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THE Bônau CABBAGE PATCH

(A quarterly magazine for the residents of Pwll)

Published and distributed free of charge to
residents of Pwll by Pwll Action Committee



*Merry Christmas
Nadolig Llawen*

No: 67 (Winter 2019)

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Editorial

Let us remember that the Christmas heart is a giving heart, a wide-open heart that thinks of others first. The birth of the baby Jesus stands as the most significant event in all history, because it has meant the pouring into a sick world of the healing medicine of love which has transformed all manner of hearts for almost two thousand years. Underneath all the bulging bundles is this beating Christmas heart. We live in a politically correct world these days. That means we're careful in how we say things.

For whatever reason, Christmas is a target in the battle of political correctness. In some place, people won't say "Merry Christmas" - they'll say "Happy Holidays" instead because they don't want to be "offensive". That's silliness, of course. You know it, I know it and all the world knows it. But in the spirit of the season we allow it "just in case" because deep down nobody with "Merry Christmas" on their lips intends to offend. So, with no offence meant, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas. Nadolig Llawen



WE'RE ON THE WEB

Don't forget that you can view all previous editions of the magazine on the web. We also have over 500 old and new photographs of interest to Pwll residents there. Take a look by pointing your browser to: www.pwllmag.co.uk

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

We would like to welcome our new sponsors to the magazine and hope that our association will be a long and enjoyable one.

We would also like to express our thanks and gratitude to all our sponsors without whose generous contributions this edition of the magazine would not have been possible.

We ask our readers to patronise our sponsors whenever possible and please mention the

Bônau Cabbage Patch when you make your purchases.

Contact Us

To contact The Bônau Cabbage Patch or The Pwll Action Committee please call Stuart on 755665 or Peter on 755260 or Jeff on 777420 or drop your articles or reports through our letterboxes at 43 or 53 or 81 Pwll Road or you can send us e-mail at:

pwllmag@gmail.com

Any photographs we use are first scanned and then the originals are returned to their rightful owners so don't be shy or fearful in sending us your photographs. It would be handy though if you wrote your name and address on the back of the photo (in pencil) or you attached one of those 'post-it-notes'.



PWLL RESIDENTS & TENANTS ASSOCIATION

The Pwll Residents Association meets @ 6:30 pm on the last Monday of every month in the vestry of Bethlehem Chapel.

Do please go along as everyone is welcome to express their views and thoughts on what they think should be improved in the village.



BÔNÀU DEADLINES

The deadline for the spring edition of The Bônau Cabbage Patch is noon 22nd January 2020 for your articles or reports or 20th January 2020 for any amendments to your advert.



Bobby Box

The local police rely on us, the public to come forward and provide them with information so they can provide a better service. It also keeps them in the loop of what is really going on in our community. You can contact them in several ways, all are confidential, and each will be investigated. You can notify them either by telephone, e-mail, Bobby Box etc. as follows: - PCSO 8005 Eira Jones telephone number 101 or e-mail eira.jones@dyfed-powys.pnn.police.uk or at our local Bobby Box which is situated at Pwll Stores. You can also follow Dyfed Powys Police on Twitter at www.twitter.com/dafyddP or be their friend on Facebook at

www.facebook.com/dafyddP



HENGOED BEAT SURGERY

Meetings are held weekly as follows:

- Pwll Pavilion – Wednesdays 11am-12 noon
 - Graig College – Thursdays 12:30pm-1:30pm.
 - Furnace Rugby Club – Thursdays 6.30pm-7.30pm
 - Sandpiper – Fridays 3pm-4pm.
 - Ramps – Friday 6pm – 7pm
 - Revolution Youth Club, 21st Century Church, Furnace – Friday 7pm – 8pm
- Everyone is welcome to attend the meetings and contribute.



Follow them on their Twitter Page:

@NPTLlanelliTown



DIARY DATES

- 22nd December
- 25th December
- 26th December
- 31st December
- 2020**
- 1st January
- 2nd January
- 25th January
- 25th January
- 25th January
- 14th February
- 25th February
- 26th February
- 1st March
- 17th March
- 20th March
- 22nd March
- 29th March

- Winter Solstice
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day
- Hogmanay

- New Years Day
- Bank Holiday Scot)
- Burns Night
- St Dwynwen's
- Chinese New Year
- St Valentine's
- Shrove Tuesday
- Ash Wednesday
- St David's Day
- St Patricks Day
- Spring Equinox
- Mothers Day
- Daylight Saving

PWLL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH & POLICING TEAM



The Neighbourhood Watch & Policing Team hold regular meetings in Pwll Pavilion so that the public can meet them and discuss their problems and concerns.

Meetings (open to all) are held every Wednesday between 11am - noon

You can contact your local Police Community Support Officer Eira Jones by phoning 101 or by e-mail at:

eira.jones@dyfed-powys.pnn.police.uk

Alternatively you can contact PC 1092 Michelle Fuge by phoning 101 or by e-mail at:

michelle.fuge@dyfed-powys.pnn.police.uk

SOME TRADITIONAL PARLOUR CHRISTMAS GAMES

Laughing game

All players sit in a circle and each player takes it in turns to say 'Ha', 'Ho' or 'Hee'. The first player to start laughing loses and is out of the game. Continue until everyone is out of the game – the person who manages not to laugh for the longest is the winner.

Charades

One player acts out a word or phrase often by miming similar-sounding words, and the other players guess the word or phrase. The idea is to use signs and not words to convey the meaning.

Blindman's Bluff

One person is blindfolded, and all other guests scatter around the room. When the blindfolded person catches someone, they have to tell who it is they have captured or the prisoner is freed and the blind man must continue their pursuit until they can identify the person caught. The blindfold then changes hands.



You're Never Fully Dressed without a Smile

One person is selected to be 'it' and that person is the only one in the group who is allowed to smile. They can do anything to try and get someone else to smile and if they succeed, they become 'it.' The person who never smiles is declared the winner.

Ho, Ho, ho

One player stands in the middle with a handkerchief. As they drop the handkerchief to the floor, everyone must laugh. They must stop laughing as soon as the cloth hits the floor. Anyone who doesn't laugh the whole time the handkerchief is falling or continues to laugh after it ends is out. The last person remaining wins the prize.

Shadow buff

Hang a sheet across the room, put a single candle on a table behind it and turn out the lights. One person sits in front of the sheet while everyone else passes between the sheet and the candle, and the person in front has to guess who each of them is. The shadows can disguise themselves in any way they want to, but if they are correctly identified they have to pay a forfeit.

Forfeits

Have fun inventing some homemade forfeits to dish out as penalties to the losers – for example the loser has to fetch snacks for everyone else, kiss the hands of all the ladies in the house or be everyone's servant for the rest of the day.

Pass the Slipper

Make a circle with one person standing in the centre with their eyes shut. The members of the family forming the circle pass a slipper around behind their backs, and then the person in the middle has to open their eyes and try to guess who has the slipper.

20 Questions

Players have 20 questions to guess the object that the 'answerer' has chosen, but they can only answer 'Yes' or 'No.'

(Source: FamiliesOnLine)

Q - What's a dog's favourite carol?
A - Bark, the herald angels sing

FIRST RAILWAY LINE IN WALES

The first railway line in Wales went from Llanelli to Pontarddulais. It was opened in 1839 to serve the iron industry. But it was soon outdone by the more famous Taff Vale Railway from Merthyr to Cardiff in 1841. Between 1840 and 1870, 2,300 kilometres of railway were built across the country.



THE PERFECT BBQ'ing

Not everyone is a natural born grill-master, but no matter what your level of expertise, you can improve your results with burgers and other picnic favourites by following these easy pieces of advice.

They were suggested by experts in the culinary arts who don't mind passing along a few tips to make the everyday grilling experience more pleasant.

Fish can be difficult to grill because they are so flaky and have a tendency to fall apart. A good way to combat this is to prepare a solution of saltwater beforehand and let them soak in it before you place them on the grill. This protects the structural integrity of the fish, and you won't run into the usual problems with the fish crumbling.



Instead of using barbecue sauce to flavour your meat, you might want to try apple juice as an alternative. It's light and keeps the meat extremely moist, especially when you put it in a spray bottle and apply it in a mist now and then throughout the grilling process.

Over-cooking is one of the biggest problems that grillers face. Of course, it's important to stay with your grill instead of wandering off and leaving it unattended. But beyond that, a simple solution may be found by pushing all of the coals to one side. This way, as burgers are done, you can put them on the cooler side of the grill. They'll still be warm, but they won't get over-cooked.

Do you have problems keeping your meat moist? To avoid dried out burgers, try putting ice cubes atop your patties as you grill. The heat will gradually melt them, but the ice cubes

will keep the burgers nice and juicy throughout the grilling process. An alternative option is to place a pat of butter on each burger.

Finally, it's difficult to play host while also manning the grill. Because of this, many people find that their meal suffers when they try to do both things at once.

To avoid this problem, grill up your meat about four hours in advance, then put it on ice until the guests arrive. Make sure you grill it until it is nearly done so that it will only take a moment to heat it back up once dinnertime arrives.

(Source: GND.com)

What did Cinderella say when her photos didn't arrive?

"One day my prints will come!"



THE WELSH DEPRESSION

In 1932, nearly half of Welsh men were unemployed.

The depression that began in the 1920s was "the central happening in the history of 20th century Wales."

People left the country in huge numbers and there were fewer people here in 1931 than in 1921. In 1932, 42.8% of Welsh men were out of work.

Although the depression affected every developed country "the experience of Wales was exceptional in severity and length". In most countries it was over by the mid-1930s but in 1939 there were still 100,000 men out of work in Wales.

In 1926, the miners of South Wales lost a combined £15 million in wages - that's more than £1 billion in today's money.

Did Rudolph go to school?

No, he was elf-taught

Jackie, Chris & Staff welcome you to

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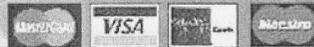
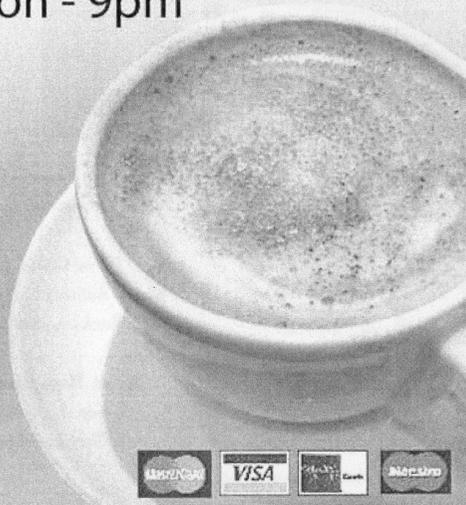
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CREEPY CHRISTMAS MYTHS



Grýla

Probably the creepiest of Christmas myths, Grýla is a mountain giantess/troll. According to Icelandic folklore, she travels from the mountains in search of naughty children. When she finds them, she abducts them and eats them. Is it any surprise children are rarely naughty in Iceland?

Yule lads



In another Icelandic legend, the Yule lads range from being bloodthirsty murderers to mischievous pranksters. Originally there were 13 Yule lads that would travel from the mountains where they live with their mother, Grýla, to the villages to scare unsuspecting victims. They take turns visiting kids 13 days before Christmas. Each Yule lad leaves a small gift for nice kids or a rotten potato for naughty kids.

Jólaökurrinn



This Icelandic Christmas cat dates back to the 19th century. According to the legend, Jólaökurrinn is a huge cat that roams the streets around Christmas time, preying on those who don't wear new clothes.

Those unable to buy new clothes for the holidays, the Yule cat eats. Some say the story was created to make people work harder around the holiday period

Belsnickel

This creepy fella originates from the middle-ages in Europe. He was one of the first to separate the good kids from the naughty. However, he did allow kids to redeem themselves if they had been bad all year. Throughout the year, the masked Belsnickel would leave candy in nice kids' houses, and leave the naughty kids with a switch. Although he never actually used the switch on kids, the stories vary. In some stories, he would leave the bad kids with nothing, in other stories he would either abduct them and never let them go home or take them to the forest to punish them for their bad behaviour.



Mari Lwyd

The Mari Lwyd tradition was once carried out in South Wales. Groups of men would go around door-to-door with a horse prop, made of a horse skull on a stick, asking for entry to the house in a song. The homeowners would deny entrance through a song, and it would go back and forth until someone eventually gave up. If the homeowner gave up first, the group of men would be granted access to their home and would be allowed food and drink and to basically cause chaos in the house.

(Source: EMGN. Com)

GRANT AWARDED TO PWLL RECREATION GROUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Pwll Recreation Ground Development Committee was successful in its bid for a Llanelli Rural Council Community Development Grant for the sum of £544.80 which enabled them to purchase a new community noticeboard situated at the changing rooms next to Pwll Pavilion.



Pictured: (left to right) Cllr. Penny Edwards who is a member of Pwll Recreation Ground Development Committee and Hengoed Ward Member, Chairman of Llanelli Rural Council, Cllr. Sharen L. Davies, Cllr. Martin Davies and Cllr. Sian Caiach who are both Hengoed Ward Members.

THEFT AT BETHLEHEM CHAPEL

Dyfed-Powys Police are appealing for information following a break-in at Bethlehem Chapel, Pwll on Tuesday October 8th

Metal was stolen from inside, and damage was caused to boilers, water pipes and a window.

It is believed items were thrown over the back wall of the chapel, and officers are appealing for anyone who might have seen any suspicious activity in the area to get in touch.

Anyone with information that could help officers with their investigation is asked to report it to Dyfed-Powys Police.

DAI AND HIS CHRISTMAS DINNER CHOICE

Blodwen: "Do you want Christmas dinner?"

Dai: "Sure, what are my choices?"

Blodwen: "Yes or no."

PWLL LITTER PICKS

For several years now the Pwll Residents Association have been organising litter picks to try and clean up the area. These are usually held quarterly and start from the Pavilion car park at 10.00 a.m., finishing by midday. Often we go to the Pavilion cafe after for a cuppa.

The picks are supported by Pride in Your Patch who bring the equipment and remove the rubbish afterwards. Cans, plastic and glass bottles are kept separate so that they can be recycled.



We usually get a good turnout, from local residents as well as seasoned litter pickers from other areas. If you would like to join in please look out for posters at the Pavilion (new notice board), Pwll Stores and the pet shop. These events are also advertised on the Keep Wales Tidy facebook page. If you would like direct notifications of future litter picks please email Veronica Haines: hainesveronica@hotmail.com to be put on the mailing list. It would be great to see more people taking a pride in this lovely area. There is a pick scheduled for Monday 18th November and the next one should be in February. Please bring gloves if you can.

LLANELLI OF YESTERYEAR



THE STAFF of Llanelli Steelworks went to Weston-super-Mare on their annual picnic. In the group are Mr. D. E. Morgan, assistant manager, and Mr. E. Hughes, personnel

Photo: John Walters

STRADEY PARK



The ground originally opened in 1879 for use by Llanelli RFC. In 1887, Stradey Park was chosen to host its first international rugby union match. In the early days of international rugby, all the British countries switched venues on a regular basis to allow supporters the chance to see their team, and clubs the opportunity of share gate receipts. Stradey Park was selected as part of the 1887 Home Nations Championship, with the opening home match for Wales being against England. The game was arranged for 8 January and a temporary stand was erected to allow a seating area so the club could charge higher ticket prices; but on the day the English team refused to play on the ground as the pitch was frozen. The adjacent cricket ground was in better condition, so the match was moved there along with the entire crowd, many members of which were extremely unhappy as they lost their seating area.

Four years later, Stradey Park was given another chance to host the national side when they were again selected to host the Home Nations Championship. In the final match, Stradey Park played host to Ireland and again temporary stands were erected, this time on the east and west sides. On this occasion there were no problems and the ground successfully hosted an international match on 7 March 1891. Although no official attendance figures were taken, the *South Wales Daily News* stated 'an immense concourse of people assembled on the park; in fact it was the largest that had ever been witnessed at a football match in the tin plate town'. Two years later, Stradey Park was the final venue of the 1893 Home Nations Championship, hosting Wales against Ireland. Wales, under the captaincy of Welsh rugby legend Arthur Gould, beat the Irish team by a

single try scored by Gould's brother, Bert Gould. The score not only gave Wales the win but also saw Wales lift the Triple Crown for the very first time in the country's history.

The ground has seen many memorable games including the defeat of Australia in 1967 and the All Blacks in 1972. It also hosted the match between Argentina and Samoa during the 1999 Rugby World Cup.

One rugby league game was held at Stradey Park. This was between Wales and Lebanon in the 2000 Rugby League World Cup on 2 November 2000. Wales won 24–22.

Due to the ground's owners, Llanelli RFU Ltd., having financial difficulties following the game turning professional, Stradey Park was sold to the Welsh Rugby Union in 1997 for £1.25 million. The ground was repurchased by Llanelli RFU Ltd. in 2005.

On 24 October 2008, the Scarlets defeated Bristol in the last ever game to be held at the ground by 28 points to nil, a crowd of over 10,800 witnessing the event.

When the Scarlets regional side was formed in 2004, it was decided that they would play the majority of their home fixtures at Stradey Park. Llanelli RFC continued to play their home matches at the ground. The stadium was also host for the Llanelli A.F.C. UEFA Cup games in the 2006/07 season.

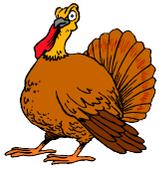
The last ever game to be played at Stradey Park was played on 24 October 2008. In an EDF Energy Cup match between the Scarlets and Bristol, the Scarlets won 27–0. The emotional occasion featured a procession of former club captains, as well as choirs, traditional songs, and a firework display to commemorate the closing of the old stadium.

LLANELLI CAR PARK CHARGES

Carmarthenshire Council has announced that the parking charges at the Murray Street Car Park, in the centre of town, will be £1 for all day parking on Saturdays, for a limited period.

The charges will be applied from October 26th to January 11 2020.

The move is to support traders and attract more people into the heart of Llanelli in the run-up to Christmas and into the New Year period.



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 colour, 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.

YULETIDE

"Yule," like many of our Christmas terms, dates back to "pagan" traditions in pre-Christian Europe, and didn't originally have anything to do with Christmas.

The word "Yule" comes from the Old English "geol," which came in turn from the Norse "jol," a pre-Christian midwinter festival. The Norse "jol" means "to go around," in this case referring to the "turn" of the year.

The "tide" in "Yuletide" comes from the Old English "tid," meaning "division of time," and in the case of "yuletide" means simply "time or season." If we wish someone "good tidings" or hear the phrase "tidings of great joy," we are harking back to a related Old Icelandic word meaning "news or events."

SANTA'S TWELVE REINDEER



Did you know that according to the song, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer", Santa has twelve reindeer? That's true! The introduction goes "There's Dasher and Dancer and Prancer and Vixen, Comet and Cupid and Donner and Blitzen..." That makes eight reindeer.

Then there's Rudolph, of course, so that makes nine.

Then there's Olive. You know, "Olive the other reindeer used to laugh..." That makes ten.

The eleventh is Howe. You know, "Then Howe the reindeer loved him..." Eleven reindeer.

Oh, and number 12? That's Andy! "Andy shouted out with glee."

It's all there - the proof is in the song!

Every year, Christmas becomes less a birthday and more a clearance sale.

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 fraternisation, or the place where it occurred (probably somewhere in Flanders), the Christmas Truce has acquired the aura of a miracle. In lacking a hero 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 night time singing from the trenches, was followed by shouted overtures and then forays between the lines by a few brave men. There followed, in daylight, a burying of the dead that had lain for weeks on 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.

THE BIRDMAN OF ALCATRAZ

Robert Franklin Stroud (January 28, 1890 – November 21, 1963), known as the "Birdman of Alcatraz", was a convicted murderer, American federal prisoner and author who has been cited as one of the most notorious criminals in the United States.



During his time at Leavenworth Penitentiary, he reared and sold birds and became a respected ornithologist, although regulations did not allow him to keep birds at Alcatraz, where he was incarcerated from 1942 to 1959. Stroud was never released from the federal prison system; he was imprisoned from 1909 to his death in 1963.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Christmas: The time when everyone gets Santamental.



PWLL ATHLETIC F.C.

League positions as at 12th October 2019

Division 1	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
Ammanford Res	8	7	1	0	37	22
Dafen	7	6	1	0	26	19
Tumble United	7	4	2	1	12	14
Pwll Athletic	7	4	1	2	1	13
FC Carmarthen	6	3	2	1	1	11
Llandovery	7	3	0	4	4	9
Felinfoel	7	2	2	3	-4	8
Kidwelly Town	6	2	1	3	-4	7
Bancffosfelen	7	2	1	4	-18	7
Camford Sport	7	2	0	5	-6	6
Llangennech	6	1	1	4	-7	4
Llandelo Town	6	1	1	4	-16	4
Johnstown	7	0	1	6	-26	1

Reserve Division Three	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
Pembrey Rerserves	6	5	1	0	23	16
Pontardullais A	5	5	0	0	24	15
Camford Sport Res	6	4	0	2	12	12
Pwll Reserves	5	4	0	1	12	12
Ammanford A	5	3	0	2	16	9
Bancffosfelen Res	5	3	0	2	2	9
Llangennech Res	6	3	0	3	-1	9
CK Swiss Valley Res	6	2	0	4	-17	6
Llandeilo Reserves	6	2	0	4	-17	6
Bwlch Reserves	1	1	0	0	1	3
Caebryn Reserves	4	0	1	3	-15	1
C P Suburbs Res	6	0	0	6	-26	0
Burry Port A	5	0	0	5	-35	0

* Points Deducted

We are better throughout the year for having in spirit, become a child again at Christmastime.
- Laura Ingalls Wilder



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

E-Mail:

Good Day Bônau Cabbage Patch,

My name is Peter Rancans, My wife Kim has been getting your mag for some years. She has some ancestors from Pwll and Llanelli and saw your publication when we were in South Wales again some time ago. I checked your website and did not see any way I can donate to the mag. We live in Seattle WA USA so are unable to attend a Jumble Sale or buy Raffle tickets.

So with winter and Xmas starting to close in I was wondering how we can donate a little? I did not see any Paypal or other ways to send money. I am from England originally and still have a few relatives in Britain. Can a check be sent maybe?

Please let me know if we can help. Many thanks for the Great Informative and Humorous Mag ...Keep up the Good Work Thanks again Peter Rancans

At Christmas , all roads lead home.
- Marjorie Holmes

WYNNE'S CHARITY QUIZ AT THE COLLIERS ARMS

This year's August Bank Holiday quiz was held on Sunday 25th August at the Colliers' Arms and was, once again, well attended. The total raised was an amazing £133.18 !!!

A big thank you goes to Wynne for, once again, organising a brilliant quiz. Thanks as well to Richard and Sarah for an excellent buffet. Finally, a big thanks to you, for attended the quiz and contributed to making it such an enjoyable evening.

The winning team – The Hotshots – donated the money to Ty Bryngwyn Hospice.

The Christmas Quiz will be held on Sunday 29th December @ 8:30pm.

Plough Monday



PLOUGH MONDAY

Plough Monday is the traditional start of the English agricultural year.

While local practices may vary, Plough Monday is generally the first Monday after Twelfth Day (Epiphany), 6 January. References to Plough Monday date back to the late 15th century. The day before Plough Monday is sometimes referred to as Plough Sunday.



WHEN DOES CHRISTMAS END?

Confusion is rife as to when Christmas is formally over – and after exactly

which evening decorations are said to bring you bad luck.

Christmas, which combines the marking of Jesus Christ's birth with the old pagan date for mid-winter celebrations, formally begins on 25 December.

That and the following 11 days count as "Christmas", with each day in the past celebrated for its own special reason – from commemorating St Stephen the martyr on the 26th to remembering the baby boys slain by King Herod on the 28th.

One of these days is celebrated as Twelfth Night – the last and final one of Christmas – and marks the coming of the Magi, or three wise men, to the baby Jesus on behalf of the rich and noble around the world.

A count of exactly 12 days from 25 December arrives at 5 January. According to the Church of England, Twelfth Night is 5 January, and the day of Epiphany – when the three wise men came – is 6 January.

But not everyone agrees.

Some people count the 12 days of Christmas as starting after Christmas Day – making 6 January the Twelfth Night, and meaning the

arrival of the three wise men should still strictly count as Christmas.

Others say "Twelfth Night" refers to the evening before the Twelfth Day, or Epiphany, on 6 January – making this the truly last day of Christmas.

DAI AND THE BREATH-ALYSER



Recently a routine police patrol was parked close to The Colliers' Arms pub in Pwll.

At closing time, the officer noticed Dai leaving the pub so apparently intoxicated that he could barely walk. Dai stumbled around for a few minutes, with the officer quietly observing. After what seemed an eternity, in which he tried his keys on five different vehicles, Dai managed to find his car and fall into it. He sat there for a few minutes as a number of other regulars left the pub and drove off.

Finally Dai started the car, switched the wipers on and off; it was a fine, dry summer night, flicked the blinkers on and off a couple of times, honked the horn and then switched on the lights. He moved the vehicle forward a few inches, reversed a little, and then remained still for a few more minutes as some more of the other patrons' vehicles left.

At last, when his was the only car left outside the pub, Dai pulled out and drove slowly down the road. The police officer, having waited patiently all this time, now started up his patrol car, put on the flashing lights, and promptly pulled Dai over and administered a breathalyser test. To his amazement, the breathalyser indicated no evidence that Dai had consumed any alcohol at all!

Dumbfounded, the officer said, "I'll have to ask you to accompany me to the police station. This breathalyser equipment must be broken."

"I doubt it," said Dai. "Tonight I was the designated decoy."

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MAKING HAY

In September, Rural Council staff cut all the grass in the "wild corner" of Pwll Park. They kindly used strimmers which made it easier for us to rake up. Taking off the cut grass helps to decrease the nutrients and therefore the amount of grass growing in future years, allowing more wild flowers to thrive. Over the course of three days a disappointingly small but dedicated group of volunteers managed to rake just over half of the area, including the bank. The weather was not perfect, but got a lot worse in the following days! Some of the grass raked off has been used for animal feed, some for mulching, and some piled nearby as habitat for wildlife.

Hopefully the top of the bank will have been rotavated by now, aiding the germination of seeds already in the ground. This year we do not intend to sow any additional seed and we will see what comes up.

Most of the trees planted last Christmas have survived, only two having been lost. The grass in the enclosure will be left as protection for the remainder.

Anyone interested in helping with this project in the future can contact Veronica Haines: hainesveronica@hotmail.com.



Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful.

LINE DANCING FUN

Do you fancy some line dancing fun? Come out and have a ton of fun while getting a great cardio workout with our line dancing sessions. Everyone welcome - amateur or expert.

A vintage-style poster for line dancing. The text reads: "LINE DANCING with John and Jan's Line Dancing Days Every Monday 7.00pm - 8.30pm Pwll Pavillion Pwll Road, Pwll, Llanelli SA15 4BD". It includes a drawing of a cowboy boot and a hat, and the text "LINE DANCING DAYS". Contact information is listed at the bottom: "Contact: John: 07855798881 Jan: 07815689456 Email: john.thomas5778.k@gmail.com".

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with John and Jan's Line Dancing Days

Every Monday
7.00pm - 8.30pm

Pwll Pavillion
Pwll Road,
Pwll,
Llanelli
SA15 4BD

LINE DANCING
DAYS

Contact:
John: 07855798881
Jan: 07815689456
Email: john.thomas5778.k@gmail.com

DID YOU KNOW

Handshakes were originally meant to make sure that the person you were meeting wasn't carrying a concealed weapon. The hand clasp proved that your hand was empty and shaking was meant to dislodge any weapons hiding up the sleeve.

You can't hum while holding your nose closed. (I bet you tried after reading this).

Two-thirds of the people on earth have never seen snow.

Capel LIBANUS Chapel

CAPEL LIBANUS CHAPEL

Cynhelir oedfaon bob bore Sul am ddeg o'r gloch gydag Ysgol Sul i'r plant ac Oedfa Gymun yn fisol.

Yn ystod y tymor diwethaf, rydym wedi bod yn ffodus i dderbyn gwasanaeth nifer o weinidogion a phregethwyr yn ein gwasanaethau wythnosol. Rydym hefyd yn ffodus bod nifer o'r aelodau yn barod i gymryd at arwain gwasanaethau pan fo angen.

Rydym yn llongyfarch ein pobl ifanc - Bethan, Osian a Dafydd ar eu llwyddiant yn yr arholiadau ac yn dymuno'n dda iddynt i'r dyfodol. Ym mis Hydref cynhaliwyd gwasanaeth diolchgarwch gyda'r plant a'r ieuentid yn cymryd at y rhannau arweiniol. Bu'r merched ifancaf yn canu ac fe gafwyd datganiad hyfryd gan Osian ar y piano. Diolch i'r plant, yr ieuentid, eu rhieni a'u hathrawon am eu gwaith a hefyd am eu rhoddion o fwyd i'r banc bwyd.



y plant a'r bobl ifanc gyda'u rhoddion i'r banc bwyd

Diolch i aelodau a ffrindiau am eu rhoddion ychwanegol o nwyddau mwy moethus i'r banc bwyd i ddathlu'r diolchgarwch. Mae'r bocs yn y cyntedd yn llawn yn gyson ac mae Deryth yn trefnu bod y nwyddau yn mynd i Ganolfan Myrtle House ar ddiwedd pob mis. Apeliwn unwaith eto am roddion ychydig yn sbesial gan gynnwys tuniau o gig, pysgod a llysiau erbyn dechrau Rhagfyr fel bod y teuluoedd anghenus yn gallu eu derbyn erbyn y Nadolig.

Cynhelir oedfa deuluol i ddathlu'r Nadolig ar Ragfyr 15^{fed} ac yna bydd oedfa Nadolig yr aelodau o dan ofal Gwenda ar Ragfyr 22^{ain}. Croeso cynnes i bawb ymuno â ni.

Bydded i chi ffydd y bugeiliaid,

Gobaith y doethion,

Cariad Mair

A llawenydd yr angylion y Nadolig hwn.



CAPEL BETHLEHEM CHAPEL

"Thou shalt not steal" – The 7th Commandment

How many of the Ten Commandments are followed today? Certainly, those who broke into Bethlehem and stole about £50-£100 worth of metal paid no heed to the seventh Commandment.

In doing so they did upwards of £9000 worth of damage to a building that holds worshippers of God. The congregation is aging and must now stay away from Bethlehem until essential repairs are carried out.

For our small congregation the Sunday Service is the highlight of their week. It is a meeting place for friends and a place where they worship the Lord.

This theft has not only caused damage to a building, but spiritual and emotional harm as well. We wonder if the perpetrators allowed this to cross their minds as the wrenched away a few pounds worth of metal.

As we try to put together a solution to this problem, we are also praying for the thieves. We bear no malice. We forgive them completely, because that is what Christians do. We pray that they may yet become decent, valuable members of our society.

God bless you all in Pwll and in the wider community.



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

As we look forward to Christmas this year we also reflect on the events during Autumn. People at Holy Trinity Church in Elgin Road, Pwll have worked hard to ensure the upkeep of the building for worship of God. It is also a place which is flexible enough to hold different events during the year. Celebrating Harvest Thanksgiving included a wonderful evening for the Harvest Supper, where we not only shared in a wonderful meal but really enjoyed the entertainment provided by the Carmarthen Ukulele Band through music and humour. A short while later church hosted an afternoon tea to support the people from a number of churches who had undertaken a sponsored walk from Llandry Church across Pembrey Mountain to St Mary's Church in Burry Port; and onwards to Holy Trinity Church in Pwll. Thanks to a really hard working group of people who give time and effort to such events as these.

It is with sadness that we note that one of those who have worked so hard at Holy Trinity Church, Mrs Elaine Unsted, has moved away to live nearer to her son and his family near Newport. Elaine was brought up and lived most of her life in Pwll near to Holy Trinity Church. Elaine has been to administrator for the parish for a number of years and, living near the church has been the first port of call when help has been needed there. Both Elaine and her husband, Peter will be greatly missed by us all. We extend our prayers and good wishes for health and happiness, to them both as they settle into their new home.

As we reflect on those who have moved away, we may also recall that it is the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War 2. Many lives were lost as a result of that war and the on-going conflicts since then. From the commemoration of All Saints Day on November 1st, bonfire night celebrations on November 5th, Remembrance Sunday on November 10th and the Armistice Commemorations on November 11th, November is a month of recalling the cost of war and violent conflict and the need to work for and pray for peace in our world. Whilst there are many large events scheduled in larger

towns and cities for the acts of remembrance, there will still be an opportunity for the Pwll community to come together for this at 2.00pm on Sunday 10th November at the memorial in Elgin Road.

From remembrance we look forward to Christmas in Holy Trinity as we give thanks for the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, and the good news that His birth brings. In December we will be holding the usual Carol service and communion services. Also we hold a Christingle Service to which everyone is invited. This service which includes the lighting of the special Christingle, raises money towards the Plant Dewi Charity which support projects that work for the support of children and families across Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire. One of the nearest projects is the Ty Mair Family Centre in Burry Port.

As we look back and look forward, Holy Trinity extends prayers and good wishes for a very Happy Christmas and a blessed and healthy New Year.

Gifts of time and love are surely the basic ingredients of a truly merry Christmas - Peg Bracken

ONLY A GAME

- Cricket is a game for gentlemen played by gentlemen,
- Football is a game for gentlemen played by hooligans,
- Rugby Union is a game for hooligans played by gentlemen,
- And Rugby League is a game for hooligans played by hooligans.

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

A man in north-eastern China who always wanted to own an aircraft is doing the next best thing: building a full-scale replica of an Airbus A320 jet.



CHRISTIAN AID

Looking back at this year, as usual it has been pretty eventful. There have been many highs and also many lows. Brexit has dominated most of it and unfortunately it is still on-going. I think most of our politicians are full of self importance and have trouble looking and seeing the wider picture.

There have been many weather disasters over the year with cyclones in America and third world countries. Climate change is affecting us all.

Christian Aid, this year, has been very busy with new projects. In the communities of the Amazon support is being given as they need our solidarity. The rainforest is important to us all. Both nature and people have been reduced to commodities by a broken economic system.

Christmas is nearing and at this time we do give a lot more thoughts to family and friends. When you are busy with your shopping, please give a thought for people who are less fortunate than yourselves. Being busy and enjoying buying gifts does give us all a boost.

Our shoe boxes have been sent and hopefully many a child will be feeling very happy when they receive their gifts this Christmas time.

The Christian Aid Carol Service will be held in Bethlehem Chapel this year, on Sunday December 1st at 10:30am. A very warm welcome is extended to you all. This service is always well attended and gives us a warm feeling, being with friends and showing us the real meaning of Christmas.

We look forward with hope to the coming year. We wish you all a very Happy and Blessed Christmas.

Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda I chi gyd.

If you would like to know more about Christian Aid the numbers to ring are:

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CONGRATULATIONS ELLIS THOMAS



Our congratulations go to Ellis Thomas on being selected to represent Wales under 20's in last year's Six Nations Championship.



Above : Ellis in action against France and Ireland.



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The Spring Group Meeting was very well attended with over a Hundred Members, Pwll W.I. we're the Hostess for the evening, organised the refreshments. We also had a special singing sketch. Then Carmarthen Ukalalees entertained us all. We all had a great evening, even though somewhat exhausting,

Events:

Friday 1st November - NEC (Birmingham) - Simply Christmas

Saturday 2nd November - Felinfoel W.I. Christmas Fayre

Saturday 23rd November - St. Peter's Bowls Club, Carmarthen - Acrylic Art. Pebble Art, Christmas Wreath

Saturday 16th November at 10.30 - Annual Council Meeting. Queen Elizabeth School, Johnstown - Speakers - Head of Denman College, Dr.Rhys Thomas Founder of the Wales Air Ambulance

Wednesday 20th November - Members will visit Merlins - at Pibrlwyd College, Carmarthen.

Several Members went to the Iltyd Group Meeting on the 23rd October, where Stepney W.I. we're the Hostesses a great afternoon was had by all.

Many thanks to the W.I. Advisers Hefina & Joyce who attended our A.G.M. on the 13th November. We en finished the evening with home-made Cawl - made by our President. Wednesday 11th Decembers - Christmas Dinner at the Ashburnham Hotel, an evening we all love, with Secret Santa.

Members were welcomed back after their Summer Break, some exotic places, South Africa, Italy and a few stay vacations too. Many thanks to member who entered

theW.I.Show at St.Peter's Hall - theme - "Love your Libraries"

The year 2020 will commence with our Meeting Wednesday 8th January 7.00 at Bethlehem Vestry.

Don't forget we will be carrying on with our Green Space near the Park. For more details contact Chris. 01554 751596



Above: Friends of Pwll W.I had a Coffee Morning in Aid of Alzheimers.



Above : Coffee Evening held at Furnace RFC



THE CHRISTMAS ROSE

The Christmas Rose, sometimes also called the Snow Rose or Winter Rose, is a magnificent plant that blooms in the mountains of Central Europe during the darkest period of the year when everything else is frozen and buried beneath ice and snow.

Legend tells the Christmas Rose was originally a black plant, but it turned white when baby Jesus was born.

Our ancestors have been familiar with the Christmas Rose for thousands of years. The plant was used in medicine as an abortifacient herb, and to kill parasites. Some ancient people were not aware of that this evergreen perennial flowering plant is poisonous and should only be used with care under right circumstances.

When Paracelsus (1493 - 1541), a well-known physician, alchemist, and philosopher described the Elixir of Life, a universal medicine to gain longevity, his formula contained components of the Christmas Rose.

Modern scientists have found out that the plant contains a glycoside that can help cure heart diseases. Scientists are re-discovering the long-forgotten healing powers of the Christmas Rose that has the potential for treating Alzheimer's, stroke, and cancer.

THE CHRISTMAS ROSE LEGEND



There is a beautiful legend behind the Christmas Rose, a flower that is today regarded as a symbol of love and hope. The story carries a powerful message reminding us of something important when we give gifts during Christmas and show love towards one another.

When people heard that baby Jesus had been born, they came to him with gifts. On a cold and

wintery night, a young shepherd girl named Madelon, saw the three Magi who followed the Star of Bethlehem. When they passed her, she asked them where they were going, and they explained they were on their way to visit the Saviour who had been born.

Madelon went with them because she wanted to see the new-born child. When they reached the stable and saw baby Jesus, the three Wise Men knelt and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Other shepherds came with presents such as honey and fruit.

Standing outside the stable where Jesus had been born, Madelon watched how the baby was surrounded with precious gifts. She was sad and started to cry. She wanted to give baby Jesus something too, but she was poor and had nothing, not even a flower. She searched, but the hillside was covered with snow and there were no flowers.

A watching Angel standing outside the stable witnessed the sadness of the poor, young shepherd girl. He felt sorry for Madelon and knew she had been searching for a gift. With one wing, he carefully removed the snow on the ground around her feet. When Madelon's tears touched the snow-free ground, white flowers suddenly sprang forth at her feet.

"No gold, no frankincense, no myrrh, is as precious, or as fitting a gift for the Prince of Peace as these pure blooms that are born from the pure tears of love, faith and devotion," the Angel told her.

Madelon was overjoyed. She now had a gift she could give to baby Jesus, and her gift was the Christmas Rose. The young shepherd girl timidly approached the cradle, knelt and laid the flowers in the bosom of the sleeping baby. As she did so, baby Jesus awoke and extended his tiny hand towards her, as if he was offering a blessing. Everyone could see Madelon's Christmas Rose was a gift of her heart and tears.

This is why the Christmas Rose is associated with love and hope. The legend of the Christmas Rose reminds us that during Christmas gift giving it is the thought that truly counts, and the most precious gifts are those that come from the heart.

(Both articles submitted by a reader)



THE LEGEND OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

By LUCY WHEELLOCK

Two little children were sitting by the fire one cold winter's night. All at once they heard a timid knock at the door, and one ran to open it.

There, outside in the cold and the darkness, stood a child with no shoes upon his feet and clad in thin, ragged garments. He was shivering with cold, and he asked to come in and warm himself.

"Yes, come," cried both the children; "you shall have our place by the fire. Come in!"

They drew the little stranger to their warm seat and shared their supper with him, and gave him their bed, while they slept on a hard bench.



In the night they were awakened by strains of sweet music and, looking out, they saw a band of children in shining garments approaching the house. They were playing on golden harps, and the air was full of melody.

Suddenly the Stranger Child stood before them; no longer cold and ragged, but clad in silvery light.

His soft voice said: "I was cold and you took Me in. I was hungry, and you fed Me. I was tired, and you gave Me your bed. I am the Christ Child, wandering through the world to bring peace and happiness to all good children. As you have given to Me, so may this tree every year give rich fruit to you."

So saying, He broke a branch from the fir tree that grew near the door, and He planted it in the ground and disappeared. But the branch grew into a great tree, and every year it bore wonderful golden fruit for the kind children.

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CHRISTMAS DID YOU KNOW



Christmas was once a moveable feast celebrated at many different times during the year. The choice of December 25th was made by Pope Julius I, in the 4th century A.D., because this coincided with the pagan rituals of Winter

Solstice, or Return of the Sun. The intent was to replace the pagan celebration with the Christian one.

The use of a Christmas wreath as a decoration on your front door, mantel or bay window symbolises a sign of welcome and long life to all who enter.

Three years after Thomas Edison invented the electric light bulb in 1879, Edward H. Johnson, who worked for Edison's company, had Christmas tree bulbs especially made for him. He proudly displayed his electric tree lights at his home on Fifth Avenue, New York City. They caused a sensation although some years were to pass before mass-manufactured Christmas tree lights were widely available.

The Canadian province of Nova Scotia leads the world in exporting lobster, wild blueberries, and Christmas trees.



It is estimated that 400,000 people become sick each year from eating tainted Christmas leftovers.

In 1937, the first postage stamp to commemorate Christmas was issued in Austria.

The largest Christmas angel ornament is over 18 feet (5.57 metres) high and over 8 feet wide at the bottom. It's not the height of this angel that's so impressive, it's that she's made out of 2946 beer bottles. It gets better - all the bottle tops are still on. This angel was displayed on Alfonso Reyes Avenue, Nuevo Leon, Mexico in January 2000.

The Puritans in America tried to make Thanksgiving Day the most important annual festival instead of Christmas.



MEXICAN CHRISTMAS MIRACLE

A charming story is told of Pepita, a poor Mexican girl who had no gift to present the Christ Child at Christmas Eve Services. As Pepita walked slowly to the chapel with her cousin Pedro, her heart was filled with sadness rather than joy. "I am sure, Pepita, that even the most humble gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes," said Pedro consolingly.

Not knowing what else to do, Pepita knelt by the roadside and gathered a handful of common weeds, fashioning them into a small bouquet. Looking at the scraggly bunch of weeds, she felt more saddened and embarrassed than ever by the humbleness of her offering. She fought back a tear as she entered the small village chapel.

As she approached the altar, she remembered Pedro's kind words: "Even the most humble gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes." She felt her spirit lift as she knelt to lay the bouquet at the foot of the nativity scene.

Suddenly, the bouquet of weeds burst into blooms of brilliant red, and all who saw them were certain that they had witnessed a Christmas miracle right before their eyes.

From that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the Flores de Noche Buena, or Flowers of the Holy Night, for they bloomed each year during the Christmas season.

Today, the common name for this plant is the poinsettia!

OH LITTLE TOWN

Oh little town 'neath moonlit skies
How still we see thee sleep.
As through the streets and on the roofs
A hooded figure creeps.
He climbs down all your chimneys
He carries a large sack..
He fills it with your valuables
Then quickly hurries back!

CRACKER JOKES – FOR THE KIDS

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

How do 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!

PWLL OF YESTERYEAR



Parade through Pwll on Mayor's Sunday 26th May, 1963

Photo: Ian Bonnell



THE COPTIC CROSS

The Coptic cross is a symbol of Coptic Christianity, the primary denomination of Egyptian Christians today. The cross comes in a number of different forms, some of which are obviously influenced by the older, pagan ankh symbol of eternal life.

Coptic Christianity developed in Egypt under Saint Mark, writer of the Gospel of Mark. The Copts became separated from mainstream Christianity at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 CE over theological differences. Egypt was then conquered by Muslim Arabs in the 7th century. The result is that Coptic Christianity developed largely independently of other Christian communities, developing their own beliefs and practices. The church is officially known as the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria and is led by its own pope. In the last few decades the Coptic and Greek Orthodox churches have reached agreement on a variety of matters, including recognising each others' marriages and baptisms as legitimate sacraments.

Early versions of the Coptic cross were a fusion of the Orthodox Christian cross and pagan Egyptian ankh. The Orthodox cross has three cross beams, one for arms, a second, sloped one for the feet, and a third at the time for the INRI label placed above Jesus' head. The early Coptic cross is missing the foot beam but includes a circle around the upper beam. The result from a pagan perspective is an ankh with an equal-armed cross inside the loop. For Copts, the circle is a halo representing divinity and resurrection. Halos or sunbursts with similar meaning are also sometimes found on orthodox crosses.

KOWTOW



Kowtow, which is borrowed from *kau tau* in Cantonese (*koutou* in Mandarin Chinese), is the act of deep respect shown by prostration, that is, kneeling and bowing so low as to have one's head touching the ground.

In Imperial Chinese protocol, the kowtow was performed before the Emperor of China. Depending on the solemnity of the situation different grades of kowtow would be used. In the most solemn of ceremonies, for example at the coronation of a new Emperor, the Emperor's subjects would undertake the ceremony of the "three kneelings and nine kowtows", the so-called grand kowtow, which involves kneeling from a standing position three times, and each time, performing the kowtow three times while kneeling. Immanuel Hsu describes the "full kowtow" as "three kneelings and nine knockings of the head on the ground."

As government officials represented the majesty of the Emperor while carrying out their duties, commoners were also required to kowtow to them in formal situations. For example, a commoner brought before a local magistrate would be required to kneel and kowtow. A commoner is then required to remain kneeling, whereas a person who has earned a degree in the Imperial examinations is permitted a seat.

Since one is required by Confucian philosophy to show great reverence to one's parents and grandparents, children may also be required to kowtow to their elderly ancestors, particularly on special occasions. For example, at a wedding, the marrying couple was traditionally required to kowtow to both sets of parents, as acknowledgement of the debt owed for their nurturing.

Confucius believed there was a natural harmony between the body and mind and therefore, whatever actions were expressed through the body would be transferred over to the mind. Because the body is placed in a low position in the kowtow, the idea is that one will naturally convert to his or her mind a feeling of respect. What one does to oneself influences the mind. Confucian philosophy held that respect was important for a society, making bowing an important ritual.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Sometimes I drink water - just to surprise my liver.



ST DWYNWEN

Saint Dwynwen is the Welsh patron saint of lovers. She is celebrated throughout Wales on 25 January.

Dwynwen is believed to have been a daughter of King Brychan Brycheiniog, who lived in the 5th century. Her mother may have been Rigrawst. Dwynwen lived in Anglesey, and her name is still recalled in place names such as Llanddwyn and Porthddwyn in Wales and the church of *Sen Adhwynn* in Advent, Cornwall.

In the tale told of her, Dwynwen falls in love with a young man named Maelon, but rejects his advances. Stories differ substantially on the events that follow but the outcome remains the same. Either she is raped by Maelon and prays for assistance, or she is unable to marry him due to her father's refusal and prays to forget her love for him. An angel provides her with a potion. Maelon drinks it and turns into ice.

Dwynwen then prays for three requests (either given as a result of drinking the potion, or prayed for when she sees what happens to Maelon). These three requests are that Maelon be released; that, through her, God look after all true lovers; and that she remain unmarried. She then retreats to the solitude of Ynys Llanddwyn off the west coast of Anglesey to become a hermit until she dies, in about AD 460.



THE ELF ON THE SHELF

The story describes how Santa's "scout elves" hide in people's homes to

watch over events.

Once everyone goes to bed, the scout elf flies back to the North Pole to report to Santa the activities, good and bad, that have taken place throughout the day. Before the family wakes up each morning, the scout elf flies back from the North Pole and hides. By hiding in a new spot each morning around the house, the scout elf

plays an ongoing game of hide and seek with the family.

The Elf on the Shelf explains that scout elves get their magic by being named and being loved by a child. In the back of each book, families have an opportunity to write their elf's name and the date that they adopted it. Once the elf is named, the scout elf receives its special Christmas magic, which allows it to fly to and from the North Pole.

The book tells how the magic might disappear if the scout elf is touched, so the rule for *The Elf on the Shelf* states, "There's only one rule that you have to follow, so I will come back and be here tomorrow: Please do not touch me. My magic might go, and Santa won't hear all I've seen or I know." Although families are told not to touch their scout elf, they can speak to it and tell it all their Christmas wishes so that it can report back to Santa accurately.

The story ends on Christmas Day with the elf leaving to stay with Santa for the rest of the year until the following Christmas season.

KNUCKLEBONES



Knucklebones, Tali, Fivestones, or Jacks, is a game of ancient origin, usually played with five small objects, or ten in the case of jacks. Originally the "knucklebones" were those of a sheep, which were thrown up and caught in various manners. Modern knucklebones consist of six points, or knobs, proceeding from a common base, and are usually made of metal or plastic. The winner is the first player to successfully complete a prescribed series of throws, which, though similar, differ widely in detail. The simplest throw consists in either tossing up one stone, the jack, or bouncing a ball, and picking up one or more stones or knucklebones from the table while it is in the air. This continues until all five stones or knucklebones have been picked up. Another throw consists in tossing up first one stone, then two, then three and so on, and catching them on the back of the hand. Different throws have received distinctive names, such as "riding the elephant", "peas in the pod", "horses in the stable", and "frogs in the well".



REINDEER

Reindeer are found in large herds in the very north of the earth. Reindeer live in both the Arctic Tundra and the North Pole regions, including parts

of North America (where they are known as caribou), Europe and Asia. Domesticated reindeers are mostly found in northern Scandinavia, Russia, and Iceland, and were introduced to these areas in the 18th century.

Ever wondered how reindeer keep warm in such low temperatures? Reindeer actually have a double layered coat - a thick, woolly undercoat and a longer-haired overcoat with hollow, air-filled hairs.

In the summer, when the ground is wet, their foot pads are softer giving them a larger surface on the ground. Their foot pads then tighten in winter to reveal the rim of their hooves, to enable better traction in the slippery snow and ice and to help them dig for food.

Reindeer are herbivores meaning they only eat plants, and love feeding on leafy greens and mushrooms. Carrots and apples aren't available in their natural habitat, but they do enjoy both as a treat (so remember to leave a carrot out on Christmas Eve!).

Some reindeer travel further than any other migrating mammal, and North American reindeer sometimes travel over 3,100 miles per year, covering around 23 miles per day. The largest migrations happen in spring and autumn.

Unlike many species of deer, both male and female reindeer grow antlers. Male reindeer usually lose their antlers in winter or spring, but females shed theirs in the summer.

DID YOU KNOW

The average mattress doubles in weight over the course of 10 years due to accumulation of dust mites and dust mite poop. (Get the vacuum cleaner out NOW!)

COCA COLA AND SANTA



Did Coca Cola invent the modern image of Santa Claus?

The pop culture version of the modern Santa emerged as an amalgam of various traditions, finally put together as a white bearded North Pole dweller by cartoonist Thomas Nast. Coca-Cola jumped on this image as it became more and more popular. In the 1930s, with the Depression slowing their sales, the company unveiled an ad campaign featuring Santa Claus guzzling down not a glass of milk, but an ice cold Coke between present deliveries.

However, this image was already in the popular consciousness, as seen in books and cartoons of the times. In this era before national television ads, many more people saw the Coca-Cola Santa than these others, but he didn't come first - and he certainly wasn't invented by the soft drink company.

DAI'S CHRISTMAS BINGE

Dai left work on the Friday before Christmas.

But it was payday as well, so instead of going home, he stayed out the entire weekend partying with his mates and spending his entire wages.

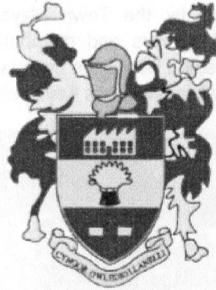
When he finally appeared at home on Christmas Eve, he was confronted by his angry wife, Blodwen. She barraged him for nearly two hours with a tirade befitting his actions. Finally Blodwen stopped the nagging and said to him, "How would you like it if you didn't see me for two or three days?"

Dai replied, "That would be fine with me."

Christmas Day went by and Dai didn't see Blodwen..

Boxing Day came and went with the same results. Wednesday was the same - no Blodwen.

But on Thursday, the swelling had gone down just enough where he could see her a little out of the corner of his left eye.



Cyngor Gwledig LLANELLI Rural Council

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Datblygu cymunedol
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What will you be buying online this Christmas?

The lead-up to Christmas is a time when, for many of us, our spending soars. This year, even more of us will be taking advantage of the choice, convenience and best prices that we can only get online ... whether it's those special presents, a festive break or that outfit that's sold out on the high street.

Unfortunately, however, November and December are also the busiest time for fraudsters - who exploit the fact that you're distracted and will do anything to find a bargain.

We've come up with these expert, easy-to-follow safety tips to help protect you from falling victim to seasonal scams such as fraudulent shopping websites, fake goods, convincing phishing emails and ads for offers that are too good to be true.

- **Don't pay for anything by transferring money directly to people or companies you don't know, however desperate you are to buy.** If it's a fraud, it's doubtful the bank will be able to recover or refund your money. The safest way to pay for anything is by credit card.
- **Make sure shopping websites are authentic** by carefully checking the address is spelled correctly. Fraudsters can set up convincing websites with very similar spelling to the authentic one.
- **Ensure that payment pages are secure,** by checking that addresses begin with 'https' ('s' is for secure) and there's a closed padlock in the address bar.
- **When you've finished paying, log out of your account.** Simply closing the page may not do this automatically.
- Counterfeit goods are of inferior quality, can be dangerous and contravene copyright law, costing the livelihoods of workers who make the real thing. **Don't buy fakes intentionally or get duped into buying them, however cheap or 'authentic'.**
- Beware of 'free' or 'low-cost' trials - whether slimming pills or the latest tech - without thoroughly reading the small print and trusted reviews. You could be signing up for large monthly direct debits which are difficult to cancel.
- **Check that a holiday or travel you book online is genuine by researching it thoroughly.** Look for independent reviews, and make sure travel agents / tour operators are genuine by checking for an ABTA/ATOL number.
- **Buy concert, event, fixture or entry tickets from official sources** such as box offices, sports clubs or reputable fan ticket exchange sites. If you don't, you could be paying for fake or non-existent tickets.
- **Watch out for unexpected emails, texts or posts urging you to click on a link or attachment.** For example, at this time of year fake parcel firm delivery messages containing harmful attachments disguised as delivery notes are commonplace.



For more information on buying safely online, visit www.getsafeonline.org

If you think you've been a victim of online fraud, report it to Action Fraud, the UK's national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre on 0300 123 20 40 or at www.actionfraud.police.uk



A CAT'S CHRISTMAS

'T was the night before
Christmas
And all through the house
Not a creature was stirring,
Not even a mouse.

'Cuzz the cat had pounced on him
And tore him apart -
Ate his mouse intestines
And chewed up his heart.

Kitty thought he heard sleigh bells,
Which made him take pause -
He stopped daintily licking
The blood from his claws.

"Must be Santa," thought Kitty
(That quite clever cat)
'Cuz nobody else climbs down
The chimney like that.

Indeed it was ol' Santa
So jolly and fat
With a huge load of presents
And all for the cat!

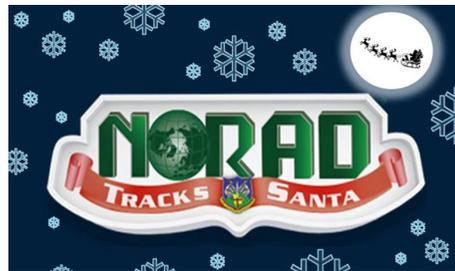
"Wow, the best Christmas ever!"
Kitty thought with a purr,
Then he coughed up a hairball
And shed some more fur!

in a tiny town so my mom wasn't too surprised that people knew what was going on.

A little later we heard bells and down the road came a horse-drawn carriage with a real-life Santa! He came in and gave me a Cabbage Patch Kid doll — it was the '80s.

To this day we still don't know who Santa was or who called my mum. Every year I send a little thank-you by trying to do something special for someone else who needs it. They taught me what Christmas is really all about and I never get tired of seeing other people's faces light up when I have been able to be their Santa.

TRACK SANTA



You can track Santa as he travels around the world delivering his presents to all the boys and girls. Just remember to be in bed, asleep, long before he is due at your house.

<https://www.noradsanta.org/>

GINGERBREAD HOUSE



A gingerbread house is a novelty confectionery shaped like a building that is made of cookie dough, cut and baked into appropriate components like walls and roofing. The usual material is crisp ginger biscuit made of gingerbread – the ginger nut. Another type of model-making with gingerbread uses boiled dough that can be moulded like clay to form edible statuettes or other decorations. These houses, covered with a variety of candies and icing, are popular Christmas decorations, often built by children with the help of their parents.

Records of honey cakes can be traced to ancient Rome. Food historians ratify that ginger has been seasoning foodstuffs and drinks since antiquity. It is believed gingerbread was first baked in Europe at the end of the 11th century, when returning crusaders brought back the custom of spicy bread from the Middle East. Ginger was not only tasty; it had properties that helped preserve the bread. According to the French legend, gingerbread was brought to Europe in 992 by the Armenian monk, later saint, Gregory of Nicopolis (Gregory Makar). He lived for seven years in Bondaroy, France, near the town of Pithiviers, where he taught gingerbread cooking to priests and other Christians. He died in 999. An early medieval Christian legend elaborates on the Gospel of Matthew's account of the birth of Jesus. According to the legend, attested to in a Greek document from the 8th century, of presumed Irish origin and translated into Latin with the title *Collectanea et Flores*, in addition to gold,

frankincense, and myrrh, given as gifts by three "wise men from the east" (magi), ginger was the gift of one wise man (magus) who was unable to complete the journey to Bethlehem. As he was lingering in his last days in a city in Syria, the magus gave his chest of ginger roots to the Rabbi who had kindly cared for him in his illness. The Rabbi told him of the prophecies of the great King who was to come to the Jews, one of which was that He would be born in Bethlehem, which, in Hebrew, meant "House of Bread". The Rabbi was accustomed to having his young students make houses of bread to eat over time to nourish the hope for their Messiah. The Magus suggested adding ground-up ginger to the bread for zest and flavour.

Gingerbread, as we know it today, descends from Medieval European culinary traditions. Gingerbread was also shaped into different forms by monks in Franconia, Germany in the 13th century. *Lebkuchen* bakers are recorded as early as 1296 in Ulm and 1395 in Nuremberg, Germany. Nuremberg was recognized as the "Gingerbread Capital of the World" when in the 1600s the guild started to employ master bakers and skilled workers to create complicated works of art from gingerbread. Medieval bakers used carved boards to create elaborate designs. During the 13th century, the custom spread across Europe. It was taken to Sweden in the 13th century by German immigrants; there are references from Vadstena Abbey of Swedish nuns baking gingerbread to ease indigestion in 1444. The traditional sweetener is honey, used by the guild in Nuremberg. Spices used are ginger, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and cardamom. Gingerbread figurines date back to the 15th century, and figural biscuit-making was practised in the 16th century. The first documented instance of figure-shaped gingerbread biscuits is from the court of Queen Elizabeth I: she had gingerbread figures made in the likeness of some of her important guests. (Source: Wikipedia)

THE CABBAGE PATCH KID



I was 6 years old, my parents were getting a divorce, and my mother was pregnant with my

little brother, so things were really rocky for us. On Christmas Eve my mum got a phone call, and the woman on the phone said they had heard we were having a tough time and asked if it would be OK if Santa came to visit. We lived

My most heart warming Christmas memory is when my infant class teacher gave each of us in the class a personalised letter from Santa.

I remember after we all got the letters, we came into school the next day really excited that SANTA WROTE TO US, and we couldn't stop telling our teacher about how Santa had sent us letters.

It always brings a smile to my face when I remember that time.

Hearing voices in your head is normal. Listening to them is quite common. Arguing with them - acceptable. It is only when you lose that argument that you get in real trouble.



A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

The day of joy returns, Father in Heaven, and crowns another year with peace and good will.

Help us rightly to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the doors of hate and open the doors of love all over the world...

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil, by the blessing that Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clean hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and the Christmas evening bring us to our bed with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

BURNING GOATS, ROTTEN BIRDS, PSYCHOTIC CATS & SAVNAS - SCANDINAVIA

Scandinavia has no shortage of exotic Christmas traditions, as you might expect from countries closest to the North Pole.

While Nordic culture, and its ancient festival of Yule, helped shape modern Christmas traditions, including the Christmas tree, many of their Christmas traditions will seem particularly alien to us.

Most famous of these is the Christmas Goat, a symbol that's popular in both Norway and Sweden and has its origins in pre-Christian times.

In the Swedish town of Gävle a giant goat of straw is built in the town square. Though Swedes are generally a conservative and law-abiding bunch, the goat proves too tempting a target, to the point where bookies take bets on how long it will be before someone finally torches it.

Another common tradition is Risalamande. The dish, a type of rice pudding, originated in Denmark but is also popular in Norway and Sweden. An almond is hidden inside and whoever finds it will, according to the folklore, get married before the following Christmas.

Of course there's no pudding until after you clean your plate. Don't like eating Brussels sprouts? Well at least you're not in Greenland where traditional Christmas fare includes raw whale blubber, known as Mattak, and Kiviak, a dead sea bird that's been rotting and fermenting for months – *bon appétit!*

In neighbouring Iceland, meanwhile, the shiftless and shirtless fall prey to the Christmas Cat. Children who finish all their work and get new clothes before Christmas are rewarded, those who don't are devoured!

Ravenous and judgemental felines aren't the only cause for concern, however. Christmas Eve in Norway is analogous to Halloween, a time when evil spirits and witches roam the land – so Norwegians make sure all their housework is done ahead of time then hide their broomsticks should the witches take flight!

In Finland and Estonia, meanwhile, families keep warm on Christmas Eve by heading to the sauna!

LA BEFANA



La Befana is an Italian Christmas witch. Not terrifying in any way, but a very strange legend. She is pictured as an old woman who flies on a broomstick and carries a large bag. According to the old folklore tale, she visits children on Epiphany Eve to determine if they have been naughty or nice. Very much like Santa, if the kids have been nice, she rewards them with gifts and candy. If they've been naughty she leaves them a dark lump of coal.



Bônau Humour

THE ANGEL ON THE CHRISTMAS TREE

On Christmas Eve, a long time ago, Santa Claus was getting ready for his annual journey. But this year there were many problems.

Four of the elder elves became ill and the younger more in-experienced elves did not produce the toys as quickly, so Santa started to worry that he would not be ready in time.

Then Mrs. Claus tells him that her mother is visiting. This makes Santa Claus stressed even more so. When he begins to gather the reindeer for his sleigh, he discovers that three of them are ready to give birth and two have jumped over the fence.

The elves begin loading the sleigh and one of the boards of the sled breaks off and the bag of toys falls to the ground dispersing the toys all around. It goes without saying that Santa was not exactly in his best state of mind and slightly triggered.

Then the doorbell rings and Santa goes to the door and expects another problem.

He opens the door and there is a little angel with a big Christmas tree brought to cheer up Santa.

The angel says in a loving tone: "Merry Christmas Santa. Is it not a beautiful day today? I have a big beautiful tree for you, is it not a beautiful tree, where do you want me to put it?"

And so began the tradition of the angel on top of the Christmas tree.

A POEM

T'was the night before Christmas and all through the house, Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. The stockings were hung by the chimney with care. They'd been worn all week and needed the air.

THE DILEMMA

While I was working as a store Santa, a boy asked me for an electric train set. "If you get your train," I told him, "your dad is going to want to play with it too. Is that all right?"

The boy became very quiet.

So, moving the conversation along, I asked, "What else would you like Santa to bring you?"

He promptly replied, "Another train."

SERVICE

It was a cold and misty Christmas morning in the very depth of winter after a heavy fall of snow and only Farmer Evans and the Reverend Joseph managed to arrive at the church for the morning service.

'Well,' said the Vicar laconically, 'I guess there's no point in having a service today.'

'Well that's not how I see it.' said Farmer Evans smartly. 'If only one cow turns up at feeding time, I still have to feed it.'

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OLD LLANELLY

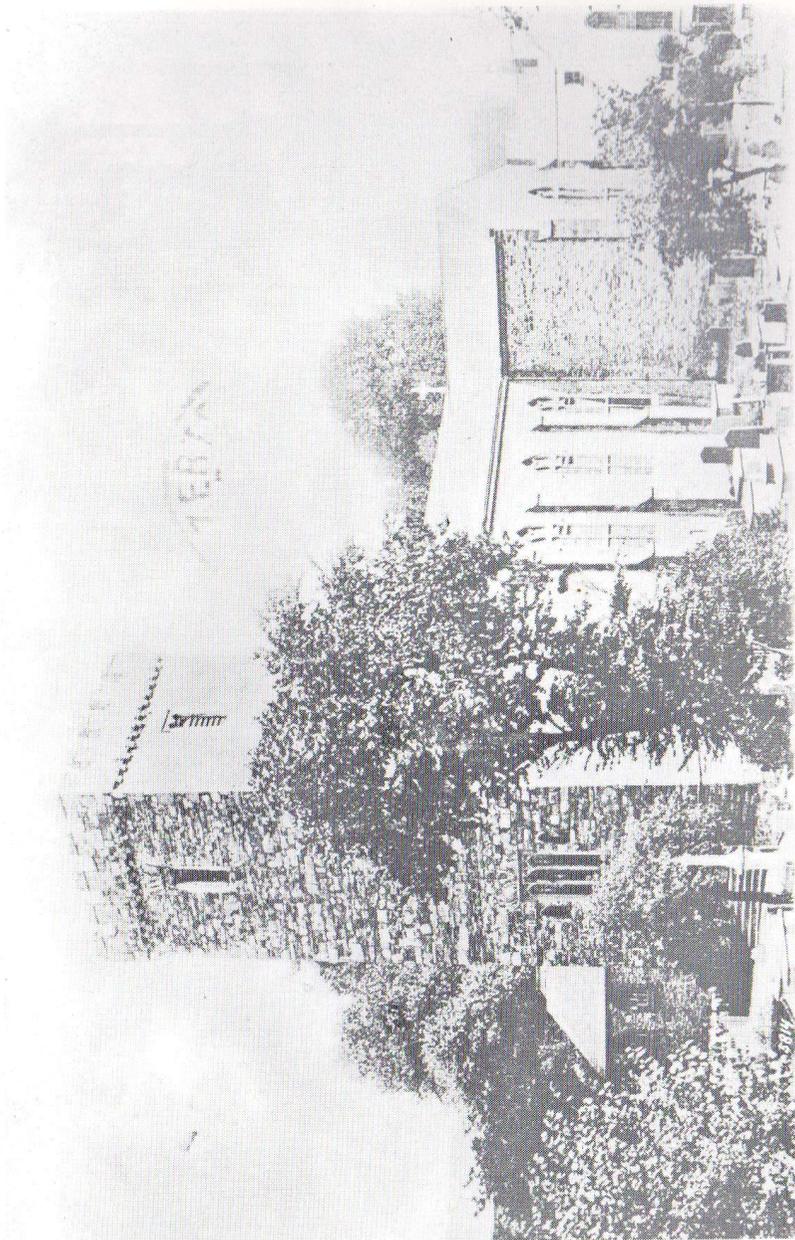


photo: Yvonne Powell

Eglwys y Plwyf, 1907
Parish Church, 1907

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