

# COWBRIDGE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

No 47: DECEMBER 2001



## Future Meetings

Sunday, 9th December  
Visit to Llanfrynach Church, at 2pm. Bring a torch!

January 4th, 2002: 'Y Wladfa: Self-determination or Exploitation' (the Welsh colonies in Patagonia) - Jon Gruffydd

February 1st: 'The appreciation of historic gardens and the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust' Dr Peter Elmes and Mrs Patricia Moore

March 1st: 'Paddle Steamers of the Bristol Channel, from the Eighteenth Century' - Chris Collard

Wednesday, March 13th  
Charter Day visit to Fonmon Castle (details in the New Year)

April 5th: 'Aspects of Kenfig' - Barry Griffiths

Meetings are held in the Lesser Hall of Cowbridge 'Town Hall on Fridays at 8.00pm

## This Issue

This is something of a bumper bundle, with two contributions from Don Gerrard, and one each from Alec Jones and Nigel Williams. The interviews with local residents are exciting considerable interest - if you would like to participate in recording other people's reminiscences (or your own) please get in touch with Don, Alec or Sue Collier.

For the next newsletter, I welcome articles, of any length and on any local history subject. The deadline is March 15.

## History Society Library

The following books, belonging to the society, may be borrowed by members on request to the chairman:  
*Glamorgan: the Greater Houses* (RCAHM)  
*Glamorgan: Mediaeval Secular Monuments* (RCAHM)  
*Excavations in Cowbridge 1977-88* (GGAT)  
*Old Cowbridge*: Hopkin James  
*Morgannwg* (Glamorgan History Soc Journal)

## REMINISCENCES OF BERT JENKINS

I was born on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1918 at 3 Greenfield Terrace, Llanbleddian, the thirteenth and youngest child of Ada and Thomas Jenkins. The nurse present at my birth was Nurse Rymer, and she was asked by my mother to choose a name for me, as she had run out of ideas! The nurse suggested 'Bertram', after a cottage owned by her brother (in the Indian Army) in Simla, called 'Bertram Cottage'.

There were 7 boys and 6 girls in the family, two of whom, Mary and George, died in childhood before I was born, and were buried in Llanbleddian churchyard. My mother was Ada John from Llanharry, and father was Thomas David Jenkins (1872-1932) from Cowbridge. They were married in Bridgend, and my father worked as a groom in the Hunt Stables at Llandough. My grandfather, William Richard Jenkins (1831-1917), was originally from Pembrokeshire and had been a regular soldier with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Foot (Cowbridge Volunteers), later the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. He served in the Crimean War (1854-6) with the Cowbridge Volunteers. My grandmother, Rebecca (1840-1924), known to everyone as 'Granny Jenkins', and grandfather, lived in Church Street. He was the verger and 'Granny' cleaned the church.

Nurse Rymer was a very small lady, always prim and proper in her uniform, and always with a white bonnet. She went on her visits in a donkey cart. She kept the the donkey originally in what is now the children's playground, but later she owned a shed on what is now the school cricket field. When she eventually retired she kept a tea shop in Eastgate, called 'Maudie's café'. Maudie was her sister-in-law.

My schooldays were very happy. I started going to school at about 2½ years old, but only on washdays. I remember my first proper day at the Council School on Broadway. Miss Rees was the teacher. Later on we were taught by Miss Aubrey, Miss Parker and Miss Thomas. In Standard III and Standard IV we were taught by two ex-servicemen from World War I, Mr Frederick and Mr Roberts. The cane was used a good deal in those days. The top class was taught by the headmaster, Mr Sloman. We did not stay in the classroom all the time. We learned gardening and we often went on nature walks. We were also taught to swim in the swimming baths at the rear of the Town Hall.

I passed the 11+ examination, and was allocated a place at the Grammar School, but my parents could not afford to send me there, and they were too proud to apply for a grant from the council. In my last year at school, I remember Lady Franklen from St Hilary visiting the school. She was a governor, and we all had to stand up when she came in.

I left school in 1932 at the age of 14. I had already done some relief work to allow one of the telegram boys to play cricket, and a full-time job came up as a telegram (or messenger) boy two weeks before I was due to leave school. Mr Sloman, the headmaster, marked me sick for the last two weeks of school so that I could take the job. So I became a Telegram Boy for the GPO, for the area covered by Pendoylan through Llantrithyd to Llandow. There was an average of 300 telegrams a week coming through Cowbridge, and my hours of work were 9.30am to 1.15pm and 2pm to 7.30pm, Monday to Saturday, and 9am to 10.30am on a Sunday. My wages were 9/3d (47p), with 6d (2½d) for Sunday. This was poor even in those days. Our uniform was almost military, with a pill-box hat and a navy-blue jacket and trousers; the buttons of the jacket had to be shining, and the trousers had to have sharp creases in them. We were inspected by the Post Master.

At about this time I remember Mr Evans of Bridge House in the High Street, who worked in the National Bank, teaching us boys how to tickle trout in the river. There were otters in the river at this time.

I always used to try to go to the cinema on a Saturday night. Joyce Sanders (now Joyce Tonkin) in the ticket office would always keep me a seat on the end of the back row, and if a telegram came in she would get me to go off to deliver it. The Post Office cleaner was Mary Shepherd, whose daughter Lucy was a telephonist. She lived next door to the Post Office and I remember she always made some very good wine!

I remember one Friday evening in January 1934 in particular. At 7.29pm a telegram came in for Brynawel, Llangan. It was snowing hard. I had to go off and deliver it, with only an oil lamp on my bicycle. I complained to Mary Shepherd about having to go, so she gave me two or three glasses of elderberry wine, which made me quite merry before I started. I rode to Brynawel as fast as I could, and there the lady of the house gave me some parsnip wine! I struggled home to Llanbleddian through deep snow. My mother and father were only shapes as I staggered through the door. I went straight to bed, somewhat the worse for my first experience of drink. Mary Shepherd had told me that it would warm me up!

In 1936, I went to Barry, having received a Royal Appointment as a postman. My wages were now 28/- a week (£1.40), £1 going for lodgings. Tom Davies, the Union secretary, got me an extra 2/- for lodging. In 1937, I became a driver, with an extra 5/- a week. I joined the Royal Engineers (TA) in 1937, and we were mobilised in 1939 on the outbreak of war as a Coastal Defence Regiment. In January 1941 we were sent to the Suez Canal and then the Western Desert. In January 1944 we came home, landing in Liverpool. On 7th June, the day after D-Day, we landed on Sword Beach in Normandy, where we were mainly employed on bridge-building. We crossed the Rhine in March, and at the end of the war in May 1945 I was in Bremen.

I was demobilised in February 1946, with seven weeks' leave, and in March 1946 I re-started in the Post Office. Prior to this, on VJ Day (15<sup>th</sup> August, 1945) in Cowbridge I met a friend, Graham Thomas. We went to the Railway Inn and then joined in all the street parties on the way into town. We met some girls near the Horse and Groom, and I noticed a nice girl sitting on the Town Hall steps. She promised to meet me at the dance in the Town Hall that night (as long as I was not drunk!). I took her home to meet the family that night, and we married on 18<sup>th</sup> March 1948, at Llansannor Church. She was Beryl John from Aberthin, and I always called her 'my VJ Girl'.

From 1948 to 1952, we lived in Barry. I returned to Cowbridge in 1952, and we lived in Aberthin. We had two children, Anne and Michael. I worked as a postman in Cowbridge until 1966, when I was promoted to Postman Higher Grade in charge of the sorting office. In those days there were five collections a day in Cowbridge, and all the sorting was done by hand.

I retired in 1976, after a heart operation. My wife, Beryl, died in 1984, and I moved to Porthcawl in 1999 to be nearer my daughter Anne.

*Bert Jenkins, as recorded by Don Gerrard, 31.10.2001*

It is good to see another record of the Jenkins family, with Bert following hard on the heels of his older sister Becky in giving us his reminiscences. Bert also gave to Don



Gerrard a hand-written document which was an unknown writer's impressions of Cowbridge in about 1907. This article, which is reproduced below, deals at some length with the author's meeting with the church sexton - who was William Richard Jenkins, Bert and Becky's grandfather. (The document had belonged to Bert's father.)

## Cowbridge in 1907

One long street, Cowbridge. After walking some distance I came to an insignificant looking little bridge which crosses an insignificant little river. The bridge gets the chief attention of the inhabitants. "So far from the bridge" is the distance to everywhere. A number of public houses come into sight, a few places of worship keep out of sight. I turn from the long street into an old-fashioned hotel where I shall stay a few days.

Saturday morning. A great storm swept over the Vale last night. The street has been washed by the rain and swept by the wind. Signs of another storm before long.

Let us have a look at Cowbridge then. Standing in front of the hotel I could see the whole of Cowbridge nearly. It is one long street with a green hill at each end of it. The road is clean and wide. Enough room to hold fairs and to accommodate crowds going to the races. Not any of the people were however willing to admit that this was the only street although they looked upon it with pride considering it enough of a town of itself. "But," they say, "there are two other streets." And seeing my thoughtful gaze, they persuade me to go and see them by saying there is a Methodist chapel in one and the Church in the other.

The first walls built around Cowbridge were raised in 1090 (*sic*) and its charter dates from the time of Charles II. It has a Mayor and Councillors. Its inhabitants still consider Cowbridge a place of great importance. It left to a stranger to perceive the decay spreading over its ancient glory. Opposite I noticed an empty house with 'To Let' in the window which shows that newcomers need not ask and wait for a dwelling place. I walked on the left side towards the bridge. I was filled with astonishment to see the large number of public houses, nearly all of them small and poor to look at. I wonder that so many can make a living with so much temperance in the country. A similar decay is to be seen upon the people too. Among the old people who have been under the discipline of conversions (*sic*) we found intelligent and thoughtful faces. But coming to those of the middle aged, a certain deterioration is noticeable. The face is heavy and dull - the bovine sodden face - as if the flesh dominated the soul. But what will become of the children?

Here I am at the bridge with a street across to the right. This leads to a square called The Limes, where the Methodist chapel is, and where there is no English now. I turned back and followed the other street into the Church. I found the door open as the door of every place of worship should be. After my eyes had become accustomed to the semi-darkness, I could see a man on in years, but as light-footed as a squirrel, dusting the seats. He gave me a military salute and a word of welcome. He seemed very energetic despite his age. One of the old inhabitants. "Welsh?" said he "Speak Welsh - I can - I am a Welshman". "Are you the sexton?" I asked him. "Yes, I ring the bells". And to my delight as he gave me his history he spoke the Welsh of the Vale. He was born 76 years ago, married 49 years. Bellringing for fully 15 years. His wife is a Welshwoman from Cowbridge and at home they speak Welsh "And there are my children" he said "I've got nine. The eldest can speak a little Welsh but the others can't speak any." He said that there were many in Cowbridge who could speak Welsh

well: Mr Yorwerth, the Mayor, Mr David and many others. But he added sadly that he could remember a lot more Welsh. "*Show o hono yr amser fu*" (Lot of it in times gone by).

It was easy to get him to speak of bygone years. When a young lad he joined the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Foot (Cowbridge Volunteers) – later the Royal Welch Fusiliers. He was at Inkerman, Alma, and before Sebastopol. He was wounded three times. In the attack upon Sebastopol he was struck in his side and severely wounded. His friend by his side, a young man from North Wales, was mortally wounded. Here he is an old man, proud of his duties, particularly that of doling out the bread to the poor on the following day.

He showed me what he considered the glory and wonders of the church: the new windows, the seats where the college boys sit, the vestry, the brass candlesticks which are only lit on Christmas night, William Carne's memorial and his wonderful history. I asked if there was any Welsh carved anywhere and he answered in the negative. But near the door there is a Welsh phrase on the crest of Jenkins of Hensol: *Fe dal am daro* – It will pay to strike. A suitable motto for the hot old Judge who spoke at the parliament of Oliver Cromwell and declared that he would hang, if they would hang him, with the Bible under one arm and Magna Carta under the other. Very suitable to the quarrelsome nature and the garrulity of the family is the sign of the Cock.

There is now no Welsh service in the Church. "I've heard many a Welsh sermon in this Church" he said, "but now you only get them in that Methodist chapel. The old man seemed grieved to think that the language of his youth had been consigned to the moles, the worms and the Methodists. And worse than all, neither of these three can speak it. Mixture of names in the churchyard. He advised me to look for the walls and gates of the town "where they could neither come in or go out after eight o'clock at night."

After getting rid of me at the gate he drew my attention to a list of sermons and addresses on moral topics, suggesting that to hear them would do me good. He then turned back abruptly as if, his whole duty as sexton fulfilled, he had nothing further to add.

## **MORE CONGRATULATIONS!**

It was not modesty which made me omit the name of one of the prizewinners of the Glamorgan County History Trust millennium competition, but when the last newsletter went to press, we had not been informed that the Cowbridge Record Society had also won! However, it was very gratifying to find that our 'Cowbridge Buildings and People' book had been so well thought of by the academic world as well as by the people of Cowbridge and district. At the presentation ceremony at West Glamorgan County Hall in late November, we received glowing words of praise from Professor Sir Glanmor Williams and others. Having also gained the Elsie Pritchard award from Cardiff University, we have done remarkably well for a first publication.

As mentioned in the September issue, Hilary Thomas also received her award at the same ceremony - so we were in excellent company.

## TOM BESSANT (1904 - 1981)

Tom Bessant and his family came to Cowbridge from Cardiff in September 1934, for Tom to work at Doble's market garden which occupied all the land on the south side of Broadway from St Athan Road to Windmill Lane and extending southwards to Windmill Field. Tom had learned his trade at a market garden at the Heath, Cardiff, on land now occupied by the University Hospital of Wales.

I first met Tom and his family when we moved to St Quentins Close in December 1968, and we became 'over the back wall' neighbours. In the years until his death it was my great pleasure to listen to Tom's recollections of a way of life that had passed and to learn from his store of agricultural knowledge. These notes are culled from my memories of our talks and have been checked for accuracy by his daughter, Barbara, who still lives in Cowbridge.

Tom worked for Bill Doble until 1939, when he took over the business and continued to run it until his retirement. He grew most varieties of vegetables, some grain for the chickens, and had large greenhouses for tomatoes. He sold his produce either to wholesalers in Tonyrefail and Cardiff or directly to the public from the shed in his stable yard.

His working life was marked out by the seasons and regulated by the weather. A sure sign that winter was coming to an end was the faint glow inside his smallest greenhouse after dark. This came from the oil-heated propagator he used to germinate his tomato seed.

Horsepower was used before tractors came into general use, and horses could be bought and sold at the horse fairs held at St Mary Hill. It was customary to buy a new horse on the understanding that the dealer would take it back if, within days, it proved unsuitable. Tom once bought a horse with which he could not work because it would not respond to his voice. In due course, the dealer took back the horse and it became apparent that the horse, which had been bought from west Wales, only responded when spoken to in Welsh. Thereafter Tom made sure he only bought horses that understood English.

Horse manure was an important fertilizer in years gone by, and it was available in bulk from the collieries employing pit ponies. It was delivered by rail to Cowbridge station, and there was great urgency to empty the wagons before the railway charged demurrage for failing to unload within the agreed time.

Tom's working life, certainly in the earlier years, was not subject to the rules and regulations that exist nowadays, tree felling being a case in point. His cultivation of land adjoining St Athan Road was greatly hindered by the presence of a large tree with widespread surface roots, and ways of removing this tree caused him much thought. He finally accepted a suggestion that an explosive charge would sever the roots, the tree would fall over and could be cut up and hauled away for sale as firewood. A couple of pints of beer for a friendly quarryman brought Tom a quantity of blasting powder and some rather sketchy instructions. In due course he packed the powder in holes in the ground around the base of the tree, lit the fuses and retired to a safe distance expecting the tree to topple over. Instead it rose in the air like a rocket and settled back to earth in the same spot, still upright! It had to be pulled over by ropes attached to a tractor before being cut up and removed.

His life was plagued by crows, rooks and jackdaws who ate the feed for his chickens and, in the spring, dug up his newly sown peas and beans. Tom had two theories about these birds; firstly, that they had a good sense of smell, which is how they found his newly planted seed;



and secondly that birds cannot count. He used this second theory to defeat the chicken-feed eaters. When he approached feeding birds, they flew away to rooftops and trees and did not return until he moved away. When he and his wife entered a hut near the chicken run, the birds flew away but returned when Mrs Bessant left the hut and walked off Tom stayed behind in the shed where he kept a shotgun, which he used to reduce the numbers of the seed eaters - and it worked every time.

A shotgun was also Tom's answer to moles which could devastate a crop by uprooting plants when burrowing through the soil. When he saw signs of moles at work he would approach very quietly, so that his footfalls caused as little vibration as possible, and then stand perfectly still. As soon as he saw soil being thrown up by a mole he fired into the ground at that point - end of mole.

He had happy memories of the brewery at the old bridge in town. Close friends of the brewer could expect a lunch-time pint from a special high strength barrel which had somehow escaped the attention of the "bloody Excise man". Lunch-time drinkers were limited to one pint - any more and there would have been no more work done in the afternoon.

I once asked Tom what had been his most profitable crop, and was surprised at his answer. I thought he might have said a crop of greenhouse melons, but it turned out to be a field of old winter cabbage - well past their best - in the late winter of 1943 - 44. He had failed to sell them through his usual outlets and was on the point of rolling the cabbages down and ploughing them in, when a buyer in search of food for the American troops stationed around Barry turned up and bought the whole crop as it stood, for a price that still brought a smile to Tom's face some thirty years later!

At the Society's meeting on 5th October, David Llewellyn talked of the movement of people from the West Country to south Wales in search of work. Tom's parents were part of this movement, coming over from Somerset in the late nineteenth century, and some Bessant relations still live in that county. As for Tom, and his family name, we have a permanent reminder in Bessant Close, Brookfield Park.

*Alec Jones*  
October 2001

## **NEW BOOK - 'LLANBLETHIAN: BUILDINGS AND PEOPLE'**

This new publication of the Cowbridge Record Society contains over 100 pages of information about the historic buildings of the village of Llanblethian and some properties to the west - Cross Inn and Pentwyn, Marlborough and Breach farms, and Crossways. Once again, this book is the product of the researches of a number of local historians; it is illustrated with photographs, old and new, and the amount of space devoted to each property varies considerably according to the material available.

Some of the houses were considered gentlemen's residences in the nineteenth century, occupied by members of county families or retired officers. Great House, Brynhyfyd, Llanblethian House, St Quintins, Hill House and The Cross are examples - with interesting residents, even if some of them only stayed for short leases. Two families from

Rochdale in Lancashire - the Entwistles and Royds - played a large part in nineteenth century Llanblethian, while Owen Williams from Caernarvonshire initially brought a great deal of life to Crossways, and the Vale, in the early twentieth century - but sadly, that episode ended in ruin and tragedy.

Even though there have been relatively few 'great families' associated with Llanblethian, there have certainly been many large ones, often living in tiny cottages - and these get a good mention. The weavers, craftsmen, farmers and labourers played a very important part in village life - people like Evan Morgan the farmer, who organised a great ox-roast, but who hung up the beast with ropes which caught fire, so that the carcass subsided into the flames; David Thomas of Stallcourt who was murdered on Llanblethian Hill; Elizabeth Llewellyn who was evicted from her cottage by the Bute Estate, and many, many more.

There is also a selective index which will be of considerable help to the family history researcher. ISBN: 0 9537029 2 8

The book costs £4.95 (or £6 by first class post in UK from the Record Society at 8 Mill Park, Cowbridge, CF71 7BG), and is available from Jeff Alden, Keith Jones or José Rawlins, or from The Cowbridge Bookshop, or Davies's the newsagents.

Further enquiries (or more information) about the history of Llanblethian to Jeff Alden, Editor, at 1 Mill Park, Cowbridge, CF71 7BG (jeff.alden@cowbridge.co.uk)

## THE WILLIS AND PERKINS DYNASTIES

William Willis was born around 1700 into one of the most notable clerical dynasties in the diocese of Llandaff. His father, Thomas Willis, had been precentor of the Cathedral and the vicar of both Caerwent and Newbottle, Northants, whilst his grandfather, William Beaw, had been Bishop of Llandaff between 1679 and 1706.

William attended New College, Oxford and became rector of Gileston in 1738. He was also the rector of Huish Champflower, Somerset, having married the daughter and heiress of the previous incumbent. He inherited the lordship of the manor of Gileston through his marriage to Mary Allen, the widow of Richard Carne. She died in 1734. His third wife, Ann, died in 1760 and in January 1775 he married again "to his fourth wife, a Mantuamaker of Llancarfan of about 21 years of age, he of 73 years old", according William Thomas' Diary. Thomas later records William Willis' demise thus - "In these days was buried at Gileston the Revd. Mr. Willis, Rector and possessor of that parish, of above 80 years of age, and as reported he married four wives and the fourth buried him, whom he married being but a child from he, for he was near 60 years older than she, without nothing. The other three he gained from them, and from one of them Gileston came to him. But he left her at his death a very rich widow."

This rich widow, Elizabeth by name, married John Perkins in Cowbridge on 4th August 1783. He was a member of a minor gentry family of Saint-y-Nyll in the parish of St Brides Super Ely and following the death of his father in 1781 found himself responsible not only for Saint-y-Nyll but also property throughout the Vale of Glamorgan.



He did not stay there long, finally disposing of Saint-y-Nyll in 1787, but came to live in the central Vale after his marriage, in Cowbridge, St. Athan, and Pentra and Ty-draw farms in Llantrithyd. His diaries and account books show him to have been a quite wealthy gentleman farmer and rackrenter with extensive land-holdings throughout the Vale. Perkins died in 1816, aged 56 and is buried in Llantrithyd Churchyard.

John Perkins lived in Eastgate, Cowbridge in 1787-8, in the house which was the predecessor to The Shield. His diary for this period helps to shed a little light on Cowbridge society at this time. He was very friendly with the Thomases of The Cross and the Tayntons, and was a member of 'Club' which appears to have been a gentlemen's club which met at various inns in Cowbridge, with different members acting as president for the evening. He was evidently a keen member of the Cowbridge and Llancarfan Book Society, though the only book mentioned in the diaries is "Tristram Shandy". He knew Henry Walters, the son of John Walters the lexicographer, who had taken over the printing shop in Cowbridge, and purchased various books and magazines from him.

Among the other shopkeepers mentioned are Mrs Simkins, from whom he bought a razor and strap (brought for him from Bristol), a shaving brush and two new scissors, Anthony Thomas, who sold him a whip, Cole the ironmonger, and Ann Clements a tobacconist. The tradesmen included Dio Lewis who put in a grate into his house, and 'whitelimed the green room', and Cadogan (probably Cadogan Howell) who seems to have worked as a carpenter and paper-hanger. The wallpaper too was brought in from Bristol. The two doctors mentioned were Dr Bevan (father of John Bevan the 19th century solicitor) and Dr Walton.

Much of the decorating and renovating work in the house was because in January 1788 he agreed to let it, for £14 a year, to Mrs Geddes, a widow who - when her husband was alive - had rented Great House. Perkins' mother lived in the house where Basil's Brasserie now stands.

After Perkins and family moved to St Athan he continued to visit Cowbridge, not only to see his mother, but to go to market, meet his friends, pay his doctors' bills and his taxes - and also to see 'the Cowbridge Volunteers firing' on Stalling Down, and to the Bear to see the French prisoners, caught after the 1797 invasion of Pembrokeshire.

Iolo Morganwg is not mentioned in John Perkins's diaries, though it is obvious from the satirical song called "The Llantryddid Farmers" that Perkins was well-known to Iolo. In verse three he writes:-

Bestir then my muse, and I prithee be brief;  
There's Perkins of each awkward farmer the chief;  
Some say he'll pass muster, I know not in what  
It is not in farming, full well I know that.

*Nigel Williams*

Sources.

John Perkins of Llantrithyd. The Diary of a Gentleman Farmer in the Vale of Glamorgan, 1788-1801 - William Linnard, in Morgannwg, Vol. XXXI, 1987.

Iolo Morganwg and Llantrithyd - William Linnard, in The National Library of Wales Journal, Vol. XXV, Number 3, Summer 1988.

The Diary of William Thomas - ed.R.T.W. Denning, South Wales Record Society, 1995.

The Diocese of Llandaff in 1763 - John R. Guy, South Wales Record Society, 1991.

Glamorgan Family History Society - Memorial Inscriptions, St. Giles Church, Gileston.

## MISCELLANEA

**Llanfrynach Church**

We have been asked to support the Llanfrynach sector of Cowbridge Parish in their application for Heritage Lottery funding to repair the Tower. The tower roof needs replacing and the tower needs to be repointed with lime mortar, to allow the building to breathe and to dry out. When at the last Committee meeting it was agreed to write in support of this application, it was also suggested that a visit to the church would be of interest, and so this has been arranged for Sunday, December 9th, at 2pm. There is no electricity in the church, and hence my suggestion to bring torches, though on a good day, even in December, the lighting is adequate at 2pm.

**Co-operation with other Societies**

George Haynes, who is on the Council of the Glamorgan History Society, has been asked to form a working party - with Viv Kelly of Llantwit Major, and Barry Davies of Pontyclun - to explore means of liaison between the local history societies of Glamorgan. George's earlier initiatives mean that we already obtain details of their programmes from a number of local societies in the Vale, and some newsletters. I would particularly commend the newsletter of the Llancarfan Society, which always contains something of interest; it can be read in Cowbridge Library.

**Cowbridge Record Society**

This society grew as a result of all the work done in my classes in local history. After accumulating so much material from our researches, we decided that we would set up a society to collect, record, preserve and publish information relating to the history of Cowbridge and district.

We have decided that it is time to put the Record Society on a formal basis, not least so that it will be easier to contact people to make decisions about future activities. It is anticipated that membership will cost something of the order of £3 a year, with the benefit of a discount on purchasing the Society's publications. If you are interested in joining, could you please give details (of name, address, and Email address if applicable) **in writing to José Rawlins or Jeff Alden.**

**Blue Plaques**

Bruce McGovern has kindly agreed to act as out liaison officer with the Council, to discuss the placing of plaques on historic buildings in Cowbridge. The Committee agreed that we would fund a plaque for Great House, the sixteenth-century town house of the Carnes in Cowbridge, which was taken over by the Franklens in the 1760s. It housed Great House School and a pharmacy in the 19th century, and of course, a pharmacy remains there today.