EDITORIAL

Christmas is a magical time. As children we love the excitement of Christmas. As adults we appreciate the focus of our lives changing to giving of ourselves to others. This Christmas edition of the Bonau Cabbage Patch is for the young as well as the old as we celebrate the birth of Christ and our children’s magical view of Christmas which most of us still carry deep down inside.

We wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Nadolig Llawen a Blwydd Newydd Dda.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GETTING THE TURKEY READY FOR CHRISTMAS DINNER

Step 1: Go buy a turkey
Step 2: Take a large drink of whisky.
Step 3: Put turkey in the oven
Step 4: Take another 2 drinks of whisky
Step 5: Set the degree at 375 ovens
Step 6: Take 3 more whiskies of drink
Step 7: Turn oven the on
Step 8: Take 4 whiskes of drinky
Step 9: Turk the bastey
Step 10: Whisky another bottle of get
Step 11: Stick a turkey in the thermometer
Step 12: Glass yourself a pour of whisky
Step 13: Bake the whisky for 4 hours
Step 14: Take the oven out of the turkey
Step 15: Floor the turkey up off the pick
Step 16: Turk the carvey
Step 17: Get yourself another scottie of botch
Step 18: Tet the sable and pour yourself a glass of turkey
Step 19: Bless the saying, pass and eat out!
Step 20: Cherry Misstmas!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Dec 22  First Day of Winter
Dec 22  Shortest Day
Dec 25  Christmas Day
Dec 26  Boxing Day
Jan 01  New Year’s Day
Jan 25  Burns Night
Jan 29  Chinese New Year
Jan 30  Muslim New Year
Feb 14  St Valentine’s Day
Feb 28  Shrove Tuesday
Mar 01  Ash Wednesday
Mar 01  Lent begins
Mar 01  St David’s Day

DID YOU KNOW

Christmas 2004 - Two Michigan robbers entered a record shop nervously waving revolvers. The first one shouted, “Nobody move!” When his partner moved, the startled first bandit shot him.
It was with great disappointment that supporters of Pwll A.F.C. read the only anonymous article printed in the autumn edition of The Bônau Cabbage Patch. The content was offensive to everyone connected with the club, players past and present, committee and supporters alike. The Elgin Road resident has allegedly heard bad language at the park. The words “disgusting” and “do not appreciate the presence of the general public” bring to mind the words slander and solicitors. Does the Elgin Road resident have times, dates, names, photos, voice recordings so that the club can investigate the matter further? It is disappointing that the letter was worthy of printing, surely the purpose of the magazine is to provide information and light hearted stories of the community, not to give the voice of an individual who has a grievance towards an organisation within the village, otherwise, where will it end? Will we have alleged reports of motorists who have driven at 31 mph, sipped a beer out of licensing hours, let their dogs foul the pavement or public place, or drop litter, all criminal offences, “let he who is without sin cast the first stone”.

If anyone can hear unacceptable bad language at the park during training sessions, please contact a member of the committee so that we can see that the matter be dealt with appropriately, and it would also be helpful if anyone has seen who burnt the cricket nets, rode a motorcycle over the football pitch, broke windows at the pavilion, ripped out the tennis nets, lit a fire in the council shed or vandalised the cricket score box, so that the park can be a safe place for all members of the community.

Yours sincerely,
Committee of Pwll A.F.C.

Dear Sir,
Thank you for the copies of The Bônau Cabbage Patch you sent back in August. I greatly enjoyed the article concerning the crash landing of the Marauder during the Second World War, but I also enjoyed reading the rest of the magazine cover-to-cover.

After deploying to Daws Hill, England in 1942 (only a few weeks after our activation as the VIII Bomber Command) we began the epic campaign against the Third Reich that resulted in our title, “The Mighty Eighth.” With the unwavering support and sacrifice of our great Allies in Britain, we persevered. Today, then residents of Pwll and America alike enjoy freedoms that could not otherwise have been retained.

Thanks again for your thoughtfulness and for producing a fine publication, which includes a wealth of useful information and much sound advice!

Sincerely,
Kevin P Chilton, Lieutenant General, Eighth Air Force, USAF
Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana

Christmas is a time when people get emotional over family ties, particularly if they have to wear them.
YES VIRGINIA – THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS

Francis P. Church's editorial, “Yes Virginia, there is a Santa Claus” was an immediate sensation, and became one of the most famous editorials ever written. It first appeared in The New York Sun in 1897, over a hundred years ago, and was reprinted annually until 1949 when the paper went out of business.

It gives us pleasure to reprint the editorial here.

Dear Editor,
I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, 'If you see it in The Sun, it's so. Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?' Virginia O'Hanlon
115 West Ninety-fifth Street

Dear Virginia,
Your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the scepticism of a sceptical age. They do not know, Virginia, as we know, that for fifteen centuries the story of Santa Claus has been widely known and popular.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world, which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! He lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas.

A CHRISTMAS POEM

England was merry England, when Old Christmas brought his sports again. 'Twas Christmas broach'd the mightiest ale; 'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale; A Christmas gambol oft could cheer A poor man's heart through half the year.

(Sir Walter Scott)

CRACKER JOKES – FOR THE KIDS

What did one Angel say to the other? Halo there!

How to cats greet each other at Christmas? “A furry merry Christmas & Happy mew year!”

What do elephants sing at Christmas? No-elephants, no-elephants!

What do angry mice send to each other at Christmas? Cross mouse cards!

How do sheep greet each other at Christmas? A merry Christmas to ewe!

What do monkeys sing at Christmas? Jungle Bells, Jungle bells!

Why are Christmas trees like bad knitters? They both drop their needles!

What did the bald man say when he got a comb for Christmas? Thanks, I'll never part with it!

Why is a burning candle like being thirsty? Because a little water ends both of them!

What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas tree? A pineapple!

What do you give a train driver for Christmas? Platform shoes!

What did the big candle say to the little candle? I'm going out tonight!

What happens to you at Christmas? Yule be happy!

How do you make an idiot laugh on boxing day? Tell him a joke on Christmas Eve!

THE WALRUS DIP

Now in its 19th year, the infamous Walrus Dip sees people entering the sea in a wide variety of fancy dress ranging from Vikings, fairies, pantomime horses & various super heroes. With all money going to charity, thousands of people turn out to watch and to take a Boxing Day stroll along the 7-mile award winning Cefn Sidan beach.

Date: 26th December 2005
Location: Pembrey Country Park
Organiser: Carmarthen County Council
Contact: 01554 747500

PARISH RECORDS

1329 - Dispute between Walter de la Boxe, parson of Llandafaelog, and Thomas Robert, parson of Pembrey, on the limits of their land, decided in favour of Llandafaelog, and confirmed by Bishop Gower, St Davids.

1819 - The Rev. Mr Pemberton bequeathed a home and garden, and £50 per annum to a master for the gratuitous instruction of the poor, children of whom there are now twelve on this foundation.

Some of these new toys are so creative and inventive. This year they have a Neurotic Doll. It's wound up already.
SOME TURKEY FACTS

There are a number of explanations for the origin of the name of Christmas’s favourite dinner guest. Some believe Christopher Columbus thought that the land he discovered (America) was connected to India, and believed the bird he discovered (the turkey) was a type of peacock. He therefore called it ‘tuka,’ which is ‘peacock’ in Tamil, an Indian language. (The turkey is actually a type of pheasant).

The Native American name for turkey is ‘firkee’; some say this is how turkeys got their name. Simple facts, however, sometimes produce the best answers—when a turkey is scared, it makes a “turk, turk, turk” noise.

Some Turkey Facts

- Age is a determining factor in taste. Old, large males are preferable to young toms (males) as tom meat is stringy. The opposite is true for females: old hens are tougher birds.
- A turkey under sixteen weeks of age is called a fryer, while a young roaster is five to seven months old.
- Turkeys are the only breed of poultry native to the Western Hemisphere.
- Turkeys have great hearing, but no external ears. They can also see in color, and have excellent visual acuity and a wide field of vision (about 270 degrees), which makes sneaking up on them difficult. However, turkeys have a poor sense of smell (what’s cooking?), but an excellent sense of taste.
- Domesticated turkeys cannot fly. Wild turkeys, however, can fly for short distances at speeds up to 55 miles per hour. They can also reach speeds of 25 miles per hour on the ground.
- Turkeys sometimes spend the night in trees.
- Turkeys can drown if they look up when it is raining. They can also have heart attacks: turkeys have been known to drop dead with shock when a jet passed over them breaking the sound barrier.
- The ballroom dance known as the Turkey Trot was named for the short, jerky steps a turkey makes.

CRACKER JOKES - FOR THE KIDS

Who do you call when your parrot falls off his perch?
The Parrot-Medics

Why did the horse cross the road? Because he wanted to visit his neighbours!

Why did the teachers at schools wear sunglasses? Because their students are so bright!

What did the right eye say to the left eye? Between you and me, something smells!

Why would you want a Giraffe as your brother? Because you can really look up to him!

How can you tell if a policeman is strong? He can hold up traffic with one hand!

What kind of train can sneeze? A choo choo train!

How do you catch a unique monkey? You neak up on him!

How do you catch a tame monkey? Tame way you caught the other one!

How does a farmer count his cows? On a cow-culator!

SPACE SHUTTLE_LAUNCH

Whilst on holiday in Florida we were fortunate enough to watch the launch of the Space Shuttle Discovery at 10:30am on 26th July from Kennedy Space Centre. This was the first shuttle to be launched since the Columbia disaster in February 2003 when all the crew were lost.

We set out from our hotel in Orlando at 3am and arrived at the Kennedy Space Centre an hour later. A large screen was set up for us to view the pre-launch coverage where we saw the crew of Discovery prepare for the mission. NASA personnel and astronaut Charlie Walker (who had been on a previous space mission on the shuttle Discovery) provided full commentary. As the moment approached, we could feel the tension in the air as staff and visitors alike prepared for the launch. When the countdown finally reached zero, it was truly amazing to witness the Space Shuttle clearing the launch pad and hurtle towards space at an incredible speed – a sight we will remember for years to come.

Some Facts & Figures:

Discovery arrived at the Kennedy Space Centre in November 1983. Its first mission took place on 30th August 1984. Discovery was NASA’s third space shuttle orbiter to join the fleet. The mobile launcher platform used to transport the shuttle to the launch complex stands 20 feet high, is 131 feet long and 114 feet wide. It travels at a speed of 1 mile per hour when loaded and uses 150 gallons of fuel every mile. It is the largest track vehicle in the world weighing in at 2721 tonnes.

(Written by Stuart Messer)

WYNNE'S XMAS COLLIERS QUIZ

Wynn’s Christmas Quiz in the Collier’s Arms will this year take place on Tuesday 27th December starting at 8:30pm. Teams of 4 members are invited to enter at a charge of £1 per player. All the proceeds of the quiz as well as the proceeds of the Christmas Hamper draw and Wynn’s Pickled Eggs sales will be donated to the charity of the winning team’s choice.

There should be quite a pool of money to fight over so why not join us there on the night and slog it out for your favourite charity. I expect Wynn will also have his usual raffle on the night to raise even more money!

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Pwll Action Committee, at the request of a considerable number of residents of Pwll, has written to Carmarthen County Council Planning Department and other organisations and individuals complaining of the lack of Planning Control on new building projects planned for Pwll.

The main concern was for an application that was refused outline planning permission last year, yet just 12 months later identical full planning permission was going to be recommended for acceptance by the chairman of the Planning Committee.

In the Pwll Action Committee’s eyes the county planners have recently made some disastrous planning decisions in the village that has now set the precedence for future planning applications. Such mistakes cannot be allowed to happen again or Pwll will completely loose its individuality and charm.

Carmarthen County Council once told us that they wanted to listen to and act upon the recommendations of the local individuals. This is their chance to prove that this policy is not a figment of our imagination.

Update: On Tuesday 18th October the Planning Committee decided to refuse planning permission.

While we are postponing, life speeds by.
THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

People often think of the twelve days of Christmas as the days preceding the festival. Actually, Christmas is a season of the Christian year that begins December 25 and lasts until January 6th - the day of Epiphany - when the church celebrates the revelation of Christ as the light of the world and recalls the journey of the Magi.

From 1558 until 1829 people in England were not allowed to practice their faith openly. It is believed by some historians that this is the time that someone wrote ‘The Twelve Days Of Christmas’ as a kind of secret catechism that could be sung in public without risk of persecution. The song has two levels of interpretation: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of the church. Each element in the carol is a code word for a religious reality.

1. The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ.
2. The two turtledoves are the Old and New Testaments.
3. Three French hens stand for faith, hope and love.
4. The four calling birds are the four Gospels.
5. The five gold rings recall the Torah (Law) the first five books of the Old Testament.
6. The six geese of laying stand for the six days of creation.
7. Seven swans a swimming represent the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit.
8. The eight maids a milking are the eight Beatitudes.
9. Nine ladies dancing are the nine fruits of the Spirit.
10. The ten lords a leaping are the Ten Commandments.
11. Eleven pipers piping stand for the eleven faithful disciples.
12. Twelve drummers drumming symbolize the twelve points of belief in the Apostles’ Creed.

There you have it...the hidden meaning of the Twelve Days Of Christmas and the secret behind the song.

I had never heard this before, and I thought maybe a lot of you haven’t either. Now the song has so much more meaning when I do hear it. - Ed

VILLAGE MAN’S MEMORIES OF THE LIBERATION OF SARK IN THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.

Today is the 10th May 1945 and I am 4½ years old. My sister is 17. I hear my mother and father talking quickly and sounding so happy. Why? Because they have just heard that we are to be liberated.

The war in Britain is ended. Hopefully there will now be peace.

Britain, Guernsey and Jersey have already become free. We have had to wait for an extra day.

There is a meeting in the Island Hall and someone has found an old vale radio which has been hidden for the duration of the war and we listen to Churchill giving his speech.

It has been decided that on the 12th we are going to have a festival day.

I have been chosen to celebrate all the good things that we have missed (all of which I have never seen before) and my sister Little Glad is to have all the items that we actually had during the occupation.

My father and Uncle Eddie have also been asked if they can arrange a procession of Firemen to march behind us and my mother to help cook a few Guernsey Wonders. It is to be a real family day.

In my wooden cart I have items from the Red Cross parcel which the ship “The Vega” brought two days ago – sugar, tea, tinned milk, tinned fruit, chocolates, spam and bananas, to name just a few.

My sister’s perambulator has salt made from sea water, coffee from acorns, tobacco made from bramble leaves, clothes made from old curtains, clogs mended with tree bark and bread made mainly from the husks of any wheat or corn that was given to us by the Germans.

We have very little meat: only the odd rabbit if it happens to stray into the garden. All the fields are mined and we cannot get to the harbour as tank traps are erected along the whole length.

I have never seen a sweet and when I was given one I tried to eat it with the wrapper on. The same with an orange – I started to bite through the skin until my mother told me to peel it.

On the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Sark my wife and I, accompanied by our children, returned to the Island and met HRH The Prince of Wales.

I wrote to Her Majesty and received a very thoughtful letter in return, saying how pleased she was to know how Sark had celebrated the freedom from occupying forces.

This year my son and daughter-in-law came with us. HRH The Queen visited Guernsey and Jersey but as she was flying out to Canada soon afterwards she did not have time to visit Sark.

And I, Edward Le Feuvre, Pwll Road.

When I hear someone sigh, “Life is hard”, I am always tempted to ask “Compared to what?”

PWLL ACTION COMMITTEE

The Pwll Action Committee held their Biennial General Meeting on Tuesday 11th October in the Pwll Community Centre. Considering the very poor weather conditions of the day the meeting was extremely well attended.

The chairman read his report, which emphasised that although the committee had had some good successes within the village other projects were progressing slowly because of the financial and manpower constraints of the relevant County Council Department.

All members of the current Committee were re-elected with two new members being elected to join the committee – Mr & Mrs Cooper (Post Office).

The meeting was also presented with the accounts, which covered the period from the inception of The Pwll Action Committee to the end of June 2005. Obviously the most income was raised from the Bônau Cabbage Patch advertisements. Conversely the greatest expense was the cost of printing the magazine.

After a lively session of Questions from the floor and answers from the Committee, Mr David Webb held the Grand Autumn Raﬄe - the results of which you will find on Page 3.

We would like to thank all the members of the public who attended the meeting and made the evening such a great success.

What does not destroy me, makes me stronger.
**ADVENTURE OF THE FEARLESS FIVE – The Conquest of the Worm**

Our adventure started one bright sunny Saturday in early September, myself and four lads – Jeff, Ian, Huw and John set off from The Colliers Arms, over to Rhossili on the Gower Peninsula, in order to cross over the causeway to Worms Head. The day had been planned carefully – tide times and so on. On reaching Rhossili, after crawling behind tractors, sheep and the like the weather turned quite nasty, black storm clouds appeared and the wind was very gusty. But were we put off? Definitely not! Determined to carry on as we were on a mission! On went our walking attire, sensible shoes (no flip flops) and off we set.

The causeway was rather dangerous, it needed our full concentration, amidst laughter, a few fears and I'm glad to say no blown away at times. “Gosh! Huw. Was that your toupee I saw whizzing yonder into the deep blue waters way below us?”

The paths surrounding the Head were very narrow and treacherous, none of us ventured close to the edge, but having said that we were on a mission! On went our walking attire, sensible shoes (no flip flops) and off we set.

The world is divided into people who do things, and people who get the credit. Try, if you can, to belong to the first class. There’s far less competition

(Above: Worms Head)

The paths surrounding the Head were very narrow and treacherous, none of us ventured close to the edge, but having said that it was well worth the effort, views were fantastic, and it made us feel proud to be living so close to this beautiful part of Wales. After a brew (not the hard stuff) and a bite to eat we said a fond farewell to Worms Head and started our trek back, all of us feeling rewarded. Our day ended sitting outside a picturesque pub, drinking a pint of beer, reminiscing and planning our next adventure. I feel I must add that being the only female in our team of five I felt well chuffed to have been asked to join in.

(Anne Smith)

**PWLL SOCCER CLUB**

A satisfactory start to the season with both Pwll teams in the top half of the division and among the early pace setters.

Pwll first Team must show more consistency having beaten top of the table Trallwm but lost to both Tumble and Pengelli – a very young team.capped of very exciting football, have already defeated St Ishmaels, one of Pembroke’s leading teams in the West Wales Cup.

Pwll reserve team with a blend of youth and experience, have also made a good start loosing only once in 7 starts (a 2-0 away defeat) to top of the table Llandeilo and among them a 5-1 home thrashing of second placed Bwlch.

**PWLL SCHOOL DVD**

Pwll Primary School recently launched their DVD to celebrate the 75th Birthday of their current school building.

Copies are available from the school at £8 each. Call 773962 to order your copy.

(This DVD is well worth the money. The nostalgia is gratifying and most rewarding. – Ed)

**PWLL CRICKET CLUB**

A late winning run saw Pwll comfortably retaining their 4th Division status in the S.W.C.A. This run included a resounding victory over local rivals South Llanelli who were eventually promoted. In this match it looked as if Pwll were the team going up, such was their superiority and it only served to illustrate what might have been. The Club’s focus is now firmly on strengthening the squad in readiness for next season.

Even in a mediocre season there were some notable performances, particularly in the bowling department. We were strong throughout the season, bowling most teams out fairly cheaply. Leading wicket taker was leg spinner David Richards with a haul of 42 wickets closely followed by Gareth Griffiths with 32. Unfortunately the batting was not of the required standard, although David Williams scored over 400 runs which included two scores of over 80 and an amazing 24 sixes! A special mention must be given to Huw Thomas who took over the captaincy halfway through the season and did a great job in keeping the team up.

In contrast the 2nd team enjoyed a very successful season, just being pipped at the post for the championship by Margam. Skipper Tim Mann led the batting and top bowler was Mark Miller with over 30 wickets including a hat trick in one game. Three local youngsters stepped up from the juniors to enjoy their first season in senior cricket – well done to Kevin Evans – who had a 50 against his name, Ashley Davies and Nathan Davies.

To finish on a high note, the club’s junior section, under junior organisers Neil Davies and Mark Miller, enjoyed a very successful season. The under 11’s finished as champions in their league, which included clubs such as Dafen, Gowerton and Carmarthen Wanderers – a brilliant achievement and a credit to the coaches. The under 12’s performed well and next year the club will enter an under 11’s in the league for the first time in a few years. If we manage to hold on to these youngsters the future will look after itself. We now look forward to our end of season presentation night and the start of indoor nets in February.

**SOME FAMOUS PEOPLE WITH WELSH ANCESTRY**

Russel Crowe  
Cary Grant  
Burt Lancaster  
Bette Davis  
Harold Lloyd  
Leslie Nielsen  
Samuel  
Dean Cain  
Joan Collins  
Susan Sarandon  
Ginger Rogers  
Myrna Loy  
Glenn Ford  
John Adams  
Calvin Coolidge  
Hilary Clinton  
Jefferson Davis  
Andrew Jackson  
Thomas Jefferson  
Abraham Lincoln  
James Monroe

**DID YOU KNOW**

When visiting Finland, Santa leaves his sleigh behind and rides on a goat named Ukko.

Finnish folklore has it that Ukko is made of straw, but is strong enough to carry Santa Claus anyway.
1914 AND THE SOLDIER’S TRUCE

Nobody knows where the Christmas Truce of 1914 began. Nor is it certain, even today, whether the truce began in one spot and spread, or broke out simultaneously in many places, the convergent evolution of numberless human hearts.

What is known is that at Christmas 1914 - four months into what would eventually be called World War I -- thousands of British, French and Belgian soldiers spent a cold, clear, beautiful Christmas mingling with their German enemies along the Western Front.

The mysterious beginnings are fortunate. For want of the name of the first person (probably German) who proposed truce, or sacred site, it has kept a single emotion at its core -- the desire for peace of the most literal and personal kind.

It began in most places with nighttime singing from the trenches, was followed by shouted overtures and then forays over the denuded ground called no man's land. After that, large numbers of soldiers poured over the front lip of the trench.

Throughout the day they exchanged food, tobacco and, in a few places, alcohol. Some chatted, usually in English, a language enough German enlistees spoke to make small talk possible. In several places, they kicked around a soccer ball, or a stuffed bag functioning as one, although contrary to legend there appears to have been no official, scored matches. Mostly, the soldiers survived, which is what they wanted from the day. They did not shoot each other.

Almost everywhere the truce was observed, it actually began on Christmas Eve, the high point of the season for the Germans. In many places, it lasted through Boxing Day, the day after Christmas observed by the English as a holiday. In a few parts of the line, hostilities didn't recommence until after New Year's Day, a holiday with special meaning for Scots and, to a lesser extent, the French.

War did resume, though. It was a truce, not a peace. What followed was misery, waste, loss and degradation on a scale difficult to imagine.

Research suggests that in 1914 at least 100,000 people participated in the Christmas Truce, directly or indirectly.

NEW TRAIN THROUGH PWLL

Some of you might have noticed a new type of train passing through the village -- a class 175 Coradia diesel multiple unit built at Alstom works, Birmingham in 1999-2000. Formerly owned by the First North Western Train Company, some units have been transferred to Arriva Trains Wales and can be seen as a two or sometimes three carriage units.

Just a few days later that month I was startled by a flock of egrets springing from the water’s edge. Twenty-three in all! Probably the highest number seen in this locality.

But surely the weirdest report to date was that of a terrapin in one of the local lakes, seen by Gaynor Rees of Penllech. I wonder where that came from?

September 21st saw the autumnal equinox where the daylight hours are shorter. However, high temperatures still persisted that month and well into October resulting in many pleasant views of various butterflies and dragonflies for the time of the year.

A sandwich tern was seen, still patrolling the sea on October 11th and it was not on its migration to the southern hemisphere. Perhaps it had left a few suitcases behind!

One sunny afternoon that month a grey squirrel had crossed the main road and was heading toward the pavilion. Oh! I know, it was probably going for an afternoon tea at the café.

Another winter beckons us and already we have had several reports from the Met Office stating that we are going to endure the coldest winter since 1995/1996. But as we all know they never get it right! We will just have to wait and see.

Wishing all readers a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. I’ll see you all in the spring.

OLD CLASS RETURNS

On September 24th the Class 52 diesel locomotive “Western Champion” returned after an absence of 30 years, with a Paddington to Fishguard special excursion. Originally 74 locomotives were built between 1961 and 1964 and once they were a regular sight through the village performing their freight and passenger duties.

THE FOUR AGES OF MAN

1 – He believes in Santa Claus
2 – He doesn’t believe in Santa Claus
3 – He is Santa Claus
4 – He looks like Santa Claus

I’ve learned that what sounds like music to teenagers sounds like a train wreck to me. (Quote by 44 year old).

I’ve learned that if you wait until retirement to really start living, you’ve left it too long. (Quoted by 67 year old).
CAPEL LIBANUS
CHAPEL

Y plant yn ystod yr oedfa.

Un Oedfa Gymun y mis a’r Suliau yn amrywio.

Oedfa bore Nadolig am 9.00am

Cynhelir cyfarfodydd arbenig:

- Diolchgarwch a’r Nadolig. Sul y chwiorydd yn flynyddol. Sul y dynion yn flynyddol.
- Suliau plant ac athrawon yr Ysgol Sul. Suliau dan arweiniad yr aelodau.
- Suliau o Fawl.

Gweithgareddau’r lwyddyn:

- Cymdeithas Ddiwylliadol - Pob pythefnos am 7 o'r gloch rhwng mis Medi ac Ebrill. Dewch i fwynhau nosweithiau amrywiol a chwrdd a'r Gwesteion gwadd. Cyfle i gymdeithasu dros gwpaned o de.
- Dosbarth Llenyddiaeth - Pob nos Fercher am 7 o'r gloch am 20 wythnos. Rhwng Medi a Mawrth mae’r dosbarth poblogaidd hwn wedi bodoli am dros 25 mlynedd. Dewch i ddarllen a thrafod Llenyddiaeth Cymraeg mewn awyrgylch gartrefol dan arweiniad Bethan Clement.
- Pwyligor Cymorth Cristnogol yn cwrdd yn y Festri.

HYD/TACH – Oedfa Undebol Cymorth Cristnogol yn Eglwys y Drindod Sanctaidd am 10.30.

A Visit to the old school building
by Kerris Chainey and Emyr Rees

Today we went to the old school to find out more about it. We know it was built for 176 children but 228 children went, so it was so over crowded. It wasn’t very safe because as you came out of the school you came on to a road because there were no paths, one boy was really unlucky because he got run over by a car. The toilets had to be empty every week because they had no drainage. Now from 1930 onwards there is a pottery club, a library, a youth club and a polling station. Evidence of how the building has changed - some of the windows are blocked off there are different types of bricks and roof tiles and some of the doors are blocked off.

HELPING HANDS’ is a registered charity that takes many types of goods to underprivileged families in Eastern Europe at least twice a year. This year 150 shoe boxes have been filled with gifts and necessities for children who would otherwise NOT HAVE ANY gifts on Christmas day. These boxes are a gift from the members of Libanus and Bethlehem, their families and friends. During the year members knit, sew and gather soft toys etc. ready for the boxes. At the end of October we came together in Libanus vestry to pack the boxes. You can see from the photos how happy and industrious everyone was during that special afternoon. This was Christmas in the true sense of the word. We watched short videos on the plight of these families. Tear-jerking images that will stay with us always. The poverty is horrendous but the joy on the children’s faces when they receive their gifts is overwhelming. Think about joining the effort next year. Everyone is welcome.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Eleni eto ‘rydym wedi paratoi bocsis esgidiau i blant bach difreintiedig Dwyrain Iwrop. Y nifer twyaf eto - 150 o focsis eleni - i blant heb obaith o anrheg Nadolig onibai am y bocsis. Mae aelodau Libanus, wedi bod yn gweithio yn ystod y lwyddyn, yn gwae, gwnei a chasglu tegannau, mawr a bach ar eu cyfer. Daeth nwyddau ag arian oddiwthr aelodau Libanus a Bethlehem, eu teuluoedd a’u ffriindiaid. Mae pump sacho’r ‘furry toys’ mawr wedi mynd hefyd eleni drwy ‘Helping Hands’ - Cymdeithas Ddyyngarol sy’n ymweld a theuluoedd tiawd ynRumunia a gwledydd Dwyrain Iwrop i leuaf dwywath y lwyddyn.

Diolch o galon am eich haeliadau drwy roi o’ch amser yn ogystal a phrynu nwyddau a chefnogi yn ariannol. Diolch yn fawr iawn i bawb. Os ydych yn dymuno cewch rhagor o fanylion oddi wrth Ann Jones, Libanus.

PWLL SCHOOL

A Visit to the old school building
by Kerris Chainey and Emyr Rees

On the afternoon of Thursday 20th October we invited past pupils to see the launch of our new DVD, about the history of our school. The visitors started to arrive at about quarter past one. And every one was seated and ready to watch the DVD by 1:30 PM. Amongst the visitors were last years pupils now in year seven. Mrs Betty Houghton-Jones the oldest past pupil of Pwll School also came along to view the launch. 30 - 40 visitors turned up and enjoyed the first showing.

Launch of School DVD
By Matthew Treharne and Lowri Bevan

On Friday 14th October the unit visited Plantasia in Swansea. First stop was the Aquarium, the children enjoyed this, but it took a while for them to adjust to the new and unfamiliar surroundings. The children enjoyed watching the piranhas and the snakes.

In the tropical area there were lots of different plants and trees. Robbie enjoyed touching the giant leaves. At the pond we fed the Koi Carp and some of the fish even came out of the water to take food from Sean and Jay.

When we had finished our tour of Plantasia, we went to the learning room, where the children could colour, play with giant cuddly toys and look at different artefacts. This was a calming end to a lovely day.

Above: Here we are in the playground of the old school.

The DVD included John Gower from the BBC news during the introduction. The DVDs are still on sale for £8.00 at the school now.

Unit visits Plantasia

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Fire Safety
On Wednesday 19th October, we had a visit from Eleanor Thomas, a fire lady, who talked to us about a fire plan. Eleanor explained that a fire plan was a plan to get out of the house if there was a fire. We watched a video about fire plans. It was very good. After the video Lowri, a girl from year 6 had to dress up as a fire lady. It was very good. I really enjoyed the talk.

Poem of the month
(By Yasmin Finnigan - Year 5)
Harvest

Harvest is here again
Apples are falling of the tree
Radishes are fresh and yummy
Vegetables are as fresh as a pumpkin
Eat healthy and keep strong
Seeds growing like flowers
Thank you for all the food we eat

OUR CHRISTMAS COVER
COLOURING COMPETITION
Once again, the Bônau Cabbage Patch asked the pupils of Pwll County Primary School to design the cover of the Christmas edition of the magazine. This year we asked them to paint a scene that would be suitable for a Christmas postcard that readers of the magazine could send to relatives who live away from Pwll.

DID YOU KNOW
There are 6,000 species of reptiles, 73,000 kinds of spiders, and 3,000 types of lice. For each person there is about 200 million insects

23rd DECEMBER 1843
On the 23rd December 1843, about four o’clock in the morning, a young man of the name Thomas Williams was returning home from Llanelly to Pembrey, and, instead of taking the road as he should have done at such time, he took to the sands for the sake of shortening the distance. It was at the time extremely dark, and it is supposed he became bewildered, and went to the water instead of keeping more to the right. He then found out the danger into which his indiscretion had exposed him, and began to call out for assistance more seriously. His cries were heard for miles by the surrounding neighbourhood, for it was very calm. Many people flocked down immediately, but before they were near the place from whence the cries proceeded, they perceived that he was drowning, for the cries became more and more feint and at last ended. A pilot boat was coming up the river at the time, and when near the spot, instead of going for assistance, one said to the rest, “It is the voice of a Ghost, and it is too dangerous for us to go near it!” and off they went, leaving the poor fellow to his fate. Who could have imagined that, in the middle of the 19th century, experienced mariners would have acted in such a superstitious manner, particularly when we reflect that the humanity of the British would not have scorned to pass by a fellow creature on such occasion without at least attempting to rescue him from a watery grave.

(Did you know: Extract from local newspaper dated January 3rd 1844)

Thomas Williams drowned or died of exhaustion the day before he was due to marry his fiancée whose home he was returning from on that fateful day. It is said that his cries for help were heard for two hours. He was buried at Pembrey Church on January 1st 1844.

He who angers you, conquers you.

(PWLL W.I.
The President Heather Darby welcomed members to the first meeting after the summer holiday break. Three new members have also joined the group. In September Rod Belcher gave an excellent talk on ‘History through banknotes.’ Members were reminded of the different types of banknotes they have used through the years. In October Peter Goodall gave an informative and interesting talk on ‘Prisons in bygone days.’ In December Mair Cairns from Pwll will be giving members novel ideas for wrapping Christmas presents.

The members had an enjoyable evening at Theatre Elli watching the production of ‘The Corn is Green.’ In November a trip was arranged to spend the day shopping in Cardiff. Members will also be visiting Bath in December to see the Christmas Markets. The annual Christmas dinner will be held at the Ashburnham Hotel on Thursday 15th December.

Two members attended a Craft Day in Pembrey Community Centre to try their hand at pewter work and silk painting and the Autumn Group meeting was held in Llansaint. Other county events include ‘A Punch, Pies and Panto Evening’ in Bronwydd Hall and a Christmas Coffee Morning in the W.I office in Carmarthen.

(Above: Members of Pwll W.I)
I believe that most people would pass on being offered No 13, but you don't pass if it represents your 13th selection to run for Wales. This is Pwll resident Jon Kersting’s 13th selection, but as he pulled out of the 2000 Navan International through injury, feels this is really his 12th selection.

This November the British and Irish Cross Country International takes place at Santry Demesne to the rear of Morton Athletic Stadium, Dublin.

The Welsh Masters Athletic Association is sending a team of 58 athletes representing the best in their age categories throughout Wales, plus reserves. We wish them all well.

(Good luck Jon – Ed)

Are you interested in becoming a Governor at Pwll Primary School?

There is a vacancy for a co-opted governor at Pwll Primary School. There are no formal qualifications needed to become a school governor. The one essential requirement is an interest in, and commitment to, the education of children. Governors have to be over 18 years of age and the term of office is four years.

Governors are ordinary people, drawn from many areas of society. They need to be able to devote time to getting to know the school well and to be active and available in their support for it. Having common sense and a desire to serve the community are also important.

Normally no one may be a governor of more than two governing bodies.

For further information please contact the Head teacher Mr. Roy James 01554-773982 or the Chairman of Governors Mr. Ian Etherington 01554-778706.

Further information on becoming a governor is available on 01267-224508.

Governors Support Unit
Pibwrlwyd, Carmarthen, SA31 2NH

CONGRATULATIONS GEMMA

We extend our congratulations to Gemma Aitken of Bassett Terrace in her GCSE Examination results this summer. Gemma received a letter from The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance for her exceptional results in Leisure and Tourism. In all a total of 4685 candidates sat the examination and Gemma was amongst a group who scored the top five marks. To come within the top five of a group of almost 5000 is indeed very exceptional.

Gemma also did extremely well in her other GCSE exams attaining the following results:

- Leisure and Tourism A*A
- Physical Education A*
- Mathematics A
- English Language A
- Spanish A
- Welsh A
- Science BB
- English Literature B

(Congratulations Gemma from everyone in Pwll)

BET YOU DIDN’T KNOW THIS!

Moths are not attracted to light. They fly towards the blackest point, which is immediately behind the light.

GARDENING CLUB – HERBS

Herbs are divided into two broad families: Labiatae (basil, marjoram, balm, mint, oregano, rosemary, summer savoury, sage, thyme), which owe their Latin name to the fact that their petals form two lip-like lobes; and Unbeliferae (dill, aniseed, caraway, chervil, coriander, cumin, fennel, parsley), whose flowers grow in, flat or rounded clusters.

Serving Ideas
There are virtually no limits, other than personal tastes and preferences, for the uses of herbs. Don’t be afraid to be innovative. Although certain herbs are associated with particular foods; for example, basil with tomatoes, tarragon with vinegar or chicken, mint with lamb and peas- these combinations are far from exclusive.

Food temperature also has a significant impact on the amount of flavour released by herbs. Although heat frees essential oils, the resulting taste and aroma quickly fade. Prolonging cooking particularly vigorous boiling and cooking without a lid, is thus inappropriate for most herbs. Generally speaking, you should add herbs at the end of cooking, particularly in the case of more fragile herbs. Rosemary, thyme, sage, bay leaf, and savoury are nevertheless ideal seasoning in simmered dishes. When preparing cold dishes, add herbs well before serving to give them time to impart their flavour, as the cold temperature slows down the development of aromas and lessens their intensity; increase the amount of seasoning when preparing cold foods.

Storage
Keep fresh herbs in the refrigerator. If they are dirty, rinse them gently just before using them. Wrapped in a paper towel and placed in a plastic bag, herbs stay fresh for several days. Those that still have their roots can be kept longer, place them in fresh water at room temperature, like cut flowers. You can also wrap the roots in a damp cloth and store the herbs in a plastic bag in the warmest part of your refrigerator.

You can freeze them whole or chopped, without blanching; if you wash them, be sure to dry them thoroughly.

AN OLDE COLONIAL CHRISTMAS

In colonial America, the Christmas season was a week of reveling and rowdiness, of wine, wassailing and wantonness. It was a time when the poor were allowed to blow off steam, to rouse their wealthy neighbours and demand some Christmas cheer. Talk about a merry little Christmas!

Christmas used to get so out of hand in the colonies that the Puritan government outlawed its celebration in 1659. The fine was five shillings for anyone “found observing any such day as Christmas or the like, either by forbearing of labour, feasting or any other way.” Among the acts that scandalized religious authorities was the tradition of Christmas “mumming.” Writing in 1725, the Rev. Henry Bourne was most upset that the pastime included “the changing of clothes between Men and Women,” a practice that was “a scandal to Religion and an encouraging of Wickedness.”

Ideas are like rabbits. You get a couple, learn how to look after them, and pretty soon you have a dozen.
Some twelve years or so ago the children of Pwll Primary School planted daffodil bulbs on the grass verge opposite Tir Waun. Two years later the Gas Board dug them up to lay a new gas main. The Pwll Action Committee recently wrote to Transco and asked if they were prepared to help replant the bulbs. Transco responded positively.

On Friday 14th October 2005, with the help of 48 young students of Pwll Primary School, teachers and support staff, hundreds of daffodil bulbs were replanted in Tir Waun ready to flower again next spring. Thank you Transco and members of Pwll Primary School for helping us.

TONGUE TWISTERS

Seventeen slimy slugs in shiny sombreros sat singing short sad songs.

Mae Llewellyn y llyfrgellydd o Lanelli wedi llyfu llawer o lyfaint

COBLYNAU

A Coblynau is a Welsh mine spirit who is relatively good-humoured. They would help miners by knocking in places with rich lodes of mineral, or metal. The Coblynau dressed in miners’ attire, and stood at around 18 inches in height.

Belief in these mine spirits was once widespread especially in Celtic areas, which were heavily mined, for example Wales and Cornwall. In Germany these mine spirits were known as Kobolds. It is easy to surmise that the dark, cramped, dangerous conditions of a mine, would be conducive to creating belief in supernatural creatures, and other superstitions.

Fairies were often thought to live underground in caves and in crevices.
DIAMOND
WEDDING
CELEBRATIONS
Pat and Margaret Doyle celebrated their Diamond Wedding on 13th October. They had a wonderful day with their family and friends and had cards from the Queen, Welsh Office and Welsh Assembly. Numerous cards and presents were received from people they had’t seen for many years. It was a really nice day for both of them.
(Congratulations to you both! Quite an achievement!)

HOLY TRINITY
The last three months have seen the end of another chapter in the life of Holy Trinity with the retirement of our Vicar, the Rev Canon David Harries. We had a very pleasant presentation evening for him despite the terrible weather.

Our services continue as normal under the guidance of the Area Dean, the Rev Hugh James, Vicar of Cydweli who has arranged a schedule of officiants to take all the services.

We look forward to hosting the Christian Aid Carol Service on 4th December at 10:30 am. It is good to join with the two chapels for these united services. Our Christingle will be on 11th December at 5:00pm and the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at 5:00pm on 18th December. Christmas Day communion is at 9:00am.

The Sunday school re-started after the summer break with some ‘new’ children and we hope the increase in number will continue. It is held at 10:30 am on Sunday mornings at the church hall. For further information contact Helen on 752025.

OUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER AND THE TRUTH
We feel that some recent reports printed in the local newspaper need some clarification.

The first concerns the objections raised by The Pwll Action Committee concerning some of the planning issues pertinent to the village.

The Committee has raised an objection concerning only ONE application – the one intended for Stradey Hill. This was done because the residents of that area approached us and asked for our support.

Indications in the report that we, as a Committee, have objected to numerous other planning applications in the village are completely untrue.

The second concerns the report concerning the action that we are allegedly going to take to make the County Council listened to our demands for a by-pass. The newspaper mistakenly printed that certain actions were going to be taken by the Pwll Action Committee and the residents of Pwll. The action indicated in the newspaper is the course of action proposed by the residents of Sandy and their Action Committee.

We fully support the residents of Sandy and their Action Committee in the legal petitioning for a bypass but we cannot condone any act that is illegal nor any course of action that would put any member of the public at risk.

The villages of Sandy and Pwll badly need a by pass. It is time the County Council acknowledged this and started to plan what course they need to take to preserve both villages for future generations.

I believe I shall live forever and I will continue in this belief until the day I die.

CAPEL
BETHLEHEM
CHAPEL
How far is it to Bethlehem?
Families are precious – we should all love our families – even with the ups and downs of every day life.

In Bethlehem Chapel, Pwll we have a precious family. Although not all are related through blood ties, we are all “related” through our belief in Jesus as our Saviour.

As a church we are growing –

Our Welsh language services which are held on the 1st, 2nd and 4th/5th Sunday of every month at 3:30 pm are well attended, but there is still room in the chapel. So as a family we invite you to come and join us.

You can be assured of a warm welcome – and who knows whom you may already know there!

Our English language service is held on the 3rd Sunday of every month at 3:30pm. This service is also well attended and is growing in numbers. A Sunday school was introduced 12 months ago, and children are faithfully being nurtured to learn about Jesus and are encouraged to let their voices be heard, and it’s far from boring.

Our ALPHA evenings were very successful – plenty of refreshments – and lots of joy – it was wonderful to meet strangers who became friends and part of our church family. We hope to begin a new series of video talks and suppers in the New Year (when the evenings start getting lighter) - why not join us?

Many people have asked what ALPHA stands for. This is basically it -

Anyone interested in finding out more about the Christian faith. People of all ages are welcome.

Learning and laughter. It is possible to learn about the Christian faith and have fun at the same time.

People meeting together. An opportunity to get to know each other and to make new friends.

Help one another. An opportunity to raise issues and to seek help.

Ask anything. ALPHA is a place where NO question is regarded as too simple or too hostile.

The SISTERHOOD have met regularly every Tuesday morning throughout the year. They have worked, and are still working extremely hard to raise money for Bethlehem through holding open coffee mornings, spring fairs, holding a market stall (a new venture last October) and they are at present preparing for Christmas. On the last Tuesday of every month at 10:30am we hold an OPEN coffee morning in the vestry of Bethlehem for everyone. Why not join us for a friendly chat.

Will you visit Bethlehem this Christmas?
Carol Singing – Rather than go round the village, it is our intention to hold a carol singing evening (around 6:30pm) outside Bethlehem Chapel followed by hot tea/coffee and mince pies in the vestry. Keep an eye open for the notice and please bring a lantern or torch or candle – although there will be light in the church lobby.

We live in an age where a great deal of the daily news is ‘bad news’, and people get despondent. If you feel like this why not spend an hour once a week with the family of Bethlehem.

As we approach Christmas look for the sign, as the shepherds and wise men did when Jesus was born. No, we don’t have a star to follow, but there is always a notice on the board outside the vestry.

We look forward to greeting you, both adults and children to join in our celebration, remembering that many years ago a small family lived in a town call Bethlehem with their newborn son – Jesus. He knew the love of His family, both close relatives and the ‘extended family’.

Let us, at Bethlehem, Pwll be your extended family. Why? Because Jesus loves you, and He told us ALL to love one another.

If you would like more information or simply an informal chat then please ring me on 01554-771252. Carys Awen Jones (Reverend)
HISTORY OF THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING

Does your Christmas dinner include a Christmas pudding? The absence of this delectable dessert from the Christmas dinner table would raise a few eyebrows. The pudding is the most special part of the meal, although families alter the way it’s cooked and presented to create their own unique traditions. Originally the Christmas pudding was referred to as hakin because of its multitude of ingredients.

The first recipes of this pudding came from the Middle Ages. The ingredients for mince pie, as it was then called, were chopped poultry, pheasant, partridge, and rabbit. Later sugar, apples, raisins, and candied oranges and lemons were added. Another form of Christmas pudding called porridge or frumenty surfaced in the 14th century. Ingredients included beef, mutton, raisins, currents, prunes, wine, and mixed spices. It was a soup-like fasting dish eaten before the Christmas celebrations commenced. In 1595, spirits, dried fruit, eggs, and breadcrumbs were added to the recipe and it became plum pudding. In 1664, it was banned by the Puritans as a lewd custom unfit for people who followed the ways of God.

In 1714, King George I re-established the pudding as part of the Christmas feast even though the Quakers strongly objected. Meat was eliminated from the recipe in the 17th century in favour of more sweets, and people began sprinkling it with brandy and setting it aflame when serving it to their guests. The Christmas pudding was not a tradition in Britain until it was introduced to the Victorians by Prince Albert. By this time the pudding looked and tasted as it does today. The traditional cooking time takes about eight hours, with preparation taking even longer due to extensive marinating. The longer the fruit is marinated in brandy, cider, or both, the better it tastes and this could take weeks!

There are many traditions and superstitions surrounding the Christmas pudding. Some traditions say to make the pudding by the 25th Sunday after Trinity, with 13 ingredients to represent Christ and His Disciples. Every member of the family is to take a turn stirring the pudding with a wooden spoon from east to west, in honour of the three kings. It is said that setting the brandy aflame represents Christ’s passion. A sprig of holly as garnish is a reminder if His ‘Crown of Thorns.’ Holly supposedly brought good luck and had special healing powers. It was often planted near houses in the belief that it protected the inhabitants.

Some families add coins to the pudding for luck. Everyone then stirs the pudding and makes a wish. Those who get the coins in their serving get wealth, health, happiness, and their wish will come true. Some people even add gold rings to the mix to indicate the finder will get married in the coming year. A tradition that died out due to its depressing nature was the addition of thimbles or buttons to the pudding. This signalled that the finder would remain a spinster or bachelor forever. One last interesting fact about Christmas pudding is that the largest batch ever made weighed in at 7,231 pounds and was made in Aughton, Lancashire on July 11, 1992. Imagine trying to finish that plate!

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FAMOUS LAST WORDS

Richard Halliburton was a “swashbuckling” global traveller and best-selling adventure writer during the 1920s and 1930s. In 1939, Halliburton and a crew attempted to sail a Chinese junk, the Sea Dragon, from Hong Kong to San Francisco as a publicity stunt. The vessel was un-seaworthy and went down in a storm. Just before the sinking Halliburton sent his last signal. “Squally gales, squalls, lee rail under water, wet bunks, hard tack, bully beef, wish you were here…instead of me!” No one survived.

PWLL CARNIVAL OF YESTERYEAR

Lavina Williams & Fred Phipps in Carnival Mood - Mid 1950's

Transported to a surreal landscape, a young girl kills the first woman she meets and then teams up with three complete strangers to kill again.

- A newspaper's TV listing for "The Wizard of Oz"
A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Let us pray...

That strength and courage abundant be given to all who work for a world of reason and understanding.

That the good that lies in each of our hearts may day by day be magnified.

That we will come to see more clearly not that which divides us, but that which unites us.

That each hour may bring us closer to a final victory, not of nation over nation, but of ourselves over our own evils and weaknesses.

That the true spirit of this Christmas Season, its joy, its beauty, its hope, and above all, its abiding faith, may be among us.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

In the western world the birthday of Jesus Christ has been celebrated on December 25th since AD 354, partly to replace the pagan worship that was commonplace in those days. However, we can be fairly sure that Jesus wasn't actually born on that date.

The Bible tells us that shepherds were staying out in the fields overnight when Jesus was born (Luke 2:8), but in that part of the world it would have been far too cold at night to do so in December. What is more likely is that He was born in the Spring, perhaps between March and May. Whatever the time of year, it is virtually impossible to identify the actual date.

This situation is further complicated by the fact that the Christian scholar Dionysius Exiguus was asked by the Pope in AD 525 to calculate new cycles for fixing the date of Easter. However, he decided to base his calculations on the date of Jesus’s birth. Unfortunately, it wasn’t discovered until the 9th century that he got it badly wrong, by which time it was too late to change the calendar.

He fixed the birth in the year 1 BC or AD 1 (Historians apparently can’t agree which) and began counting from the latter. But both earlier and later scholars agreed that Jesus was born at an earlier date. Indeed, it was eventually established that Herod the Great died in Spring of 4 BC. If Jesus had been born at the start of AD 1, as we currently have it, then Jesus would have been born some 4 or 5 years after Herod died. There is no way of accurately establishing the actual date of his birth, but it is most likely to have been between 5 and 6 BC.

The important thing is that he was born, and his nominal birth date of December 25th seems as good as any to celebrate his birth and his message. It also a wonderful catalyst for enjoying the precious and simple pleasures of being, if only for a brief time, close together in the warm familiarity of friends and family, renewing relationships and sharing memories.

A CHRISTMAS POEM

’Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

(Clement C. Moore)

Christmas: When you exchange hellos with strangers and good buys with friends.

FOUR ALL WHO REED AND RIGHT:

We’ll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes; but the plural of ox became oxen not oxes.

One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese, yet the plural of moose should never be meese.

You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice; yet the plural of house is houses, not hice.

If the plural of man is always called men, why shouldn’t the plural of pan be called pen?

If I spoke of my foot and show you my feet, and I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?

If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth, why shouldn’t the plural of booth be called beeth?

Then one may be that, and three would be those, yet hat in the plural would never be hose, and the plural of cat is cats, not cose.

We speak of a brother and also of brethren, but though we say mother, we never say methren.

Then the masculine pronouns are he, his, and him, but imagine the feminine as being she, shis, and shim.

BOXING DAY

Boxing Day takes its name from the ancient practice of opening boxes that contained money given to those who had given their service during the year. It was also the day when alms boxes, placed in churches on Christmas Day, were opened. The money was then given to the priest or used to help the poor and needy. Another name for Boxing Day used to be Offering Day.

The earliest boxes of all were not box shaped, as you might imagine, nor were they made of wood. They were, in fact, earthenware containers with a silt in the top (rather like piggy banks). These earthenware ‘boxes’ were used by the Romans for collecting money to help pay for the festivities at the winter Saturnalia celebrations.

During the seventeenth century it became the custom for apprentices to ask their master’s customers for money at Christmas time. They collected this money in earthenware containers, which could be opened only by being smashed, and on Boxing Day the apprentices would eagerly have a ‘smashing time’, (hence the expression), seeing how much they had collected.

A later tradition, and the one which has survived to this day, was the distribution of Christmas ‘boxes’, gifts of money to people who had provided services throughout the year – the postman, the lamp-lighter, parish beadle, parish watchmen, dustmen and turn-cocks – which happened on the day after Christmas Day.
Continuing our walk through Pwll in 1881. We have a location for you folks! The Blue Anchor Pub is mentioned so at least we know where we are! We are heading east along Pwll Road.

D = Daughter / S = Son / U = Unmarried / B = Born / W = Widow(er) / Sch = Scholar

Dwelling-Pwll (Pool)

Thomas WILLIAMS / Head / 38 / Pembrey / Coal Miner
Mary WILLIAMS / Wife / 31 / Pembrey
Mary Ann WILLIAMS / D / S / Pembrey / Sch
Elizabeth WILLIAMS / D / S / Pembrey / Sch
John WILLIAMS / S / 6 m / Pembrey

Dwelling-Pwll (Pool)

David EVANS / Head / M / 55 / Pembrey / General Labour
Ann EVANS / D / U / 29 / Pembrey

Dwelling-Pwll (Pool)

David WILLIAMS / Head / 30 / Kidwelly / Finer At Tinworks.
Jane WILLIAMS / Wife / 32 / Carmarthen Town
William J. WILLIAMS / S / B / Kidwelly
Henry WILLIAMS / S / 6 / Kidwelly
Mary WILLIAMS / D / 4 / Kidwelly
Margaret WILLIAMS / D / 2 / Llanelli.

Dwelling - Blue Anchor

William MORGAN / Head / 75 / Pembrey / Licensed Victuallar
Mary MORGAN / Wife / 74 / Llanelli
Richard MORGAN / S / U / 33 / Pembrey / Coal Miner
Joseph MORGAN / S / U / 31 / Pembrey
Watch Keeping (Mfg)
Catherine HUGHES / Niece / 12 / Pembrey / Sch

Dwelling-Pwll (Pool)

Isaac MORGAN / Head / W / 46 / Llanelli / Coal Miner
Mary Ann MORGAN / D / U / 18 / Pembrey
Margaret MORGAN / D / 16 / Pembrey
Joseph MORGAN / S / 9 / Pembrey / Sch
Evon MORGAN / S / 5 / Pembrey / Sch

Dwelling-Pwll (Pool)

Jane WILLIAMS / Head / W / 38 / Liverpool / Dressmaker
John Henry WILLIAMS / S / 11 / Liverpool / Sch

The British Military writes OFF’s (officer fitness reports). The form used for Royal Navy and Marines fitness reports is the S206. The following are actual excerpts taken from people’s ‘206’s’...

Bônau Humour

When she opens her mouth, it seems that this is only to change whichever foot was previously in there.

His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of curiosity.

I would not breed from this Officer.

This Officer is really not so much of a has-been, but more of a definitely won’t-be.

When she opens her mouth, it seems that this is only to change whichever foot was previously in there.

He has carried out each and every one of his duties to his entire satisfaction.

He would be off his depth in a car park puddle.

Technically sound - socially impossible.

This Officer reminds me very much of a gyroscope - always spinning around at a frantic pace, but not really going anywhere.

This young lady has delusions of adequacy.

This Medical Officer has used my ship to carry his genitals from port to port, and my officers to carry him from bar to bar.

Since my last report he has reached rock bottom, and has started to dig.

She sets low personal standards and then consistently fails to achieve them.

He has the wisdom of youth, and the energy of old age.

This Officer should go far - and the sooner he starts, the better.

In my opinion this pilot should not be authorized to fly below 250 feet.

The only ship I would recommend this man for is citizenship.

This man is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot.

Works well when under constant supervision and cornered like a rat in a trap.

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Some Words of Wisdom from British Politicians of the Conservative Party!

"Suicide is a real threat to health." - Virginia Bottomley

"Anyone would think we were living on some island somewhere." - George Walden

"It's not the future I'm talking about, I'm talking about tomorrow." - John Gummer

"The more important things are more important, than the less important things." - Stephen Dorrell

"When the IRA plant such bombs, it proves they can scare people, it proves they can kill people, it proves nothing." - Peter Bottomley

"We said zero, and I think any statistician will tell you that... zero must mean plus or minus a few." - William Waldegrave

"Who Sadam Hussein kills, dies." - Jeffrey Archer

"There's no smoke without mud being flung around." - Edwina Currie

"I will never forget the 1981, -- or was it 1982? -- honours list." - Julian Critchley

"All those people who say that there will never be a Single European Currency are trying to forecast history." - Kenneth Clark

"The British public sees with blinding clarity." - Michael Heseltine

"You know what they say-don't get mad, get angry." - Edwina Currie

"We are not wholly an island, except geographically." - John Major

Every year, Christmas becomes less of a birthday and more a Clearance Sale.