations were boycotted by Mensheviks, Left Socialist Revolutionaries and anarchists. It became an important official holiday of the Soviet Union, celebrated with elaborate popular parades in the centre of the major cities. The biggest of these was traditionally organised in Moscow's Red Square, where the General Secretary of the CPSU and other party and government leaders stood atop Lenin's Mausoleum and waved to the crowds. In 1991, the last year that demonstrations were held in Red Square, May Day grew into a high-spirited political event. Around 50,000 people participated in the 1991 Red Square rally, after which the tradition was interrupted for 13 years. In the early post-Soviet period the holiday returned as massive political gatherings of supporters of radically minded politicians. For instance, an action dubbed as "a rally of communist-oriented organisations" was held in Red Square in 1992. The rally began with a performance of the Soviet Union anthem and raising the Red Flag and ended with appeals from the leader of the opposition movement 'Working Moscow', Viktor Anpilov, "for early dismissal of President Boris Yeltsin, ousting Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov from power and putting the latter on trial". Since 1992, May Day is officially called "The Day of Spring and Labour", but remains a major holiday in present-day Russia.

Roger Pike

WELSH PIRATES (part 2)

The two stories below conclude this short series about pirates born in Wales.

JOHN EVANS

The place and date of birth of John Evans is not known, but on several occasions he was described by others as “coming from Wales”. He started his pirate career in September 1722. Up to that time he had been legitimately involved in a variety of sailing jobs, from master of a sloop on the island of Nevis to working as a mate sailing from Jamaica. Due to a lack of berths on ships at the time, he and three or four others found themselves out of work and rowed out from Port Royal, Jamaica, in a canoe. Their first illegal acts were simple robbery of houses near the shore, but this was not entirely to their liking and they really wanted to secure a proper ship and move their work out to sea.

Soon they encountered a sloop lying at anchor off Bermuda. They took the ship and put into a little village where they proceeded to ransack the local tavern. The next day they set sail for Hispaniola in the sloop, which they renamed the *Scowerer*. Their first true prize as pirates was a Spanish sloop, but it had little in the way of treasure on board. After this they set course for the Windward Islands, where they came across the *Dove*, a ship bound from New England to Jamaica. They forced the mate and three crew members to join them before releasing the *Dove*.

The next prize was two ships, the 200 ton *Lucretia* and the smaller *Catherine*. Intending to modify the ships to their use, they went to the little island of Avis, but before they could begin work they sighted another sloop and gave chase. They failed to catch her, being slowed by the *Lucretia*. They were now near the island of Ruby and decided to do the modification work there. This idea was also forestalled when they saw a Dutch sloop and captured her. This new ship was more to their liking, so they abandoned the slow-moving *Lucretia*. *Scowerer*, *Catherine* and newly acquired sloop set sail for the north coast of Jamaica and soon captured a sugar drover, before going on to the Grand Caymans, again with the intention of cleaning their hulls.

Prior to making landfall, the boatswain and Evans exchanged ill language and the boatswain, taking offense, challenged Evans to a duel. When they docked, however, the boatswain refused to go ashore and pursue the duel. John Evans, angered by the man’s cowardice, beat him about the shoulders and back with

his cane, causing the boatswain to draw his pistol and shot Evans in the head. The boatswain then jumped overboard and tried to swim to shore, but he was soon picked up by the *Scowerer's* crew. The crew, so angered at the death of their captain resolved to torture the man, but were unable to fulfil the threat as two of the crew shot him first. Lacking a willing candidate to take over as captain the crew set ashore at the Caymans with 9,000 gold coins to be split among the 30 crew members.

Evans and his crew appeared to have been fairly successful and if it had not been for the unfortunate death of the captain, less than a year after becoming a pirate, they might have gone on to greater things, making Evans a little better known today. As is was, the crew only had enough plunder to last a few months in port, so they looked for further opportunities, probably as pirates on other vessels.

JOHN CALLIS

John Callis (or Callys or Callice) enjoyed an exciting career as a pirate, although it's difficult to be too sure about many of the details of his life. He was born into a well-off family in Tintern, Monmouthshire, in the late 1530s. He had family connections with the Earl of Pembroke and the Herberts, the principal family of South Wales. After his education, he went to London as a young man to learn to be a clothes merchant, but decided the lifestyle wasn't for him, so soon returned to Wales.

By 1574 he was being accused of being captain of the pirate ship, the *Cost Me Noughte*. The Admiralty described him as 'a notorius pyrate haunting the coasts of Wales', as it was alleged he was the leader of a group of raiders terrorising sea-borne trade off the South Wales coast from his bases in Penarth and Cardiff. However, because of his family connections, he was not prosecuted. Indeed, Callis was so friendly with William Herbert, High Sheriff of Glamorgan and Vice-Admiral of Wales, that he stayed in his house in Cardiff while he attempted to sell the ill-gotten merchandise he had stolen from merchant ships. The gentry were said to have been well rewarded by Callis for looking after him.

During 1574 Callis and his crew took control of an Italian ship in the Bristol Channel and sold its cargo in Bristol and Cardiff and at the end of the year he attacked a Portuguese ship off the Azores. For three years Callis preyed on a

great number of ships in the Bristol Channel and further afield, around the coast of Britain. He was always safe in South Wales, because of his links with the area's main landowners. In addition to his friends in Glamorgan, he had a good relationship with the bigwigs of Pembrokeshire and he is said to have established a headquarters for himself in a tavern in Angle, near Milford Haven.

Callis was indiscriminate and indiscreet in his pirate activities. He attacked Spanish, French, Danish, Dutch, Scottish, Portuguese and no doubt any other ships that he could find, taking whatever he could see profit in, be it wine or brandy; wool or linen; salt, raisins, almonds, olives or pomegranates; whale oil, Scottish salmon, haddock or the catch from the Newfoundland fisheries; and, of course, cash and any other valuables on board the captured ships.

However, Callis' rapacious career came to a halt when he was arrested in 1577 and dragged in chains to the Tower of London. He was tried on ten serious counts of piracy, but although he was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged, he found a way to escape the gallows by giving information to the authorities about the activities of the gentry who were behind piracy in South Wales. Once free, Callis soon went back to his old occupation, capturing ships from Spain, France and Denmark, and selling some of the goods in Cardiff. In 1582 he joined an expedition that was intended to catch pirates, but he used the opportunity to capture even more merchant ships. Over the next four years there were reports of Callis taking ships off the coasts of Ireland and Scotland as well as Wales.

His end is uncertain. Some sources say that he went to North Africa to continue his career as a pirate, but that he was killed there in 1586 or 1587. However, another report says that he was hanged in Wapping for his crimes, in the company of two other pirates who had been active in raiding the coast of Wales. Yet others maintain that because he was active in South Wales from Cardiff to Haverfordwest, pressure from neighbouring countries forced the English government to take action and capture him in 1586. The elderly pirate attempted to assist authorities in tracking down other pirates in exchange for his release, as he had done before. However, the authorities refused his offer and he was hanged in Newport later that year. Following his execution, a commission was appointed to investigate merchants and others in the counties of Cardigan, Pembroke, Carmarthen, Monmouth and Glamorgan associated with locally-based pirates. A list of those illegally dealing with pirates was compiled by the commission and some of the offenders were fined.

Researched by Roger Pike

THE NEWSLETTER

Y Llychau is produced on behalf of St Michael & All Angels, Talley. It is intended to be a community publication (not just a church magazine) and as such it needs the support of all members of the community.

An easy way to support or possibly improve the Newsletter is for more readers to submit articles to be included. This would mean that future issues would contain more items of local interest and less pieces written by the editor. If you have written an article in the past, it does not preclude you writing another and if you have never submitted a piece for publication, please consider writing something. If no contributions are received, there will be no newsletter!

Roger Pike
Newsletter Editor

Bryn Heulog, Talley, Llandeilo, SA19 7YH

Tel: **01558 685741**

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

THE NEXT ISSUE

Intended Publication Date – **Monday 2nd July 2018**

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

For contributions written in English or Welsh that require translating
Sunday 20th May 2018 (to allow time for translation)

For contributions written in either language (English **and/or** Welsh) that
do not need to be translated
Sunday 27th May 2018