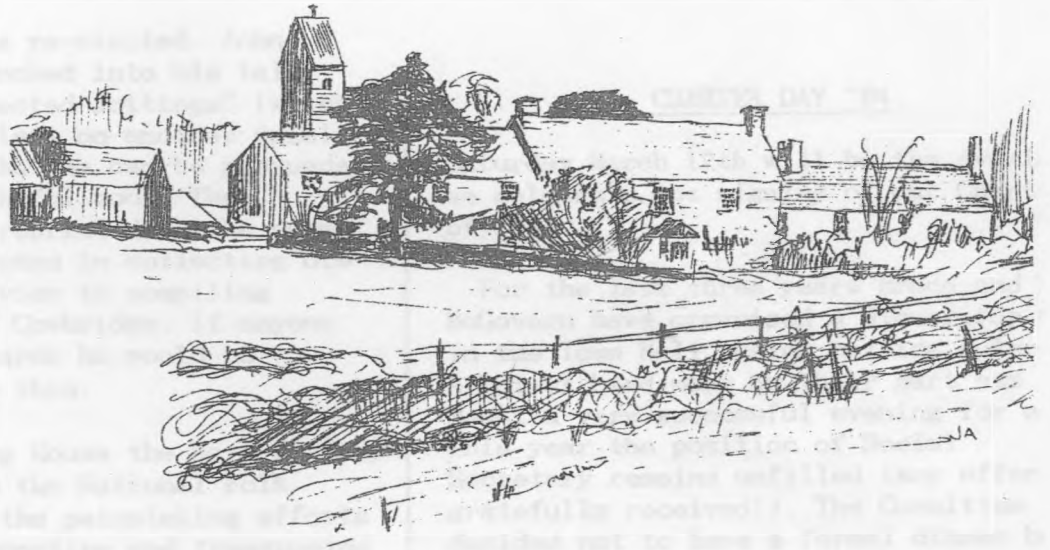


COWBRIDGE AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

No. 32

DECEMBER 1993



YSTRADOWEN

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President :	Rev. Norman E. Williams
Hon. Chairman :	Mrs Yvonne Weeding (Tel. 772878)
Hon. Secretary :	Mr John L.S. Miles (Tel. 772270)
Hon. Treasurers :	Mrs Valerie Pugh (Tel. 772593) Mrs Ivana Locke (Tel. 773252)
Programme Sec. :	Mr Derrick Kingham (Tel. 0443 228889)

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- January 7th : "John Bedford: Ironmaster
Extraordinary" by Philip Riden.
- February 4th : "Princes, Priests and
Paupers" by Hilary Thomas.
- March 4th : "Oral History in Valley and
Vale" by Katherine Beaudette.
- April 8th : "Hangers, Tangers and Pigs"
by Richard Keen.

THE YEAR TO DATE

The 1993-94 Session started with the A.G.M. on Sept. 10th in the Lesser Hall as usual. Yvonne Weeding and John Miles were returned as ChairPerson and Hon. Sec. respectively for the 19th year in succession. The Programme Secretary, Gwynneth Keay, having at last found someone willing to tackle that office, announced that she was retiring in favour of Derrick Kingham, a member of several years' standing and well-known to many as Administrator of Talygarn rehabilitation Centre. Val Shannon, our excellent and versatile Treasurer, also resigned and handed her responsibilities over to Ivana Locke and Val Pugh.

After a pretty speech of appreciation, Yvonne presented Val and Gwynneth with beautiful bouquets.

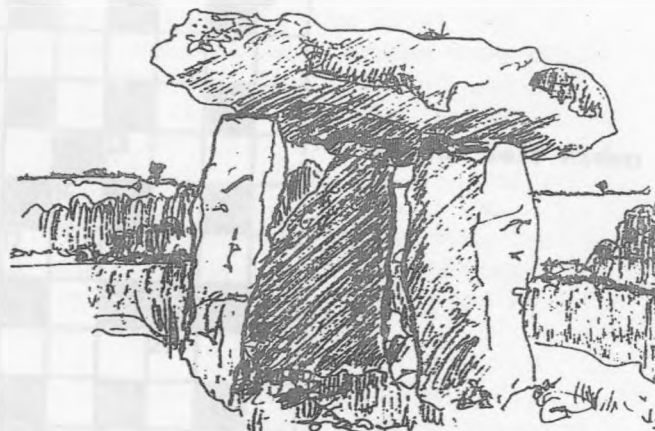
With the Committee re-elected. John Richards then launched into his talk entitled "Disconnected Jottings" (which John Miles summarises on another page), some of us hope that he can be persuaded to have his delightful book 'The Cowbridge Story' reprinted but he seems to be more interested in collecting old postcards with a view to compiling another record of Cowbridge. If anyone has any old postcards he would be delighted to have them.

In October "Moving House the Hard Way" by Gerallt Nash from the National Folk Museum explained the painstaking efforts required in transporting and transposing buildings of historical and architectural interest from all over Wales to St Fagans, which involves numbering every stone and beam.

November brought T. Alun Davies, also from St Fagans, who developed the theme with his lecture on "Welsh Country Furniture".

The Maud Gunter Memorial Lecture in December will once again be given by Arthur Peplow, Vice-President. This year's subject is "Medieval Normandy". Arthur is one of our favourite Speakers who always commands a full house.

Maud Gunter was a much loved little lady who taught at Cowbridge Girls High School. She was an authority on the history of the Vale and was an important Founder member of this Society.



ST. LYTHANS CROMLECH

CHARTER DAY '94

Saturday March 12th will be the event we celebrate the signing of our Charter of 1254.

For the last three years Bruce and 1 McGovern have organised a dinner for us in the Town Hall, using outside caterers. A lot of hard work on their part has meant a very successful evening for all. This year the position of Social Secretary remains unfilled (any offer gratefully received!). The Committee decided not to have a formal dinner but to go back to the more informal supper of the early days of the Society.

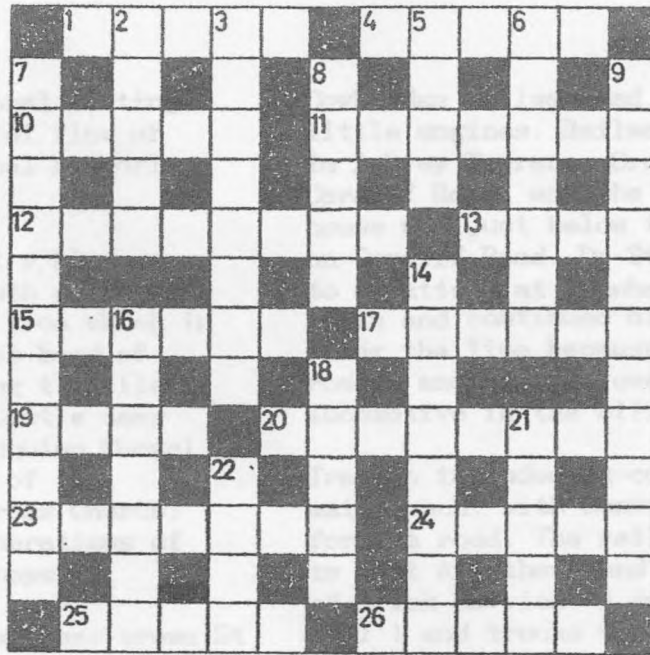
The Lesser Hall lounge area and kitchen has been booked. Unfortunately the Mayor is unable to invite us to the usual reception in the Mayor's Parlour as the builders will be in.

There will be a small charge to cover cost of sherry and meat. Members are asked to bring all other savoury and sweet items; a board will be passed round at the meetings after Christmas so you can indicate what you will bring.

I well remember the first of these Charter suppers some 19 years ago and superb spread we had then. This continued for many years until increasingly large numbers made the use of outside caterers appear more desirable.

HISTORICAL CROSSWORD

set by Jeff Alden



ACROSS

- 1 Name of landed family of the Vale, with a memorial in Cowbridge Church(5)
- 4 Covered horses 'up to their fetlocks' in the battle of Stalling Down (5)
- 10 Lingua incognita? (5)
- 11. 16's drinking vessel, a streamside plant in Llanblethian (7)
- 12 10 adjective for the Via Julia (8)
- 13 Ianto Frank's is in St Hilary - look out in 10 (4)
- 15 Landed gentry of the Vale, owned East and West 6 (6)
- 17 Cliffs, footpaths and river banks are often thus, alas! (6)
- 19 Wine, bag or dismissal? (4)
- 20 Crossed by missionaries in the C7 and C8 (5, 3)
- 23 Grown in Margam at one time (6)
- 24 Rees, international rugby player and headmaster (5)
- 25 East Cardiff saint, so Henry declared backwards! (5)
- 26 Motionless (5)

DOWN

- 2 Bargains were struck in Cowbridge church on St Nicholas '.....(5)
- 3 Now, or a century ago (8)
- 5 Coxen..... led to St Hilary (4)
- 6 Fruit trees in this Vale castle? (7)
- 7 Settled by people from the Low Countries: birthplace of Iolo Morgannwg (11)
- 8 Whips across the water (5)
- 9 Cowbridge inn which became an academy (6, 5)
- 14 Between Llanfrynach and the Llanblethian vineyard (5, 3)
- 16 The Third paid for a Cowbridge chaplain (7)
- 18 Gathered in Cowbridge and sold in Cardiff in C19 (5)
- 21 Sanitary improvement, welcomed in Cowbridge in 1953, and in Ystradowen in 1993 (5)
- 22 One-time Lordship of the western Vale, did grow into a district (4)



Members at the Annual General Meeting were regaled by a delightful flow of reminiscences from our local historian member.

The journey begins at Pant y Lladron (Thieves' Hollow) just south of the A48 and east of Stalling Down from which in the 18th century a ruthless band of robbers preyed upon passing travellers. The remains of Llanquian Castle near Hollybush Farm and of Llanquian Chapel remind us of the creation of the Llanquian aisle in Holy Cross Church. Cowbridge, occupied by generations of Cowbridge Grammar School boys.

John Montgomery Traherne's trees crown St Hilary Down. From the County jail at Cowbridge to the gibbet tree there was brought one Gordon from Gower, the last man to be hanged there. Down Tyn-y-Caeau Lane from the road through Aberthin was brought the coal to smelt lead at St Hilary lead mines. In Eastfield cottages lived Edward 'Nailer' Lewis, a blacksmith who made nails. An old woodsman used to cut Coxen Lane for the Council for five pounds a year until he was ninety-six.

In Cardiff Road, the Crown and Anchor's licence lapsed in mid 1914-18. The old school house opposite was the first boarding school in Cowbridge, run by the Church. At Llandough Road (now St Athan Road) there was a tollgate where Basil's Brasserie is now (A small stone marker with 'County Toll' on it used to be there). Evan Tucker of the Railway Inn was driver of the Cowbridge Fire Engine. Jim Croome the stoker, with Mr Brown of the Town Hall in the crew. One day on a call Evan went over the hedge at Beggars Bush.

Cowbridge railway had its first two little engines. Railway houses were built in Aubrey Terrace, Croft Street and Cardiff Road, and the station master's house was just below the old school house on Cardiff Road. Dr Stanistreet, called to a patient at Llanharry, went there by train and continued his journey on foot along the line because of the blocked roads, and was run over and killed by a locomotive in the blizzard.

Traffic included ox-carts and a daily mail coach, with convicts stone-knapping for the road. The railway was continued to East Aberthaw, and Cowbridge was full of Irish navvies. A snail engine ('Little Nell') and trucks were used. The cutting (under Cardiff Road and southward) was made by hand. Albert Maddox kept a chip shop and began the first local transport with a wagonette drawn by horse to the seaside. Frank Kitchener drove the first Maddox bus (Cowbridge Motors) which would stop at Ely to connect with the Cardiff bus. The former chip shop is now Bridge Studio (near the river). In Eastgate the New Druids and Commercial Hotels were built, the latter becoming the Eastgate and now converting to flats.

An iron trap on the pavement covers the site of the Eastgate pump, the well dropping forty-three feet. From the Post office, then Bethel's Court (after Bethel Chapel) and on the other side the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, a horse and trap tied up there during the service. The Pavilion Cinema ran a diesel generator before mains electricity came. A large flywheel from the generator is on the ground behind the Cinema. The tennis court behind was a wall where the game was played with leather glove and ball. Next door was the Tennis Court Hotel, later the Wheelwright's Arms. One of the wheelwright's carts has been found and is preserved in the Welsh Folk Museum. The Town Council raised a £900 mortgage for the old prison (to become the Town Hall); the Warder's bedroom had fine plaster work. The Bridge Inn was near the river, the Blue Bell past the bridge. The White Hart (opposite) became The Nag's Head. The Royal Oak (south side) is now Gaskell & Walker.





(continued)

Miss Dobb's Coffee Tavern is followed by Great House where, as Franklen House, it was the Misses Culverhouse's school for young ladies, then boarding house for the Grammar School. The brass marker in the road marks the site of the Town Cross at the entrance to Rood Street, now Church Street (Rood = Cross). The Spread Eagle Inn of the 18th century became the Eagle Academy of the 19th where farmers' sons who worked in the summer were educated in the winter in arithmetic, writing, book-keeping.

Beyond the Mason's Arms lay West Village. The National Provincial Bank was the first specifically built as a bank in Cowbridge. Last on the right was the Westgate toll cottage.

J.L.S.Miles



REVIEW OF MUSEUM YEAR 1993

The opening of the Museum every Saturday at the end of July and during August, was a success.

One of the rewards of stewarding the Museum is the interesting people who visit us. At two different times this year we have had prison warders and their wives. The interest in our exhibition and of course the cells was gratifying and the information they gave us was fascinating. A special visit was arranged for Mr Mills, the son of the Mr Mills who built what is now the French Restaurant and Conservative Club, also the cinema. Mr Mills was very infirm and it developed into a very emotional visit.

The Group visits this year have been even more varied than usual, beginning in January with the wife of the High Sherriff who brought a group of friends which included Lady McPherson and Mrs Tasker Watkins; then the Officers' Wives Club from St Athan, followed by a group of Japanese language students, an individual wanting to examine the minerals from Llanharry Iron Ore Mine, a couple from Canada tracing their ancestors and several groups of children from various schools and organisations.

The annual meeting of the Friends of the Museum was held as usual in June. This year the curator from Caerleon Museum was our speaker and because many members had met him when we visited Caerleon some years ago, a friendly atmosphere was quickly established. Early in the new year we are planning to visit the National Museum. Tom Sharpe, assistant geologist at the National and one of our Trustees, will give us a short introduction to the geographic exhibition then we will be free to view the exhibition at our own pace. The extension also houses the new Art Gallery, so this can be part of the visit. It will most likely be arranged for a Sunday afternoon. Friends will be informed.

Marion Eveleigh

The PROGRAMME SECRETARY for 1975 - 1994 writes:

I should like to thank you all for your kindness and support over the past nineteen years.

In the beginning the Meetings were held every month from September to May in the then new Library where Yvonne Weeding and John Miles were first elected as Chairman and Hon. Sec. respectively.

No-one was keen to become Prog. Sec. so I eventually and reluctantly agreed to take it on as a "purely temporary" measure which has somehow lasted till now. I was given a piece of foolscap with proposed dates and two names of suggested speakers... neither of whom could come!

This sparked off a trail of attending Seminars. Day Schools and various Lectures to try to find interesting Speakers willing to come to Cowbridge on a Friday evening. I also contacted the Universities, Museums. Archives and Archaeology Departments, various Associations and discovered what a wealth of talent there is in and around Cowbridge.

My main concern has been to find subjects of local historical interest but we occasionally ventured further afield as intrepid members shared their exciting and fascinating experiences in e.g. the Himalayas, the Galapagos Islands and around the sites of Inca civilization in Peru. We've also had European Art and Architecture, Antiques and Porcelain including the superb Nantgarw collection in between detailed local history of people, places and artefacts.

I should like to thank Dennis Heal here for the projector stand and large wall screen which has made such a vast improvement to the illustrated lectures. Being involved with this Society has been great fun; there's always been a happy atmosphere and rapport as various projects have been tackled and achieved. The most notable of these being the

Cowbridge Museum now established in its own right for which all credit is due to Marion Eveleigh, Curator, and her dedicated helpers.

The Town Trail of Cowbridge and Llanblethian involved a lot of research but has proved popular with visitors.

We're delighted to have so many Founder Members still attending, so dare I hope the programmes can't have been too boring...? Just as a matter of interest, a swift calculation shows that I've written approximately 860 letters and made 400 odd 'phone calls, so at least I think I can claim to have tried.

If the Speakers came from a distance I used to invite them to dinner beforehand or back home with friends after the lecture. Unfortunately sheer numbers precluded inviting everybody so to solve that problem we started serving wine or coffee in the hall which gives everyone a chance to circulate after meetings.

Finally I should like to record my thanks to all the Speakers who have so kindly come to Cowbridge to share their specialized knowledge with us and am delighted to hand over to Derrick Kingham. I wish him every success and hope he will enjoy it as much as I have.

Thank you for putting up with me for so long.



THE PARISH MAGAZINE

This is a copy of a page from the Parish Magazine of November 1899 - a historical record of historical facts.

LLANBLETHIAN, COWBRIDGE, AND WELSH ST. DONATS PARISH MAGAZINE.

The following particulars of the 1821 census (extracted from our Church registers) are interesting:

By a census taken of the Parish of Llanblethian, on May 28th, 1821, in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, it appears that there are 147 inhabited houses, 12 uninhabited, and 2 building.

That there are 158 families, whereof 71 are employed in agriculture, 29 in handicraft, and 58 not comprised in the two preceding classes.

That there are 703 inhabitants, whereof 318 are males and 385 females.

Cowbridge, June 10, 1821.

H. S. Plumptre, Minister.

The account of a survey made according to an Act of Parliament of the houses and population of the Town of Cowbridge, on May 21, 1821, by which it appears that there are 185 inhabited houses, occupied by 216 families.

1 house building, and 3 uninhabited.

1107 inhabitants of whom 541 are males and 566 females; that of the 216 families, 24 are chiefly employed in agriculture, 64 in trade, manufactures, and handicraft; and 128 not comprised in the two preceding classes.

Cowbridge, June 2, 1821.

H. S. Plumptre, Vicar.

BURIALS.

"Them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."—1 Th. iv. 14.

(IN COWBRIDGE churchyard).

October 27—Mary Ann Williams, Prisk, aged 39 years.

COLLECTIONS.

	COWBRIDGE.			LLANBLETHIAN.	
	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	
October 1—	...	2 2 11	October 1—	...	0 9 8
" 8	...	2 12 5	" 8—	...	0 11 3
" 15	TM	2 3 10	" 15—	...	0 8 8
" 22	...	2 11 3			
" 29-	...	2 6 4			

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LEONARD N. A. DAVIES, M. A.

CMDR. BRO. ORDER OF ST JOHN

Sadly, we record that Leonard died on 7th October 1993.

Leonard was a graduate of Cardiff University, where he was awarded the Prince Llewelyn ap Gruffydd Memorial Prize.

On leaving University he served for one year as a Gunner, Royal Artillery. He transferred to the Royal Army Educational Corps, rising from the rank of Sergeant Instructor (Education) to Lieutenant Colonel, Staff Officer, Command Educational Officer, Malaya Command. He served with Wingate's Chindits during which time he was known as "The Chindits' Professor".

On demobilisation he lectured at the Emergency Teacher Training College at Lladrindod Wells for a few years before becoming Education Training Officer for the South Wales Electricity Board from 1950 — 1962. He was then appointed Principal at Pendrell Hall College of Adult Education where he remained until retirement. During his time there he served on one of the committees set up to organise the Open University.

Education was therefore an important part of Leonard's life and after he joined the Society on coming to Cowbridge he delighted us in most years with his lectures. Many of these were connected with local history, such as Cholera Epidemics in Cardiff and the Vale: Piracy. Smuggling and Wrecking; Stage Coach Routes of South Wales: the Glamorganshire Canal - Cardiff's other Waterway; Thomas Andrew Walker - the Building of the Severn Tunnel: Captain David Tilley and the Cowbridge Fire Brigade; the Forts of Milford Haven. He also lectured on the Escape of King Charles II and on Palmer the Poisoner of Rugeley (Murder most Foul).

In addition to lecturing, Leonard attended our meetings regularly. On the day before he died he told Dorothy that he had a good idea for another lecture. By his death the Society loses a faithful member and a great character.

