

Whitchurch (Cardiff) Association Football

The early years.

The Football Association (the FA) is the governing body of association football in England and the Crown Dependencies of Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man. Formed in 1863, it is the oldest football association in the world and is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the amateur and professional game in its territory. The north Wales towns of Wrexham and Ruabon also adopted the sport in this era. Wrexham A.F.C. is Wales' oldest professional club and the third oldest in the world. This interest led to the formation of the Football Association of Wales (FAW) in 1876 by Welsh solicitor Llewelyn Kenrick and this was followed in 1877 by the creation of the Welsh Cup. In 1877 the FAW formed the first Wales national football team who played their first game that year, losing 4–0 away to Scotland. (Ref: Wikipedia)

As you read on a thought must be given to the coverage and reports published in the newspapers over 120 years ago. Luckily for us they are accessible and now part of our history and heritage.

With accreditation to the National Library of Wales – Newspaper Archives <https://www.library.wales>

Sadly, a lot of clubs don't stand the test of time, but, bear in mind, the 20th century had 2 world wars and this alone would have had a huge affect on the longevity of all clubs and the development of all sport, in the first half of the 20th century.

You have to take your hat off to the early 'pioneers' of local football, most of these people were labouring in local factories, farmers fields and the railway (although local agriculture was in decline at that time the Melingriffith tin works was a large employer and the Taff Vale Railway had been constructed c.mid 19thC). Those times in general and work itself, was tough for them, but they were resourceful enough to create and build sports clubs, organise matches and travel to away games (no cars).

Football in Whitchurch has always been a constant struggle. The village has not lacked players, football teams and football clubs, but, it has lacked a 'village club' in the same way that rugby does. For the most part, it looks, from the outside, like the ambitions of the current AFC Whitchurch set up goes some way to put that to bed. This area of Cardiff has always been disadvantaged by the lack of club facilities and a pitch they could call their own. In the 1960's and 70's the village hosted teams like Whitchurch Hospital F.C. based at the hospital ground, Coryton Athletic, Coryton Rangers and Cardiff Suburbans all using Cae Delyn when and if it was available. The local pubs hosted these teams, Whitchurch Hospital at The Hollybush; Coryton Rangers (becoming Athletic) based at the British Legion Earl Haig club and Cardiff Suburbans at The Masons Arms. Rhiwbina also had a successful side playing in the Cardiff and District League, using The Butchers Arms.

Coryton Athletic (Cardiff and District League) ceased playing c.1970 and Coryton Rangers (in the Cardiff Combination League) took their name and the rights to their pitch at Cae Delyn, also acquiring some of their equipment at the time.

In the early 70's, Coryton Athletic, based at the British Legion / Earl Haig club, started to build a strong side and with an up and coming successful youth side, Coryton Colts, things looked rosy, but, disagreements within (c. 1972) saw the formation of a new team at The Park Lawn Tennis Club, dividing players' loyalty, adopting the tennis club's name in the process. This divide saw the

Coryton Ath. team change their name to Whitchurch Earl Haig F.C. At the time, Whitchurch Hospital F.C. had a successful side in the old First Division of the Cardiff Combination League, benefitting from having a pitch of their own (on the hospital ground) which was well managed and cared for, the envy of many. They shared training evenings with the Coryton Athletic club, using the hospital hall / gym with players mixing well with each other, the Hospital team, blessed with ex professional footballers (a few from Newport County) now at the hospital learning a new profession as physios, offering good advice, encouragement and support on these occasions. By the early 80's all these clubs were running 2nd teams, Whitchurch F.C. also having a third XI. Whitchurch Hospital FC was now firmly based at The Plough (Whitchurch) and by 7pm on a Saturday evening the pub was rammed, the hospital boys being joined by the players from Whitchurch F.C., Whitchurch Rugby Club and also local referees returning from their own games, all friendly rivalry.

From the mid 1980's however things became more and more difficult, Council owned pitches were neglected, ageing teams, declining interest in playing, changes within league management with the old guard giving way to the new and administering and organising the game in general, not just with clubs, but arranging fixtures, pitches, referees and the ever increasing financial demands put pressure on teams.

The football 'pyramid' league structure at the time was based on the thriving Cardiff and District and the Cardiff Combination Leagues, both of a similar standard, then the South Wales Amateur League and above that the Welsh League. Teams in the top divisions of the Cardiff Combination and the Cardiff and District Leagues played at a high standard and competed well in the South Wales Amateur Cup winning it on many occasions. Coryton Athletic got to the semi final in 1974 losing to Llanishen 2 – 1, Llanishen going on to win the cup.

In the early 80's Whitchurch Hospital F.C. tried unsuccessfully to enter the South Wales Amateur League, but the lack of changing rooms (using the hospital facilities at that time); the inability to provide segregation of opposing teams, the pitch had no barriers around it, no record of previous years accounts and not being able to demonstrate an appropriate commercial side (revenue generation) for sustainability were reasons given.

(The dates given here for the 1980's and the early 90's events need to be confirmed by others, but won't be too far out).....

At some time c.mid 80's Whitchurch F.C. had forged a relationship with the youth club at Whitchurch High School on Penline Road, the club having created a thriving age range junior and youth football set up, mainly run by parents. Through the connections made, the senior football team obtained permission to use the school changing rooms for Saturday matches and to use the football pitch behind the shops on Merthyr Road, the pitch belonging to Glan Y Nant School (now Ysgol Melin Gruffydd) with the players from both sides having to walk across, in their kit, from the school to get there. It was far from ideal but at least the Whitchurch club could play in the village, neither was it an entirely harmonious relationship with the rugby 'flavoured' High school.

By 1991 however this group association: under one overall committee of the senior football team, the junior and youth teams and the youth club itself, was an incoherent arrangement, each group having disparate views and ambitions and the senior side opted to sever the connection for the common good and to devote their time and resources for their own pressing needs.

At this time Whitchurch F.C. applied to enter the South Wales Amateur League, but, with the same outcome the hospital team had experienced some years earlier, the pitch and the changing rooms being a major issue. Both, were 'toe in the water' attempts, to find out what was required to elevate the status of the local team and an attempt to put Whitchurch football on the map in the eyes of those that ran the game in South Wales. The reason for doing this was because it was recognised that a number of good local players, lost to Whitchurch, opted to play for clubs with better facilities, offering better opportunities, playing at a higher level, some of these lads preferring to play for Taffs Well; Cardiff Corries; Bridgend, Pontyclun and even Maesteg. To overcome this, efforts were made to forge a link with the old Whitchurch Rugby Club on Velindre Road, to use as a club base and also, separately, with Cardiff H.S.O.B. (now Cardiff Harlequins), to use the club house and spare land as a pitch on their ground near forest Farm, but these were rejected by the respective committees of their day, despite having some support within these clubs. The land at HSOB later became the home of Cardiff Cricket Club.

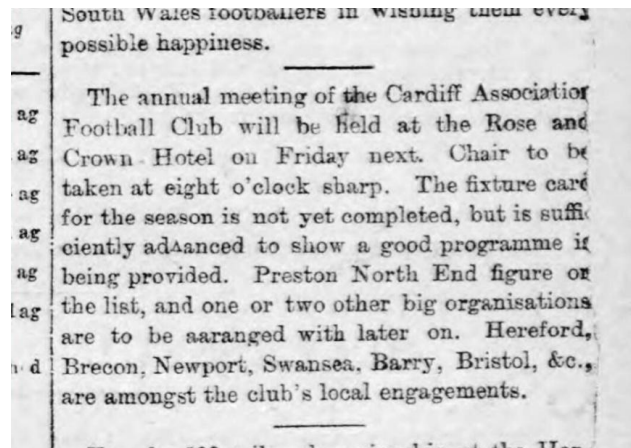
The upshot of all this, later, was that football teams merged together over the next few seasons, the pitch at Whitchurch Hospital being a huge asset that enabled football to retain a foothold in the area. Gabalfa Grasshoppers merged with Whitchurch Hospital F.C. becoming 'Whitchurch Hospital Grasshoppers' (mid 80's) and a few seasons later this team merged with Whitchurch F.C. (c.1993 – *requires checking*). The burgeoning youth club set up at Whitchurch High School and the successful age range youth football teams based within it that had further developed over the years, eventually led to a closer bond with the senior team and the eventual formation of AFC Whitchurch.

Hats off to all those, over many, many, years that have contributed to Whitchurch football.

Finally, before we delve into the deeper history of Whitchurch football through the archives, spare a moment, just reflect on how good it is that the names you are about to see, of those who represented the village over 120 years ago, once consigned to history, but now, brought to the present, what would they have thought to know that their exploits would be viewed over 120 years later? Was your family amongst them? Given the challenges, demands and the bumpy and irregular nature of how football clubs evolve, how far back do we have to go to find the foundations of our football heritage in Whitchurch?

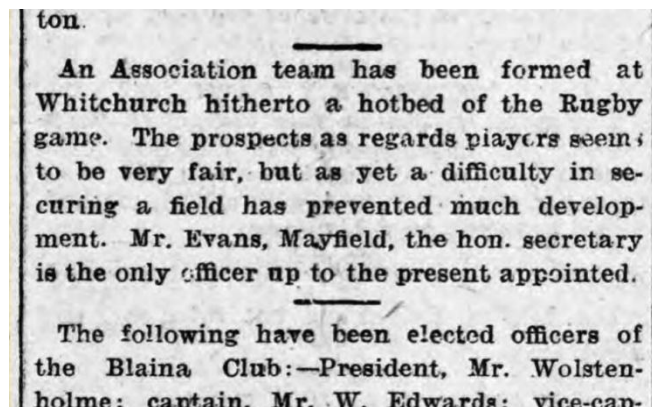
Read on.....

As we plunge into the depths it's worth noting that Cardiff City (AFC) are celebrating their 125th anniversary (as at 2024), placing their origin back to 1899, however the aficionados among us will be only too quick to point out that they were founded in 1899 as Riverside A.F.C., the club changed its name to Cardiff City in 1908 and entered the Southern Football League in 1910 before joining the English Football League in 1920 (Ref Wikipedia). In season 1924 – 25 Cardiff City got to the final of the English Challenge Cup (The F.A. Cup) at Wembley, but lost to Sheffield United 1 – 0 but better things came and in 1927 they won the cup at Wembley. Beating Arsenal 1 – 0 in front of 91,206 spectators. Cardiff however had other teams that pre-dated this, the following newspaper article from The Evening Express, dated 6th Sept 1894, provides evidence of just one of them:



This team of course has no direct link to the present day Cardiff City AFC. It is sufficient to know that Riverside AFC developed very, very quickly, from a regional team to F.A. Cup winners.

The earliest indication on Whitchurch Football might surprise, take a look at this cutting published in The Evening Express on 14th September 1901. It's worth noting that rugby in Whitchurch was well established by this time, having 'officially' started in 1885. Back in those days, newspapers reported on rugby as "Football" and what we now call football as "Association Football" or "Soccer".



The age old problem that still dogs our village sport today is highlighted even back then, "difficulty in securing a field". This didn't apply to rugby however, one of the proud boasts of the village at that time was that it hosted 4 rugby teams, Whitchurch, Tongwynlais, Llandaff Yard and Whitchurch YMCA (rugby).

Another early reference to a Whitchurch team was provided by The Evening express on 11th October 1901 when this team sheet was published:

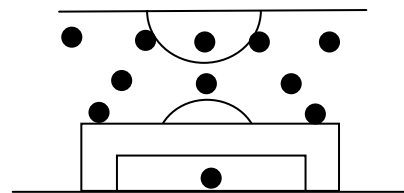
THOMPSON.
Saint Paul's v. Splott Windsors.—On the Moors. St. Paul's: Goal, C. Avland; backs, J. Garrett and H. Phillips; half-backs, T. Elliott, H. Shead, and another; forwards, J. Pritchard, T. Huxtable, R. Long, C. Huxtable, and C. Spackman. Train leaves Iron-room at 2.30.

Whitchurch v. Cardiff Bank Clerks.—At Whitchurch. Whitchurch: Goal, W. Bailey; backs, W. Evans and S. Price; half-backs, Campbell, J. Thomas, and E. Rigg; forwards, C. Evans, B. Greenslade, Churchill, Seaman, and T. Shelper (captain).

Porthcawl v. Bridgend County School.—At Porthcawl. Porthcawl: Goal, J. Towns; backs, A. Blades (captain) and J. Roberts; half-backs, J. S. Jones, J. H. Thomas, and W. Williams; forwards, W. Perkins, A. Winkfield, W. David, D. Evans, and A. Crow. Reserves: Parkes and Hammond. County School: Goal, J. Dyer; backs, W. Whitton and T. Thomas; half-backs, S. Jenkins, E. O. Hughes, and S. Harries; forwards, J. Thomas, H. Lewis.

In this cutting we have the names of the early representatives of that Whitchurch team: (Goal) W. Bailey; (backs) W. Evans and S. Price ; (half backs) Campbell, Thomas and Rigg; (forwards) Evans, Greenslade, Churchill, Seaman and T. Shelper (Captain).

Lining up in the old traditional and rigid 5 – 3 – 2 formation. (Ask your fathers and grandfathers).



These player positions were:

<i>Left Wing</i>	<i>Inside Left</i>	<i>Centre Forward</i>	<i>Inside Right</i>	<i>Right Wing</i>
<i>Left Half</i>		<i>Centre Half</i>	<i>Right Half</i>	
	<i>Left Full Back</i>		<i>Right Full Back</i>	
	Goal keeper			

Just a few days later on the 14th October the Evening Express printed the results of local matches, described as 'Minor Matches' showing the scoreline 'Cardiff Banks, one goal; Whitchurch, nil' and just above that score was another: 'Riverside, one goal; Singleton, one goal'. Some of the published scorelines showed other local clubs listed as Cardiff Loudouns; Cardiff Corinthians; Cardiff Villa; Cardiff Windsors; Docks; Pen Hill Villa; Cardiff Albions; Grange; Canton Villa; Canton Parish; Cathays and more, with others from Barry, Penarth and Caerphilly.

Another early reference to a Whitchurch team was provided by The Evening express on 6th December 1901 when this team sheet was published:

Docks Crescents v. Cathays United
Grange Fields. Crescents: Goal, T. Mutford; backs, F. Colley (captain) and A. Hodge; half backs, E. Benson, T. Ales, and H. Beecher; forwards, A. Gale, W. Pinnic, J. Bewick, J. Davies, and W. Morgan.

Cardiff Albion Reserves v. St. Martin's.—At Llandaff Fields. Albion Reserves: Goal, Heitzman; backs, Newton and Scott; half-backs, Churchill, Francis, and Hargraves; forwards, Cottell, Hieple, Church, Blake, and Pallot (captain).

Whitchurch v. Splott A.—At Whitchurch. Whitchurch: Goal, Templeton; backs, Corfield and Evans; half-backs, Campbell, Thomas, and Evans; forwards, Fisher, Rees, Church, Lace, and Greenslade.

Cymrics v. Canton Villa.—At Grange. Cymrics: Goal, Price; backs, Milford and Hales; half-backs, Maguire, Mathers, and George; forwards, Jenkins, Thomas, Docton, Weeks, and Syverret. Kick-off at 3.15 p.m.

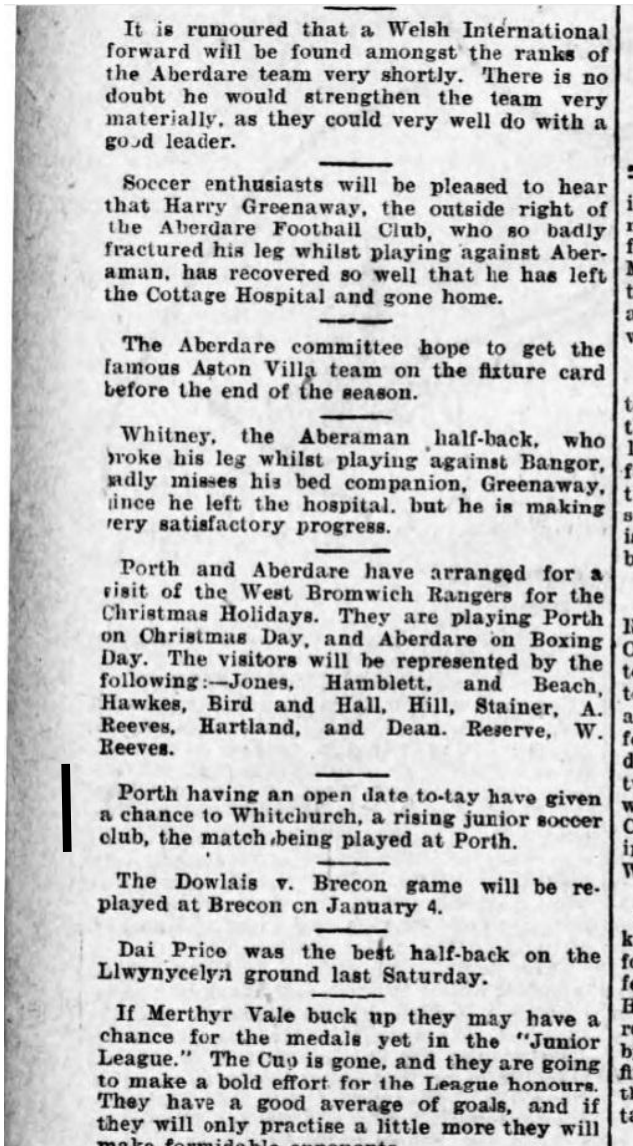
Gelli Juniors v. Hafod Reserves.—At Gelli. Gelli: Goal, Fred Chillington; backs, A. Harding and E. Walters; half-backs, T. Morris, A. Owens, and D. T. Jones; forwards, M. N. Bennett, W. Stephens, F. Williams, J. Lane,

In this cutting we have the names of the early representatives of that Whitchurch team with some changes from the previous match shown:

(Goal) Templeton;
(backs) Corfield and Evans;
(half backs) Campbell, Thomas and Evans;
(forwards) Fisher, Rees, Church, Lace and Greenslade.

Lining up in a 5 – 3 – 2 formation

On 20th December the Evening Express showed that Whitchurch was playing away at Hafod 2nds, with the Hafod team being shown, but another edition on the same date showed Whitchurch playing away at Porth and it's possible that the game with Hafod was a 2nd team game and perhaps the first evidence that Whitchurch had a 2nd team, the Hafod 1st team that day playing away at Caerphilly. This is further substantiated by a report in The Evening Express dated 21st December in which it states that Porth were without a game that day and that Whitchurch had filled in.



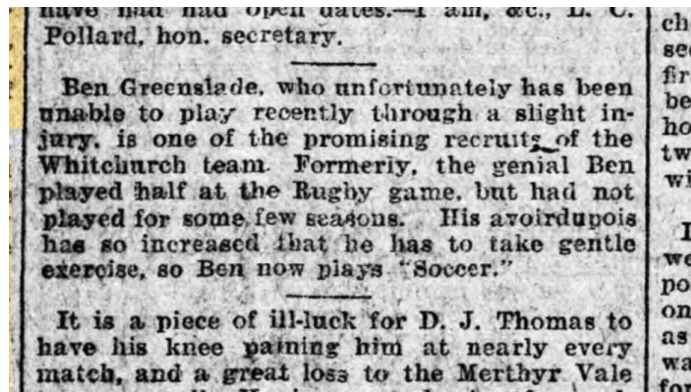
Just how junior is not known, either a reference to the age of players, or to the club itself, having only been formed a few months earlier.

It's well worth showing this extract because of what else it tells us, not least of all that Whitchurch is mentioned within it, but, that Aberdare is mentioned with the capability of having a Welsh International playing for them and not only that but they have ambitions to arrange a fixture with Aston Villa. West Bromwich Rangers also get mentioned, all on the same page.

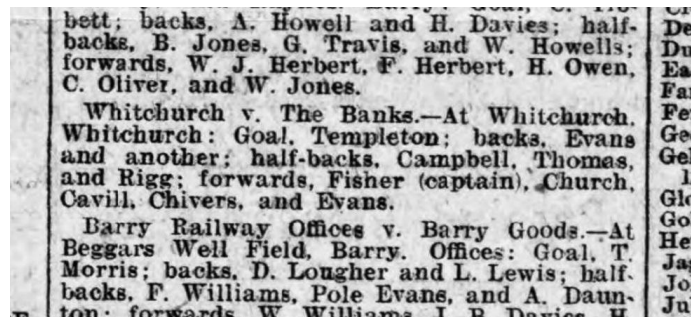
On the 27th December 1901, The Evening Express showed the following scores from recent matches:

Aberdare, four goals; West Bromwich Rangers, nil
 Hafod, three goals; Aberdare Reserves, nil.
 Whitchurch, five goals; Docks, nil.

By 1902 things had moved on, archive coverage is not extensive and in all probability, coverage of Whitchurch Association Football matches was not of great importance, one brief report came from The Evening Express on 11th January 1902 making light of the difference between rugby and football when a Whitchurch rugby player, Ben Greenslade, changed codes to aid a return from injury:



On the 17th January The Evening Express printed the results of the weekend games with Whitchurch beating Radyr 3- 0 and just for the record that day, Cardiff Albions beat Riverside 4 – 0. The same newspaper edition printed the Whitchurch team for the next game against 'The Banks'.



With just a few changes from previous matches this tends to suggest that a fairly regular squad was available for the club.

On January 24th The Evening Express published the team sheet presumably for the match against Radyr just played, printing the scores again on the 25th Jan.

Kelly, Gibson, Spencer, Llewellyn, and Jarman.

Park Villa v. Woodville Crescents.—At Roath Park. Villa: Goal, J. Booth; backs, J. Davies (captain) and A. Jenkins; half backs, J. Stoley, S. Parr, and J. Cottle; forwards, Tom Jones, C. Dunn, B. Rogers, E. Farrant, and C. Griffiths. Crescents: Goal, Twiney; backs, Gunstan and Parker; half backs, T. Willis, Collins, and Butt; forwards, W. Morgan, R. Jones (captain), A. Yeo, L. Davis, and R. Wise.

Whitchurch v. Radyr.—At Whitchurch. Whitchurch: Goal, D. Templeton; backs, W. Evans and Sam Boddy; half backs, E. Rigg, I. E. Thomas, and E. Campbell; forwards, J. Fisher (captain), R. Church, B. Greenlade, P. Rees, and W. M. Evans.

Pontlottyn Stars v. Bedlinog Seconds.—At Bedlinog. Goal, D. Richards; backs, Jack Price and R. Lloyd; half backs, D. E. Williams, W. Price, and W. Meredith; forwards, Bob Jones, D. Price (captain), G. Thomas, Phil Richards, and J. Lewis.

Cymrics v. Grange Reserves.—At Grange. Cymrics: Goal, C. Price; backs, E. Milford and D. Syverret; half backs, R. Mathers, A.

31st January 1902 The Evening Express published this team sheet for a home match against Barry Island:

J. R. Evans, G. Gower (captain), D. T. Jarman, and H. Williams.

Sploott United v. Grange Windsors.—At the Jubilee Park. Sploott: Goal, Stait; backs, Davies and Strong; half-backs, Jones, Taplin, and Hutchins; forwards, Gaccon, Banbury, Thomas, Willicombe, and Morrish.

Whitchurch v. Barry Island.—At Whitchurch. Whitchurch: Goal, D. Templeton; backs, W. Evans and H. Fisher; half-backs, W. A. Campbell, J. Thomas (captain), and E. Rigg; forwards, W. Richards, P. Rees, H. Jones, Alderman, and G. Alexander.

Barry District v. Cadoxton Rovers.—At Buttrills Ground. Barry District: Goal, B. Melvin; backs, P. James and T. Holmes; half-backs, J. Yarr, R. Mason, and J. Mason; forwards, A. German, jun., J. Dalton, A. German, sen., W. Thomas, and B. Melvin.

Radyr v. Penarth Artillery.—At Penarth. Radyr: Goal, A. Leaves (captain); backs, Sergeant Leary and J. Hedges; half-backs, R. Phillips, W. Davies, and G. Hole; forwards, A. Shannon, T. Foreman, J. Edmunds, E. Samuel, and A. Mabbitt.

Another that catches the eye is this next cutting from The Evening Express on 8th March 1902 which highlights the strides that the club were taking as they developed:

... themselves lucky for not having a far larger score registered against them. The saint's forwards are a fine combination of sturdy and clever exponents of the game; and the same team should make things hum for St. Vincent's and all the other teams they have yet to meet.

The Cardiff Corinthians have been idle for several weeks and the game with Whitchurch to-day is very welcome. They have unfortunately lost the services of their crack centre half, J. Gibson, through illness. They are fortunate in being able to secure the services of Bryce Smith to fill his place.

Porth were fairly beaten by Barry last Saturday. It was the worst game they have played this season.

The Porth Club are receiving a great deal

The score was Whitchurch, nil; Cardiff Corinthians, four goals and the Corries came away from the game with their reputation enhanced according to this brief report in The Evening Express dated 15th March 1902, the local crowd being suitably impressed by them.

nasty tactics of the Moorlands.

Pallot, of the Cardiff Albion Reserves, is a really splendid player on the left wing, and can score if given the least chance. He also knows the way to shoot, his cross kicks being one of his specialities.

Cook played a good game at back for the Albion Reserves last Saturday.

The Cardiff Corinthians came away from Whitchurch one point higher in the estimation of the crowd there last Saturday. Kelly, Gibson, and Llewellyn were easily distinguishable.

Day, the Abertillery outside left forward,

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In this report dated 22nd March 1902 in the Evening Express three of the Whitchurch team

the Porth match last Saturday, is steadily progressing, and hopes to be all right for the Rogerstone match on Good Friday.

R. Evans turned out for Nelson on Saturday for the first time, and soon made himself known by scoring the first goal.

Nelson have not played at home for the last six weeks, but will make a welcome re-appearance to-day versus Cardiff Corinthians.

In Pascoe-Howells and W. M. Evans the Whitchurch Club has two promising players. The former fills the position of left and the other of right half-back. They have the advantage of being in the company of J. Thomas, who, as centre half, is one of the most sterling players in the team.

The Cymrics are still improving. They beat the Barry County School last Saturday, which is a performance other teams have tried to do, but failed. Although they only won by one goal, scored by W. Docton, they thoroughly deserved it.

mouth men (I being amongst them "Boys, I admire your pluck for to such a big set of fellows; you de luck," and now he turns round at us of all sorts of mean things. example of the manner in which I people treated us:—I was playin and the ball had been kicked out of play. I stood near the touch-l for the ball, when one of the L players came up to me and gave in the back, the ball at the time b play. Did any of the Plymouth n or anything as bad?

Barry Dock Albions have in al matches, of which they have won 1 four, and lost one. They have sco against 13, their biggest success be the Eastbournes, whom they d twelve goals to nil.

A correspondent writes conde practice of conferring nicknames players in the Aberdare distri nounces it as very reprehensible.

Jerry White, the goalkeeper a fe

caught the eye of the local press, unfortunately it is only W. Evans that has any familiar regularity with the other team sheets displayed.

There is another short report in The Evening express dated 1st April on a representative game against 'Mr Duck's Eleven', the Duck family mentioned is believed to be the same, being pharmacists in and around the Cardiff area with a pharmacy shop in the centre of Whitchurch village now occupied by Boots (the Chemist/Pharmacy Group). Evidently it was a return match and so a match between the two must have been played some time earlier in the season.

Pring was the referee.

ASSOCIATION.

Upton Park v. Port Talbot.—Played at Aberavon on Easter Monday morning. Final score:—Upton Park, three goals; Port Talbot, two goals.

Whitchurch v. Mr. Duck's Eleven.—This return match was played at Whitchurch on Easter Monday, Duck's Eleven winning by two goals to one.

Woodville Crescents v. Treharris Juniors.—This match was played at the Roath Park on Monday in the presence of about a thousand spectators, and, after a splendid game, resulted in a win for the Woodvilles by one goal to nil.

CARDIFF ARMS PARK.—HOLIDAY MATCHES.
BARBARIANS V. CARDIFF, Easter Wednesday.

Quite who the Duck's could call on to represent them at football is not known, but clearly the Whitchurch team was second best that day.

This following cutting gave good detail coverage of Whitchurch's game against The Corries

CARDIFF CORINTHIANS V. WHITCHURCH.

The meeting between these teams at the Llandaff Fields only caused a small amount of interest. Whitchurch came down fully strong, but Simmons was missing from the home team, Norrie playing in his stead. The Corinthians were the first to attack, Evan Llewellyn giving a few chances in the centre, Pascoe Howells broke away for Whitchurch, but Thomas was equal to the occasion and drove them back. Then W. Frazer (who was playing on the right vice Tom Spencer) shot in, which Templeton successfully negotiated. Gibson gave a chance to Kelly, which again failed to penetrate. Bryce Smith next shot, but the Whitchurch custodian dealt with each as successfully as the first. A neat dribble taken up by Whitchurch caused the home defence some trouble, but Fred Price eventually cleared. The combination on either side was not much to be admired; kick and run was generally the play. Kelly, Gibson, and Llewellyn were each doing well, but somehow or other the attacks were always nipped in the bud by the Whitchurch backs, Norrie and Evans. Templeton in goal was playing splendidly, and he was mainly responsible for there being no score. Beece put in a wonderfully good shot, which went about 2in. wide of the mark.

Half-time score.	Goals.
Corinthians	0
Whitchurch	0

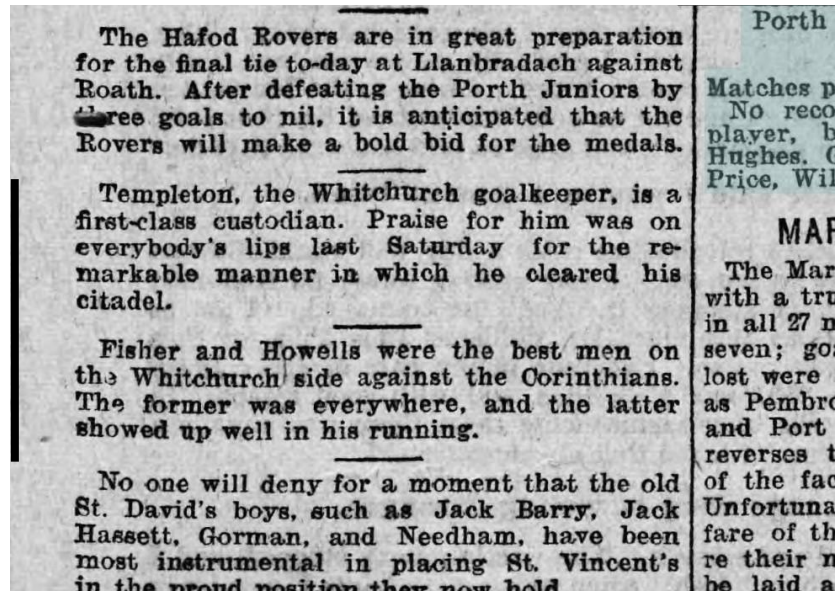
Half-time score.	Goals.
Corinthians	0
Whitchurch	0

The second half opened out very smart. The Corinthians got on the move, but Norrie kicked across into touch. The whole front rank getting down well Kelly received, and Norrie fumbling, allowed him to draw first blood. This only served to make Whitchurch play more determinedly than ever, but their combination was wretched. The home team were now having the best of matters, and Whitchurch were acting mostly on the defensive. Soon after the home team got their goal in a remarkable manner. Frazer received on the wing about five yards from the goal and gave to Gibson, and he headed to Kelly, who passed neatly to Llewellyn, and the latter shot, giving Templeton no chance. Whitchurch now worked better, and Fred Price missing, Fisher banged it through, Norrie going full length on the ground in trying to save. Norrie conceded a corner to the Corinthians, and Gibson placed it well in front, but the wind carried it over the bar. The kick out afforded the visitors no relief, and it was not long before Templeton was conspicuous for a fine clearance. Frazer gave a chance to Kelly, who shot wide, the best he could do in the circumstance.

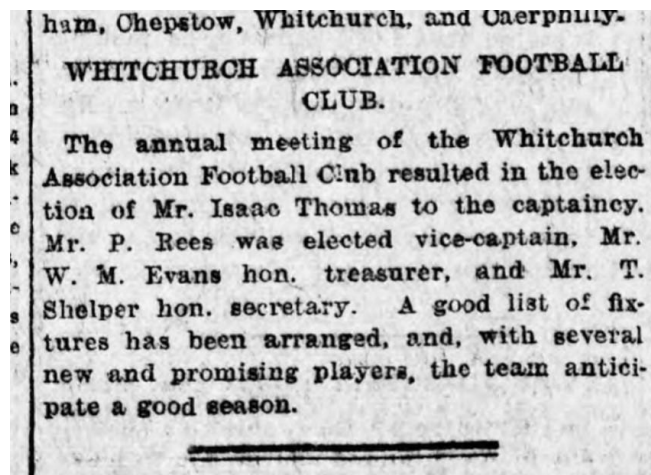
Final score.	Goals.
Cardiff Corinthians	2
Whitchurch	1

BEVAN SHIELD.

It was published in The Evening Express on the 19th April 1902 and must have been one of, if not the last game of the season. It's clear here that it was a close match, but, the reporter although not being too impressed, did seem to get occasionally excited by some aspects of play. Some of the players, however, were worthy of some praise, The Evening Express following up on this game on the 26th April 1902, mentioning Templeton, Fisher and Howells .



One important announcement was published in The Evening Express on 8th August 1902 with a brief account of the Whitchurch Association Football Club AGM



For the new season starting in September 1902 - 03 the Whitchurch club seemed to be reasonably well established. Here's a game that could get local football historians excited, printed in The Evening Express on 26th September 1902 and one worth mentioning to anyone with the time to listen.

Wellfield Stars v. Cathays United.—At Roath Park.	lon
Wellfield Stars: Goal, B. Shepherd; backs, W. Roper and J. Galsworthy; half-backs, H. Watson, F. Kingdom, and E. Morinan; forwards, D. Aitkin, D. Tudor, P. White, E. Parr, and A. Frayling.	Mr J
Orb Villa (Newport) v. Maindee.—Goal, C. Goodwin; backs, J. Locket (captain) and B. Goodkin; half-backs, D. Howse, T. Postle, and J. Veale; forwards, A. Austin, A. Groves, J. Bills, A. Clarke, and J. Banes.	Mr e Mr J Mr J Lord
Whitchurch v. Riverside.—At Whitchurch. Whitchurch: Goal, D. Templeton; backs, W. Evans and W. Rowe; half-backs, E. Riggs, Isaac Thomas (captain), and W. Campbell; forwards, H. G. Bedford, H. Jones, H. Fisher, W. Richards, and G. Alexander.	Mr J Mr J Col. Mr
Clarence Juniors v. Mr. A. Gale's Eleven.—At Grange Fields. Clarence Juniors: Goal, W. Morgan; backs, G. Blackler and D. Syvret; half-backs, C. Cooms, E. Sanders, and A. M'Guire; forwards, D. Evans, A. Fogg, W. Docton, F. Colley, and B. Kelly.	Mr C Mr J Mr V Mr V Mr C
Cartherine Villa v. Marlborough Crescents.—At Llandaff Fields. Catherine Villa: Goal, J. Dent; backs, G. Heslop, and B. Phillips; half-backs, E. Bellimore,	Mr J Mr J Capt

It was a Whitchurch game, at home, against Riverside and little doubt that it was THE Riverside team that you would know of if you have an interest in local football (see page 3 Re: Cardiff City).

Another of the early fixtures was shown in the Evening Express on 3rd October 1902 for a game to be played against Cardiff Corinthians at Llandaff Fields with the Corries team being listed. This start to the new season also saw the Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. Association Football team share the limelight locally with their fixture against Marlborough Crescents appearing in The Evening Express with the Marlborough players listed for the game but not the Whitchurch Y.M. team. The next we hear about these two Whitchurch teams was when The Evening Express printed the scores for local matches on 13th October

St Martin's, 3 goals; Whitchurch YMCA 1 goal - (presumably St Martin's, Caerphilly)
United Banks, 2 goals; Whitchurch 1 goal

These results on a day when Canton Wesleyans beat Canton Utd 7 -2; Cardiff Corinthians beat Cardiff Bohemians 3 – 0; Cardiff Albions beat Canton Parish Church 3 – 1; Radyr beat Penarth Artillery 4 – 0 and Hafod beat Roath Old Boys 4 – 1. (Just a hint there that some of the football teams originated from and within the local church).

On 17th October 1902 The Evening Express printed the team selection for the next match against Penarth Parish Church.

Merthyr Vale v. Roath (Cardiff).—At Merthyr Vale. Merthyr Vale: Goal, M'Palmer; backs, J. A. Lewis and Harry Roberts; half-backs, R. Davies, R. J. Owen, and T. O. Jones; forwards, James Evans, W. Thomas, J. Hughes, D. J. Thomas, and T. Price.

Penarth Parish Church v. Whitchurch.—At Penarth. Whitchurch: Goal, D. Templeton; backs, W. Rorie and W. Evans; half-backs, E. Rigg, I. Thomas (captain), and W. Phillips; forwards, W. Richards, P. Rees, H. Jones, H. Fisher, and G. Alexander.

Sploott United v. Clive Juniors.—At Canton. Sploott: Goal, S. Stait; backs, Gaccon and Davies (captain); half-backs, Jones, Thomas, and Hutchin; forwards, Banbury, Willicombe, Tiplin, Morrish, and another.

Penrhiwceiber Rangers v. Ynyabwl Eovers.—At Ynyabwl. Rangers: Goal, W. Wakely; backs, A. Duddon (captain) and Thomas Jones; half-backs, A. C. Jones, Pryce Lloyd, and J. Edwards; forwards, T. Bowlands, Isaac Jones, D. W. Mainwaring, J. Poole, and T. Jones. Referee: Mr. W. J. Evans.

Cardiff Tereadors v. Penarth Parish Church A.—At

The team names and players of other sides have been included here just to give the reader a feel for the types of teams that were playing local football at this time and comparisons can be made with the names of Whitchurch players over this period of time.

What about this one, for a game against 'Cardiff'? Unfortunately the Whitchurch team at the time seemed to have had a few results go against them, so much so that the local supporters didn't get too excited about attending, but, still a few hundred turned up to watch. 25th October 1902 The Evening express

Ystrad Gyn-	Caerleon	4	aggressive,
tries; Sploott	Newport Centrals	0	tracks for
bridge, nil.	CARDIFF v. WHITCHURCH.		however, w
n. nil.	Cardiff were at home to Whitchurch this		
n. nil.	afternoon at the Higher Grade Field. There		
entre United.	were only a few hundred spectators around		
ter failed to	the ropes, the match being robbed of much of		
nds, nil.	the interest by the fact that the Corinthians		
ry; Bristol, 1	had won rather easily over them earlier in		
tonians, nil.	the season. But to-day Whitchurch were re-		
berbeeg, nil.	presented by a stronger eleven. The teams		
1 try.	were:—		
ran Reserves.	Cardiff.—Goal, Swain; backs, Nash and Mor-		
ert Stars, nil.	gan; half-backs, Phillips, Price, and Needs;		
il; Treorky	forwards, Travers, Powell, Braddon, Graham,		
oleford Stars.	and Holtham.		
lgwain, nil.	Whitchurch.—Goal, Bissatt; backs, W. Norrie		
ints.	and Evans; half-backs, Fisher, Thomas, and		
1 nil.	H. Bedford; forwards, Richards, Rees, Jones,		
1 dropped, 1	Campbell, and Alderman.		
val Engineers	Powell started for Cardiff, who were imme-		
1 dropped), 1	diately aggressive. Holtham, getting the ball		
ational, nil;	on the left, centred, and Powell and Braddon		
al 1 try; Dy-	rushed it through. Hardly had matters re-		
dropped goal,	sumed before Holtham again got away, and,		
nil.	as the result of some passing, "Yank" scored		
nil.	a second goal. A minute later Braddon shot		
points.	outside. Whitchurch then pressed, Bedford		
erbert Stars.	doing the needful work on the right. Two		
Llewellyn,	free' were awarded close in in succession, and		
	each time Norris placed them to good advan-		
	tage, the latter time only missing the net by		
	a few inches. Soon after Cardiff gained a		
	free, and Fisher cleared. A dribble initiating		
	in the centre was taken along well by the		
	home men, and Travers found the net beau-		
	tifully right in the corner. Half-time score:		
	—Cardiff, 3 goals; Whitchurch, nil. Cardiff		
	opened the second half warmly, Holtham and		
	Graham being prominent in front of goal.		
	Needs was responsible for another goal for		
	the home team, placing in the centre grandly,		
	and Graham got the forth.		
	Final score: Goals.		
	Cardiff	4	front of the
	Whitchurch	0	could never
	BARRY UNITED ATHLETIC V. ABERDARE.		
	This return match, in connection with the		
			all oppositi

It would be interesting to know whereabouts of the 'Higher Grade Field', mentioned.

On the 7th November 1902 The Evening Express published team sheets for the weekend's games with Whitchurch playing against Radyr at the home ground of Whitchurch:

W. Forbes, and D. Aitken.
 St. Fagan's Seconds v. Spillers Juniors.—At St. Fagan's. St. Fagan's: Goal, A. Roderick; backs, V. Lewis and A. Jones; half-backs, Vaughan, W. Welsby, and T. Haines; forwards, H. Matthews, J. Thomas, W. Edmonds (captain), Idris Thomas, and C. Garner.
 Whitchurch v. Radyr.—At Whitchurch. Whitchurch: Goal, Pascoe Howells; backs, W. Evans and W. Norie; half-backs, W. A. Campbell, I. Thomas (captain), and E. Rigg; forwards, W. Richards, H. Alderman, H. Fisher, P. Rees, and G. Alexander. Radyr: Goal, A. Leaves (captain); backs, Sergeant Leary and J. Hodges; half-backs, R. Phillips, W. Davies, and G. Hole; forwards, A. Shannon, E. Samuel, J. Edmunds, A. Mabbitt, and T. Foreman.
 Catherine Villa v. Victoria United.—At Llandaff Fields. Catherine Villa: Goal, T. Little; C. Jones and G. Heslop; half-backs, T. Charles, Morgan Evans, and B. Hodson (captain); forwards, C. Orr, D. Heslop, C.

W. Evans is still there in defence, Campbell, Thomas and Rigg are still half backs and there is a new forward line.

On the same day, 7th November, The Evening Express showed the Victoria Juniors team sheet for a match against 'Whitchurch Choir' to be played at The Heath and in all probability this was a youth game for a team based at St Mary's Church in Whitchurch.

On the 15th November 1902 The Evening Express reported on a local derby against Radyr in a good old fashioned way.

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WHITCHURCH.

Radyr and Whitchurch are old rivals, and neither concedes anything to the other. On Saturday Whitchurch gave their opponents rather a drubbing by three goals to nil. Radyr did not have much luck, but the form of Thomas and Richards was irresistible, while Pascoe and Howells kept a grand goal.

Y.M.C.A. met Gladstone Villa, and the juniors, who have a useful back in Foxall, were credited with a well-deserved victory by one to nil.

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CO
OF

On the 21st November 1902 The Evening Express published the following Whitchurch team for a game against Newport Garrison at Whitchurch:

Goal - W.A. Campbell

Full Backs – W. Evans and W. Rowe

Half Backs – H. Fisher; P. Howells and E. Rigg

Forwards – W. Richards; H. Alderman; H. Jones; G. Alexander and Jack Jones

This being a day when Cardiff Albions were scheduled to play Canton and University were to play Barry Dock United.

On the 22nd November The Evening Express printed a brief report on a match between Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. and 'Lutons', (Cardiff Lutons, a local football team). The report went on to state:

"In the game...the ball was kicked over the fencing into a field of cabbages and in spite of a diligent search, could not be found. The game ended with the 'Lutons' leading by three to nil".

The Evening express published this team on 28th November 1902, for a Whitchurch match against Cardiff University, to be played at Whitchurch:

Whitchurch v. Cardiff University.—At Whitchurch.	Whitchurch: Goal, J. Thomas (captain); backs, W. Evans and W. Rosie; half-backs, W. Phillips, W. A. Campbell, and H. Fisher; forwards, I. C. Evans, W. Richards, J. Jones, P. Rees, and G. Alexander.	10
East Moors v. Barry Old Boys.—At Splott Park.	East Moors: Goal, J. Williams; backs, J. Hurford and C. Hadley; half-backs, E. Coles, E. Owen, and C. Thomas; forwards, A. Owen (captain), L. Chirighin, W. Owen, J. Thomas, and H. Parrish.	10
Canton v. Barry District.—At Barry.	Canton: Goal, J. Fox; backs, W. Evans and J. Garnett; half-backs, F. G. Good (captain), J. Jones, and B. Rogers; forwards, E. Brooks, J. Binding, W. S. Fletcher, J. Moss, and E. Milford.	10
Radyr v. Lutons.—At Radyr.	Radyr: Goal, E. Powell; backs, Sergeant Leary and J. Hedges; half-backs, R. Phillips, W. Davies, and G. Hole; forwards, A. Shannon, A. Leaves (captain), J. Edmunds, A. Morgan	10

In this game the goalkeeper J. Thomas is named as captain and this is the first time his name is seen as goalkeeper for Whitchurch, in previous matches Isaac Thomas was captain and we have to wonder whether this was coincidence or that there was some family connection.

A day later, on the 29th November 1902, The Evening express printed a short article on an abandoned Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. match, spoiled by the weather, but passing a critical opinion of the state of the Whitchurch pitch:

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WHITCHURCH.

The match between Cardiff West End and Whitchurch Young Men Christian Association was abandoned before half-time last Saturday owing to the heavy rain. The game, as far as it went, was in favour of the Westenders, the Y.M.C.A.'s goal being repeatedly assailed. J. Hover, A. Harrison, and Phillpott for the West End were in splendid form. The Y.M.C.A. ground is in a very bad condition.

CAUTION.—HOW TO TEST THE PURITY OF COCOAS.—If treated with alkali and chemicals, such cocoas will have a medicinal scent when the tin is opened, and it will be a darker colour when in liquor. CADBURY'S Cocoa has no addition of any kind, and is guaranteed absolutely pure. e3435-1

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The Evening Express on 1st December 1902 printed the scores of recent matches, with Whitchurch losing to Cardiff University, 2 goals; Whitchurch, 1.

One that caught the imagination and seems to have stirred the locals was the return local derby between Radyr and Whitchurch. But, it didn't seem to live up to expectations if this cutting is anything to go by, on this occasion, Radyr took the bragging rights:

The Evening Express 13th December 1902

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last goal. Aberaman were still pressing, when time was called.

Final score:		Goals.
Aberaman		9
Nelson		0

RADYR V WHITCHURCH

This match, which had been looked forward to by both teams for several weeks past, was played at Radyr, before a number of spectators. Lewis kicked off for the homesters, and after loose play in the centre of the field Whitchurch took the ball near the homesters' goal, but from a wild shot it went over the bar. Radyr then attacked, and E. Samuel shot the first goal. Ten minutes later Mabbitt registered the second. Nothing further was scored.

Final score:		Goals.
Raydr		2
Whitchurch		0

In the New Year (1903), the games flowed thick and fast. On the 2nd January The Evening Express published a list of fixtures in which Whitchurch were scheduled to play away at Canton and later that month The Evening Express printed team selections for the weekends fixtures on 30th January 1903 in which Whitchurch were scheduled to play against Cardiff Corinthians. The Whitchurch team that day was:

ASSOCIATION.	
	CAERPHILLY V. ABERDARE.
	At Caerphilly. Caerphilly: Goal, R. Watson; backs, W. Gregory and E. Jones; half-backs (selected from), W. Tagg, Battles, Rogers, and Fudger; forwards (selected from), Thompson, James, Rogers, Wilcox, Wilson, and Bevan.
	CARDIFF CORINTHIANS V. WHITCHURCH.
	At Whitchurch. Whitchurch: Goal, D. Templeton; backs, W. Norie and W. Evans; half-backs, E. Rigg, R. Other, and H. Fisher; forwards, W. Richards, R. Jones, Jack Jones, Phil Rees (captain), and H. Alderman. Corinthians: Goal, L. Mullins; backs, T. Thomas and F. Price; half-backs, A. Beatt, J. Gibson, and W. Blake; forwards, W. J. Bull (captain), W. Gibson, Sergeant Kelly, W. Stuckey, and E. Francis.
	NELSON V. BARRY DISTRICT.
	At Nelson. Nelson: Goal, E. Welsh; backs, W. Stafford and W. Hyslop; half-backs, E. Abraham, W. Evans, and W. J. Edmunds; forwards, D. Davies, D. Thomas, L. Edwards, H. Grey, and G. Jenkins.
	LLANBRADACH V. EBBW VALE.
	At Llanbradach. Llanbradach: Goal, F. Mills; backs, G. Watkins and Hutchinsonson; half-backs, J. Mills, W. Williams, and J. Athey; forwards, M. Williams, Burbage, A. Turner (captain), W. Davies, and B. Turner.
	PORTH V. CARDIFF.
	At Porth. Porth: Goal, W. H. Stone; backs, R. ... half-backs, A. Hanley, L. ...

There are still some recognisable and regular names playing for Whitchurch and it is good to see. In the follow up, The Evening Express printed this report on 31st January 1903.....

ag.	for Cheshire. Crossing over, Lancashire led
er-	by two to one. On changing ends Lancashire
ed	had the advantage, and Comber scored twice.
ain	Blackmore scored for Cheshire.
re-	Final score.
si-	Goals.
ed	Lancashire 5
ed	Cheshire 2
m-	
ist	WHITCHURCH V. CORINTHIANS.
for	These friendly rivals met at Whitchurch in
is.	wet weather. The game throughout was well
ew	contested, Whitchurch having rather the
nes	better of the game during the latter stages.
ed	Ralph Jones registered the first point for the
by	homesters, but the Corinthians were soon
rst	level, and, both sides playing a strong defence.
the	no further score was registered. Final score:
of	Whitchurch, 1 goal; Corinthians, 1 goal.
la.	PONTLOTTYN V. ABERGAVENNY.
	The above league match was played on the
	Duffryn Field, Pontlottyn, this afternoon. The
	homesters commenced operations with nine
	men fielding. The home team were quickly

On 2nd February 1903 The Evening Express printed the scores of local matches with Whitchurch drawing 1 – 1 in the 'Corinthians' game.

On the 2nd March 1903 Whitchurch lost 1 – 0 against Canton Parish Church.

The 7th March 1903 The Evening Express printed a brief report on a match that saw Whitchurch lose to United Banks in a tight game:

<p>in). Bel- ins, tin few ere by ers, ing the the and bal, ter, nge up th ale me re, nge ser- or the rail ass- by. ole eg- the age</p>	<p>before during the coming season. The party will leave England on June 20.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">UNITED BANKS V. WHITCHURCH.</p> <p>Played at Llandaff Fields. Williams started for the Banks, and an attack was made on the visitors' goal. Aubrey then ran along smartly, and Evans retaliated with a rare kick. A free fell to the Banks, but to no advantage. Banks forced a corner, which was nicely placed, Riches finding the net. Davies went away, but the attack was warded off by Williams. Half-time was then called, the Banks leading by one goal to nil. Re-starting, the Whitchurch goal had a narrow shave, a shot from Thomas hitting the up-rights. The home team were penalised, and the ball being placed nicely in the goal mouth, Davies scored. Whitchurch were now smartly attacking, Davies having hard lines in not scoring. The Banks proved too good on the defensive. Again the home team made an attempt, Riches taking the ball on his own, and, beating both backs and goalkeeper, scored.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Final score. Goals.</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>United Banks</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Whitchurch</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">TREHARRIS V. CAERPHILLY</p>	United Banks	2	Whitchurch	1	<p>(Chester- dington (North), L. F. A. J. W. Ho and C. I and Suss Umpire and C. O After t was che advanced and givin being mu exhibiting saved, bu his charg latter wa were mu Gordon-s with a sh A minute time by two min custodian attached a good g robbed, s Hams, w and the Wales w ball from</p>
United Banks	2					
Whitchurch	1					

A few weeks later, on 27th March 1903, The Evening Express gives notice of an away game 'Singleton v Whitchurch', listing the Singleton team only and this presumably is Singleton near Newport.

On 2nd May 1903 The Evening express reported under the "Whitchurch" headline that "A team has been formed this year at Beulah and a good season is being looked forward to. — Mr. W. J. Lloyd (the old Whitchurch and Llanishen player) has been elected captain, Mr Will Davies, secretary and Mr. Arthur Davies, Treasurer". The old parish boundary of Whitchurch included Rhiwbina back in those days, but possibly, the first sign of a neighbouring team and one that also seems to be connected to the local church.

There was an announcement of an AGM on 26th August 1903 in The Evening Express which gives the impression that things seem to be going well given the young age of the club.

Sussex and Kent ; (1) Somerset, Dorsetshire, and Hampshire.

The Whitchurch Club.

The Whitchurch Association Football Club held their annual meeting last evening. Mr. J. Thomas presided over a good attendance. It was decided to run first and second elevens. The following officers were elected:—President, Mr. J. H. Cory; captain first eleven, Mr. P. Rees; hon. secretary, Mr. W. Evans, Mayfield, who has already arranged several good fixtures.

CARDIFF RAILWAY CLUB.

A Rugby team has been formed amongst the staff at Cardiff Goods G.W.R. Mr. F. Hart was elected president, Mr. E. T. Davies, cap

There was a good attendance at the meeting and one of the major decisions taken was to run a 2nd team which again tells us that there must have been a lot of interest in the game here, not just that, but it also attracted the interest of some influential people, with the club claiming Mr. J. H. Cory as President.

Before the start of season 1903 – 04 we come across this article published on 25th July 1903 in The Evening Express which comments on local sport, mentioning Whitchurch,

banded, thus depriving them of a game last week. Teams crying off in this way might at least be considerate and inform their opponents before arrangements are made.

The football season is approaching apace, and six weeks hence will see operations commencing. The Whitchurch Rugby Club have exceedingly good prospects, and have a strong list of fixtures arranged. Llandaff Yard are eligible for the first division of the Cardiff and District Union, but have not yet definitely decided whether they will join the League. Whitchurch Crescents are candidates for the third division of the Cardiff and District Union, and have prospects of a good season. The Whitchurch Soccer club anticipate some good additions to their players' ranks, and have their usual attractive list of fixtures.

FOOTBALL

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Llandaff Yard Rugby Club, Whitchurch Crescents (Rugby) and an optimistic view for the season for Whitchurch Football Club (soccer) with an attractive fixture list on offer for the loyal followers in the village.

We don't hear much about the Whitchurch 2nd s, but there was an interesting and pleasing article on 25th September 1903 in The Evening Express which listed the players for a host of games that

weekend and among these was the player names for 'Whitchurch Seconds' who were scheduled to play against 'Llandaff Rooks'. The line up for Whitchurch was:

Goal: J. Phillips
 Backs: G. Howells and A. Evans
 Half-backs: W. Evans; F. Watson and H. Warwick
 Forwards: G. Broad, R. Edser, T. Lewis (captain), B. Chivers and A.N.Other

With some, like Chivers and Evans, having played 1st team football.

There was also a snippet of information on the 2nd team, published on 23rd October 1903 in the Barry Herald, mainly relating to their own local team, it's not good news for us, but it at least tells us that the team was sufficiently successful and well managed to be able to run a 2nd team.

The game between the Barry Railway Officials and the Cardiff Y.M.C.A. showed that the former have improved considerably during the last few weeks. Notwithstanding the heavy state of the ground, a good game was witnessed, the Officials winning by 6 goals to one.

Barry Intermediate Old Boys registered another win against the Whitchurch Seconds on the Romilly Park. The Old Boys fairly outclassed their opponents, and had much the better of the game, scoring five goals to two.

The match between the Hill Top Stars and the Island United was an interesting struggle, the Stars winning by 2 goals to nil. Burford

In a Boxing Day publication of the Evening Express dated 26th December 1903 there was a less than complimentary report on the team's game against Corinthians, being highly critical of the

Oaklands	10	2	7	1	17	22	5
Conservatives	9	2	7	0	11	22	4
Recreatives	8	0	8	0	4	26	0

WHITCHURCH

The visit of the Corinthians to Whitchurch was the Soccer "tit-bit" of the season. One can hardly understand the apathy shown by some of the members of the villagers' team to allow their side to take the field for a time with ten men only. Whitchurch undoubtedly could make a good side if they wished. They have an excellent ground, and every chance for practice and training.

In the match under notice there was no mistaking the superior combination of the visitors, and their unselfishness was a lesson to some of the homesters. They fully deserved their four to one victory. If the Soccer code is to flourish in Whitchurch, a few additional players are needed and more "esprit de corps."

GRAND XMAS TRANSFORMATIONS

It is impossible to conceive a grander Xmas transformation than the wonderful

team's organisation and the lack of pride and loyalty on display. That said, we apparently had an "excellent ground" and it leaves us wondering where that might have been, perhaps on the old Polo Ground?

It seems that things are not going too well around Christmas 1903, because The Evening Express on 28th December printed this unfortunate score:

PEMBROKE DOCK V. CARDIFF ALBION.		
Final score.		
Pembroke Dock	Goals.	2
Cardiff Albion		2
WHITCHURCH V. SINGLETONS.		
Final score:		
Singletons	Goals	5
Whitchurch		0

In 1904 regular matches continued with Whitchurch playing at home against Barry Intermediate Old Boys with the Old Boys team being listed in The Evening Express on 11th March.

It wasn't all doom and gloom though, in the new year there was a positive outlook provided by the newspaper on 23rd January 1904 (The Evening Express) extolling the virtues of the village team and with what seems to have been a big contribution from 2nd team players that day, Dan Templeton, in goal, stole the show, earning most of the praise.

yeoman service for Treharris against Aberdare. The clever footwork of the former and the latter's shooting gave the spectators sufficient reason for their wild enthusiasm.	Penarh St. H St. J Whit Well
WHITCHURCH.	
For some time we have been advocating the inclusion of local junior talent in the Whitchurch Soccer team. Last Saturday's match proved that this step was well advised. Against Penarth Parish Church seven of the Seconds were included, and the result reflects credit on the side that took the field. Broad, the vice-captain of the Second Eleven, scored the villagers' goal. The feature of the match was the goalkeeping of Dan Templeton for the homesters. Some of his saves were really marvellous. Dan is great on his day.	Cardiff Spil Hibe Whit St. J Penarh Olive St. P St. E St. J

Not to be outdone, a week later, the players of Whitchurch 2nds had their names published in The Evening Express on 29th January 1904 for the team selection against 'Higher Grade Old Boys', a match scheduled to be played at Roath Park and suspiciously, a Whitchurch team that seemed to have more than just a sprinkling of first team players.....

Taylor; backs, W. Evans and E. Milford; half-backs, B. Rogers, J. Jones, and F. Good; forwards, T. Boulton, L. C. Pallot, A. Graham (captain), L. I. Moss, and E. Brooks.	Mr T Mr E Mr E Mr B Mr F Mr G
Whitchurch Seconds v. Higher Grade Old Boys.—At Roath Park. Whitchurch Seconds: Goal, D. Elliott; backs, M. Cambridge, D. Wilson, and Lloyd; half-backs, W. Evans, F. Watson, and R. Edser; forwards, G. Broad, A. Evans, T. Seccombe, T. Lewis, and B. Chivers.	ne
Wellfields v. Cadroxton.—At Roath Park. Wellfields: Goal, J. Roberts; backs, H. Nash and J. Galsworthy; half-backs, D. Aitken, D. Tudor, and W. Roper; forwards, L. Thomas, P. White, Rev. A. M. Jenkin, R. ...	Mr J Major Herr

On the 15th February 1904 The Evening Express published a list of results with Whitchurch

SOCCER FINALS.	
Barry West End, 8 goals;	Barry Hilltops, 1 goal.
Intermediate Old Boys, 4 goals;	County School, 2 goals.
Stacey-road Old Boys, 3 goals;	Canton Parish Church Seconds, nil.
Higher Grade Old Boys, 1 goal;	Y.M.C.A., 1 goal.
Gladstone Villa, 1 goal;	Barry Dock Cymrics, 1 goal.
Ormond Juniors (Newport), nil;	Belmont Villa, nil.
Abergavenny, 3 goals;	Cwmanan, 1 goal.
Whitchurch, 3 goals;	United Banks, 0.
Wyndham Stars, 2 goals;	Cardiff Brigade, 0.
ENGLISH LEAGUE—DIVISION I.	
Newcastle United, 4 goals;	Notts County, 1.
Wolverhampton Wanderers, 1 goal;	Sheffield United, 0.
Blackburn Rovers, 1 goal;	Small Heath, 1.
Liverpool, 0;	Stoke, 0.
Manchester City, 1 goal;	Aston Villa, 0.
Bury, 0;	Everton, 0.
Middlesbrough, 0;	Derby County, 0.
Sheffield Wednesday, 0;	Sunderland, 0.
RE-PLAYED ENGLISH CUP-TIE.	

comfortably beating United Banks and sharing the page with the illustrious teams of the English First Division (as well as Barry Hilltops).

At the beginning of season 1904 – 05 there is a reference to our other Whitchurch team, the Y.M.C.A., which was published in The Evening Express on 23rd September 1904 and it gives us the team sheet for their match against Canton Villa.

T. Metford (captain); backs, L. Morgan and S. Fishburn; half-backs, C. Bassett, C. Organ, and S. Heal; forwards, J. Needs, W. Hall, A. Ogden, H. Bibbings, and A. Graham.
Caerleon v. Orb Working Men (Newport District League).—At Caerleon.—Caerleon: Goal, F. Brown; backs, J. Hopkins and P. Young; half-backs, B. Wallace, W. Edwards (captain), and C. Jones; forwards, C. Oakley, F. Morgan, A. G. Price, W. Carpenter, and T. Edwards.
Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. v. Canton Villa.—At Canton. Y.M.C.A.: Goal, J. Phillips; backs, D. Lloyd and G. Warwick; half-backs, U. Warwick, W. Evans, and A. Evans; forwards, G. Broad, D. Elliott, H. Chivers, T. Kellin, and T. Lewis.
Barry Corinthians v. Cardiff East.—At Barry. Corinthians: Goal, B. Sheldon; backs, E. David and A. Ackland; half-backs, J. David, W. Lodge, and W. Lee; forwards, A. Witchard, C. Bowles, S. David (captain), A. Jones, and J. Dunn.
Barry Dock Albions v. Cardiff Albions.—At Cardiff. Barry Dock Albions: Goal, S. Glanville; backs, A. Hayward and W. English; half-backs, E. Westall, F. Davies, and R. Pratt; forwards, E. Melvin, W. Davies, F. Davies (captain), H. Thornhill, and H. Dooley.
Cardiff United v. Caerphilly.—At Llandaff Fields. Cardiff United: Goal, B. Huzzey; backs, P. E. Davies and A. Goodman; half-backs, H. P. Chamberlain, J. W. Hanscomb, and W. E. Gardner; forwards, C. Page, B. Sloman, C. A. Gibbs (captain), W. H. Thomas, and T. Jones.
Llanishen Juniors v. Roath Park Villa.—At Llanishen. Llanishen: Goal, T. Kearl; backs, A. Jones and B. Merchant; half-backs, J. V. Williams, G. Coulthard, and W. Neath; forwards, B. Kearl, G. Smith, F. Joliffe, B. Coulthard, and G. Griffiths; reserves, R. Williams and G. Merchant. Kick-off, 3.30 sharp.
Pontypridd v. Merthyr Vale.
Merthyr Vale Seconds v. Porth Seconds.
Gordon Reserves (Newport) v. Scratch Team.
Angleton (Bridgend) v. Tenby.
Riverside v. Canton Albions.
Cathays Presbyterians v. Woodville Juniors.
Cadoxton Radical Institute v. Canton Victoria Crescents.
Hope (Cardiff) v. Barry Dock Cymrics.

Apart from this record and reference as to who represented the Y.M. club back in those days, other teams are included to give us a flavour of what teams were around back then, just for the sake of interest. The Y.M.C.A. seemed to be attracting a lion's share of local interest during this period because there is very little available on Whitchurch AFC and on 24th September 1904, The Evening Express published this short account in praise of some of the Y.M. players:

They emerged from the fray with eleven goals to nil to their credit.

WHITCHURCH

After a season's rest, Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. have again returned to the field, and hope to make a good show. There are a number of good players available, and with the return of G. Broad, W. Evans, A. Edser, the Brothers Warwick, T. Lewis, and D. Elliott, a strong side should be the result.

G. Broad has been chosen as captain, and a better selection could not have been made. He is a player well above the ordinary, and his unassuming disposition commends him to all.

W. Elliott is suffering from a swollen leg, caused by an injury in Saturday's match against Radyr. His place at back will be filled by D. Lloyd, who last season played in that position for Whitchurch Seconds.

Noticeably, D. Lloyd has been recruited, a player that had formerly been with Whitchurch 2nds. Unfortunately though, the same newspaper of the same date printed a short report on the YM's match against Radyr, the home side seemingly having better prospects for the season than the YM.

A new football club, to be named the Ross Amateur Football Club, has been formed in Ross, and there is every prospect of the new club being a success.

RADYR

Radyr commenced their fixture list with Whitchurch Y.M.C.A., whom they met on the Radyr ground, before a fair number of spectators, on Saturday last. Although the home team were without the valuable services of several of their best players, including Ray (captain) and Samuel, they managed to defeat their old friends. With hard work in training, and a little self-denial for the sake of keeping the team well together, Radyr should have a future.

TON

Walter Chillington, who has just returned from college, distinguished himself by playing a magnificent game last Saturday, and he is spoken of as one likely to become a

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By the 7th October 1904 there is another reference to the Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. team which was published in The Evening Express. The team selection for a match against Canton Wesleyans being named as follows with some changes from the previous selection shown above, but also with some regulars of the Whitchurch AFC team already mentioned: Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. -

Goal: J. Phillips
 Backs: D. Lloyd and W. Elliott
 Half-backs: A. Evans, W. Evans and Dan Elliott
 Forwards: H. Chivers, T. Lewis, D. Davies, T. J. Killin and G. Broad (captain)

More exposure was given to the Y.M. team on 28th October 1904 in The Evening Express for their next game against Ashton Crescents.



Unfortunately the Y.M.C.A. side didn't do too well some weeks later losing away at Radyr 5 – 0 according to the Evening Express on 14th November 1904.

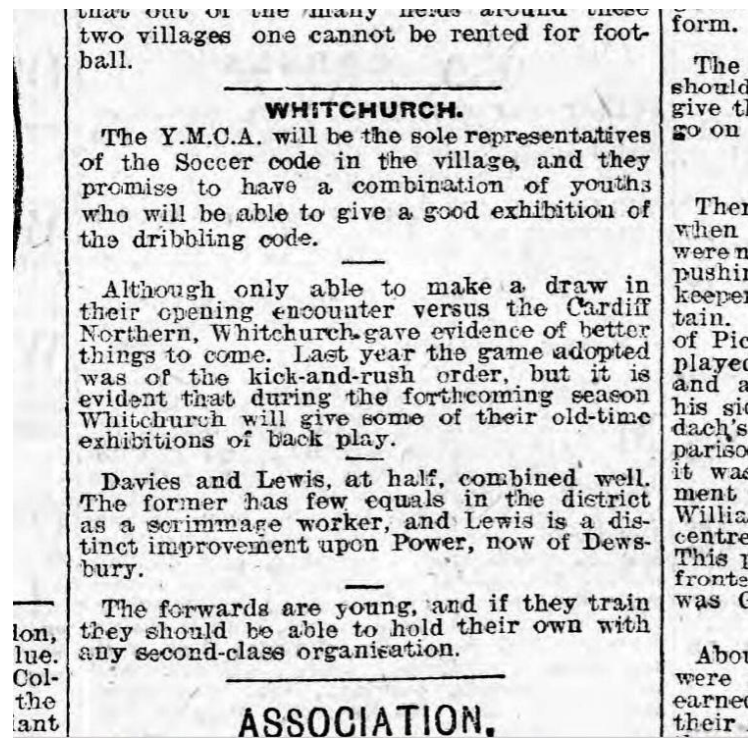
By the 3rd December 1904 there is further reference to the Y.M.C.A. team published in The Evening Express as follows

WHITCHURCH

The Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. gave evidence of a great improvement in form in their match with the second string of Cardiff Y.M.C.A., winning by 4-1. Tom Lewis, the Whitchurch centre forward, was in great form, scoring no less than three times, whilst Broad, the other scorer, was also prominent. A few displays of this kind will re-ignite interest in Soccer locally. The Y.M.C.A., with training and practice, give promise of shaping into a good side.

On the 9th December The Evening Express printed the fixture list for the weekend's games in which Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. were scheduled to play at home against 'Rhydney Thistles k.o. 3pm.

By now the impression given by these archives is that Whitchurch Football Club has met with some difficulties, the material available seems only to relate to the Y.M.C.A. team and such an observation is further supported by this cutting from the Evening Express on the 16th September 1905, at the beginning of the 1905 – 06 season contrasting the better prospects for the Whitchurch Rugby club:

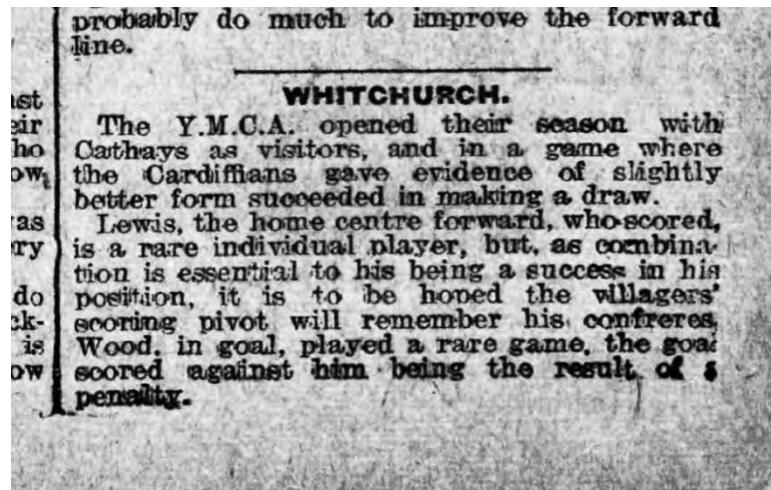


This brief update seems conclusive, that, for whatever reason, Whitchurch Association Football Club was no more and that only the Y.M.C.A. team remained as 'sole representatives of the Soccer code in the village', the remainder of this report being dedicated to Whitchurch rugby. The YM must have had some strength in depth too, on 27th December 1906 The Evening Express published the results of recent matches some under the headline 'Other Association Finals' and amongst them was the scoreline "Whitchurch Y.M.C.A Seconds, 5 goals; Whitchurch Y.M.C.A Firsts, 3 goals".

The suggestion that it was the end for Whitchurch however, didn't seem to be the case, although scarce, further reports do become available, providing strong evidence that, in fact, it was not the end. The Evening Express on 4th November 1905 printed results under the heading 'Soccer Finals' among them being "Whitchurch, 2 goals; Pontypridd, nil". On 23rd March 1906 The Barry Docks News printed the result of a match between Barry Intermediate Old Boys against Whitchurch Y.M.C.A., the YM winning 3 – 0 and just below this report was the next fixture for the 'Old Boys' to be played at the Buttrills (Barry) against Whitchurch. Not only this but The Evening Express published a list of fixtures on 21st September 1906 one of which was Barry Docks Albion vs Whitchurch – At Barry and on the 22nd September printed the result, a 5 – 0 win for Barry Docks, not a great result for the village team, but again, on 21st December 1906 The Evening Express printed the Cardiff Corinthians team for a fixture scheduled for Llandaff Fields, against Whitchurch. On 1st February 1908 The Evening Express printed the results of recent matches among them being the scoreline 'Heath, 4: Whitchurch, 1' and the same paper printed an entire

list of 'Local Soccer Results' on 4th January 1909 one of them being "Whitchurch, 4; Penarth Church 1". So things are not quite what they seem.

It is fair to say however, that from 1905 onwards we get more coverage of the Y.M. team and less of the Whitchurch team, typically with this cutting from the Evening Express on the 30th September 1905, at the beginning of the 1905 – 06 season:



'Lewis the home centre forward' was the star that day, was he the same 'Lewis' that had previously played for Whitchurch Football Club?

On 23rd March 1906 The Barry Dock News reports that "*Barry Intermediate Old Boys were defeated by Whitchurch YMCA at Whitchurch last Saturday by three goals to nil*". Showing us that at least one Whitchurch team is still worthy of reporting on.

One fixture that might interest us locally was this one in the Evening Express on 10th January 1910..... 'Local Soccer Results' - St. Vincent's Cardiff 3 Whitchurch Mental Hospital 1.

We have to accept the uncertainty of all this, there is a notable drop off in reference material which could be and probably is down to the demise of the Whitchurch A.F.C. club, but it could also be down to the priorities of the newspapers and their reporting resources and it could also be down to the present incomplete nature of available archives, maybe a lot more material will surface, in time, that will provide us with a more complete picture of what was going on during the early part of the 20th C. It's fair to say, however, that research has been completed on other local sports and in a similar way, the research material does become scarce for these as well and at the same period. In this case it's likely that the club which existed at that time lost key personnel, not just on the field, but also, off the field, one thing leading to another and their ability to continue and evolve was compromised as a result. It also seems possible, judging by the later results shown, that they did to continue, but at a lower level with less resources and declining interest.

There is no indication in any of this that Whitchurch Football Club were involved in any league format or cup competition and it seems to be that games were arranged according to status and profile in much the same way as the old rugby clubs of this era, a matter for the organising committees to get things sorted.

For their part, Whitchurch Y.M.C.A. was still going a few seasons later, also having their own rugby team at that time. The address for the Whitchurch Y.M.C.A was given as “Y.M.C.A. Hut, Church Road” just before the St Mary’s Church Hall and this is believed to be the site on the corner of the lane, now occupied by a retail building which, by coincidence, displays the mural of our Gareth Bale. (There was a stand-alone ‘dwelling’ on the corner at that time).

Football continued to flourish within the village with a team from St Mary’s Church having fixtures in 1910.

Just ‘a word to the wise’ for any potential researcher, there was a ‘Whitchurch’ that competed at a high level and a prominent club in the early years of the Welsh Cup getting to the final against Wellington in 1906 and again in 1907 against Oswestry, both at the Racecourse Ground Wrexham. This club however was an English club, Whitchurch, based in Shropshire, formed in October 1871 and dissolved in 1985. Other records relate to Whitchurch on the border of Herefordshire and Monmouthshire.

Something to take away from all this is just how well these old newspapers are archived and are freely available and accessible for research. Being mindful of just how newspapers have declined over recent decades, overtaken by technology - How will your achievements and those of your team be seen in 120 years time in the same way that all this was? Where are your player records and achievements saved? How are you adding to the history of football in Whitchurch? What can you record now that future generations will be able to see in the future to allow them some understanding of just what their ancestors did? We owe them that.

Hopefully this script can go some way to enhance the reputation of the club by it having a proven and long history in the game, having been formed in 1901. Although other clubs have gone on to bigger and better things, many, many more have fallen along the wayside. The unpredictable nature of the game and the volatility of life itself, is a constant test to all clubs, administrators and to all those that govern, not just the individual clubs, but sport in general. Whitchurch Football Club is part of this journey and the continuous drive to create a heritage, enrich players and club members and to create a lasting legacy, bears testament to the loyalty and dedication of a lot of good people.