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MEMORIES

A small but important collection of memories.

A Bônau Cabbage Patch Supplement

TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

By Dennis Bates

There are many places that can be quite evocative to a person. Mine is a slab of rock alongside the railway line in Pwll.

Some of the finest walking country I know of lies on the top and on both sides of Pembrey Mountain and it has many footpaths that sooner or later will present the walker with all manner of wonderful vistas. I have walked up the mountain on a balmy spring day, following a steep path that opened out into a fairy-dell of wild flowers, bluebells, primroses, buttercups in profusion laid on a display that no gardener could match. The sun shafted through the newly opened canopy of leaves as if to spot-light this idyllic scene. The path continued lined with these wild flowers until it led me to one of my favourite spots; Mumbles Head, overlooking Pembrey. There I sat down, munched my chocolate bar, and looked out over Carmarthen Bay.

Many paths lead to unexpected places on the mountain. One I know cuts right through the corner of a private garden, but a polite knock and a request to follow the path always leads to a smile, a conversation and permission to carry on. The path continues through a farm and keeps company with a stream until the walker comes out by the Graig in Burry Port.

Wherever I walk around Pembrey Mountain, my route always takes me to Burry Port Harbour and then on through the windmill park, now defunct thank goodness; then on home to Llanelli via the sea-wall that runs along-side the main railway line. It's there that I reach my rock.

My rock is a warm brown colour, about seven feet long and slightly scooped out like a petrified hammock. It faces due south tilting a little so that on a warm summer's day it catches the full rays of the sun. Sitting on the rock, I can look across to Gower or watch three cormorants (always three) standing on the sand-bank with outstretched wings trying to cool off in the heat of the day. Whatever the tide is doing, in or out, there is always something to see. Looking toward Llanelli I am aware of the rounded shape of "Monument" hill overlooking the water park.



The monument is the form of a criss-crossed concrete billets and a plaque tells us that the

Duport Steel works, better known as "The Klondyke", stood on this site.

I turn and look out again over the estuary; lying on the rock in the sun, my head on my small ruck-sack, I close my eyes. Memories of Llanelli, as I knew it, came flooding back.

My earliest memory of the town is the noise of the clogs as the wearers made their way in the dawn, down Ropewalk Road, to the change-over of shifts in the Morfa tin-plate works. The clip-clop was like heavy raindrops on a tin roof. You could tell if the worker was a man or a woman; the ladies made a lighter clip, the men a definite clop! I would lie awake, wondering at this, my first introduction to the traditions and unique Welshness of Llanelli. My mother had been born in the town, in the area known as Custom House Bank, part of Seaside.

At that time, in fact, we lived in Southend-on-Sea. I myself knew little of Llanelli. The outbreak of war however, brought the family to the town and an area I have loved ever since.

Lying on the rock, the sun hot on my bared upper body, eyes closed to the glare, I smiled as I remembered the quaint Welsh way of distinguishing peoples' names with that of their jobs.

My first errand ever was to be sent, basin in hand, to Mrs Davis "the chips" in School Road. Then followed instructions over the following months to other Morfa characters. Freddy Evans "the post", Olive "the shop", Griffiths "the milk", with his horse and cart and milk churns with long handled measures hooked over the rim.

Mrs Pike "ginger beer", Delaney "the barber", best basin crop in town; the other horse and cart man, Nicholls "the fish", with the power so they say, to heal warts by touching them with his phosphorous tainted fingers!

Garfield Ungoed, who had a parlour-shop on the corner of Olive Street and Ropewalk Road was always chewing, what, no one knew; he was never seen to

put anything into his mouth or spit anything out.

Dick "the shop", was just about opposite the corner of Ropewalk Road and New Street where my parents established a bakery during the war.

Sitting up on my rock, a bit stiff now after my long walk, I muse a little longer. It's such a nice day!

I look again towards Llanelli, and I think of the old wonderful glass covered vaulted roof of the market pavilion. They pulled it down in about 1969 I think. I'm told they were going to build another one on the same spot, give or take a foot. It'll cost quite a few million quid, so they tell me. Isn't it a funny old world?

1969 was the year Pat and I took over the Half Moon Inn in Als Square. There we made the acquaintance of men like Jack "the Hat", Bryn "Rabbits", and many others.

But it's time to leave my rock. Another day, another walk. Another day of musing. Lord knows what I'll remember next time.

PWLL IN THE PAST

By Kay Pascoe (nee Rogers)

Quite recently I had the pleasure of discussing "Pwll in the Olden Day" with my mother, Mrs Edwina Barney of Bassett Terrace, and her friend Mrs Edna Rees (nee Davies), a native of Pwll, whose sister is Mrs Avril Lodwick of Stepney Road. Mrs Rees left the village on her marriage and is now living in Aberaeron where I too live. They are not contemporaries and indeed the three of us represent different decades of growing up in Pwll from World War I to the 1950's. There was a lot of laughter, several dim memories, but enough sharp recollections to entice others perhaps to submit their childhood memories.

Early Days

Edna lived in Bassett Terrace and remembers Florrie and Jack Davies whose sweet shop was also a billiard hall. "There was little traffic" she said, "so we played on the road". Among

the games was Whip and Top and 'Ticker' (Hopscotch).



The proximity of Stradey Woods meant a large play area to explore. The journey to the brand new school meant a ramble through 'The Graig' where there was a cottage whose elderly resident gave the children tart. Edna comments that her mother was not too happy with the standard of hygiene in this home cooking!

For Edwina, the first school was next to her home – The 'Institute'. She remembers forays to the top of 'Tyle Blue' to a small shop near the church, kept by the Irons family, selling sweets: half a penny for 'cockle shells', liquorice and sherbet. Both remember playing in the shelter (just as I do) which was above where the Church Hall is now – near 'Tom y cobbllwr's' shop.

Teachers' name and idiosyncrasies were remembered: Mr Edwards, Miss McVicar, Mrs Evans (mother of Gethin Evans, Pwll Road) and Miss Griffiths. (Is this the same Miss Griffiths who taught me in the 40's?). Another childhood memory both ladies remembered was the custom of inviting them, en route from school or playing, to view the corpses of the recent dead whether they knew the deceased or not!

Adolescent Years



Edwina's secondary education took place in West End, in a building on the main road. She's not sure whether there was an entrance exam or not but remembers a fair deal of walking in all weathers. She has always spoken with a great deal of affection, of Mr Rolfe as the teacher who most encouraged her, especially her acting talents. Edna attended Stradey Central School as it was then called. "There was a bus stop outside Salem," she recalls. (Salem was Bethlehem's little vestry building, which stood where the car lot near the Chinese Takeaway is now. More on this story later!)

Teachers, Misses Mattie and May Powell lived near "The Travellers" – now 'The Sospan' – and travelled with them to ensure that the pupils boarded and alighted the buses safely and behaved themselves en route. Both agreed that Stradey Woods was no longer "a large play area to explore" but an ideal venue for courting! Some things never change!

When we touched on transport during the discussion we got on to trolleys and trams. For me in the 50's they were always 'the trolley buses' and came as far as the aforementioned shelter at Erw Fach and had overhead rails. This might be a fruitful area to explore, e.g. when did the trolleys stop? I remember talk of the very last night journey when mementoes from the bus were given to those who took the last trip. This must have been in the late 50's.

Shops

I was amazed how many shops Pwll boasted in the 20's and 30's. Here are the ones Edwina and Edna told me about:

Siop Fach: I remember this; it's now the site of a brand new house.

Siop in Thomas Terrace: once kept by 'mam a tad Betty Harries' it later became a branch of the Co-op.

Millinery Shop: This was at the bottom of Tyle Catherine, kept by two sisters who sold 'beautiful hats and Easter bonnets'.

Siop Thomas: Grocery shop kept by Mrs Thomas, mother of Naughton Thomas of Pwll Road.

Fish and Fruit: Next to 'Tom y Cobbllwr' by the shelter.

Siop Watt: Now the Pet shop. This was a general store but also a barbers and unisex hair cutter.

Manchester House: Drapers

Butcher: We all remembered 'Pricey the butcher' very well.

Billiard and Sweet Shop: Mentioned above.

Two Shops: Kept by the Evans family (one later became Mr & Mrs Edwards' grocer shop). The other, of course was the famous Chip shop where we, as young people in 50's used to congregate. Edna and Edwina recalled the spotless eating room with marble topped tables and the 'takeaway' area to which residents of the village carried their own basins, duly warmed by Christmas Evans, owner, to be filled by golden chips and quickly taken home.

These were main road shops, but there were also places off the beaten track: the previously mentioned Siop Irons by the church, 'Siop Billy Janie' top road, Stepney Road sweet shop (No 27?), a Stepney Road butter shop kept by Mrs Peregrine, and 'Peter the Papers' opposite the old Police houses next to Coleg Sir Gar.

There was nearly no need to catch a trolley bus to town in 'the old days'.

Chapels

Edna attended Bethlehem. Chapel life was so important in her youth that Salem



vestry catered for the children of Erw Fach, as Bethlehem itself was a fair walk to attend Sunday school. She remembers her teachers there: Davie Sammy Lewis, Davies the Draper, and the formidable Watt Hoskins, owner of the

aforementioned shop. Salem was also used for the weekly Babies Clinic and both Edna and Edwina remember 'the posh prams outside', 'the tea and Marie biscuits', 'a lovely nurse' and Dr Reggie. Edna's Auntie Katie sold the Cow & Gate milk.

Edwina's family were Libanus members. It was always well attended, she recalled, and full of characters: Mrs Lizzie-Jane Treharne, Mr Stan Bonnell, 'Arweinydd y Gân' and the kindly Mrs Cunningham, who in my youth at Christmas time, presented every child with a little hand made bag with coins inside.

Both chapels encouraged the young to perform, with participation in 'Ysgol Gwarter', Cwrdd y Plant, Cantata and oratorios being regular occurrences. Both mentioned the Reverend Gwyn Bowen of Bethlehem with affection, and the succession of Reverend Jones' with which Libanus was blessed: Thomas, Trevor and Elfyn being among them.

Pubs

The pubs, of course, played their part in the social life of the village but, unlike the chapels, these were 'men only' domains. They believe that all four were there in their youth and Edna recalled that Sid and Gertie who kept the 'Travellers' also sold paraffin. My husband who often went for a pint with Hugh, my stepfather, to the Travellers in the 60's recalls a group of World War I veterans who regaled other locals with their tales of 'Wipers' (Ypres in Belgium) and had special chairs, which accommodated their injuries sustained in that horrific war which they were so lucky to survive.

World War II

Both women were extremely interesting about the arrival of the evacuees. Edna says one woman arrived with her child and promptly left because she took a dislike to Pwll! Imagine! Mrs Gwen Beynon of Bassett Terrace took in a little orphan girl who stayed a long time and Edna, then a teenager, recalls going with Mrs Beynon to collect her from the school. She was the last one to be chosen.

Edwina, with a baby of her own (me), was obliged to take in evacuees herself. Two little girls from Swansea arrived to live with s and

were visited by their mothers every Sunday. My mother recalls having to give them rations of butter etc for their tea. "They were Catholics" she recalls "and walked to the services in Llanelli (or Llanelly as it was then). No Libanus or Bethlehem for them!

Both Edna and Edwina could have gone on much longer, there were so many areas left untouched. I thoroughly enjoyed listening to them and hope their memories will inspire others to add to the recollections of 'Gwyr y Bônau'.

Article submitted by Kay Pascoe (nee Rogers)

THE GOOD WIFE GUIDE

This is an actual extract from a Home Economics textbook printed in the early 1950's

Have dinner ready. Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a delicious meal ready for his return from work. This is a way of letting him know that you've been thinking about him and are concerned about his needs. Most men are hungry when they come home and the prospect of a good meal (especially his favourite dish) is part of the warm welcome needed.



Prepare yourself. Take 15 minutes to rest so you will be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up our make up, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh looking. He has just been with a lot of work weary people. Be a

little gay and a little more interesting for him. His boring day may need a lift and one of your duties is to provide it.

Clear away the clutter. Make one last trip through the main part of the house just before your husband arrives. Gather up schoolbooks, toys, papers etc. and then run a dust cloth over the tables. During the colder months of the year you should prepare and light a fire for him to unwind by. Your husband will feel he has reached a haven of rest and order and it will give you a lift too. After all, catering for his comfort will provide you with immense personal satisfaction.

Minimise all noise. At the time of his arrival eliminate all noise of the washer, dryer or vacuum. Try to encourage the children to be quiet. Be happy to see him. Greet him with a warm smile and show sincerity in your desire to please him.

Listen to him. You may have a dozen important things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first, remember his topics of conversation are more important than yours. Make the evening his.

Never complain if he arrives home late or goes out to dinner or other places of entertainment without you. Instead, try to understand his world of strain and pressure and his very real need to be at home and relax. Try to make sure your home is a place of peace, order and tranquillity where your husband can renew himself in body and spirit. Don't greet him with complaints and problems. Don't complain if he's late for dinner, or even stays out all night. Count this as minor compared to what he might have gone through that day. Make him comfortable. Have him lean back in a comfortable chair or have him lie down in the bedroom. Have a cool or warm drink ready for him. Arrange the pillow and offer to take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soothing and pleasant voice. Don't ask him questions about his actions or question his judgement or integrity. Remember, he is the master of the house and as such will always exercise this will with fairness and truthfulness.

When he has a chance to have his evening meal, clear the dishes and wash up promptly. If your husband should offer to help decline his offer as he may feel obliged to repeat this offer and after a long working day, he does not need the extra work.



Encourage your husband to pursue his hobbies and interests and be supporting without seeming to encroach. If you have little hobbies yourself try not to bore him speaking of these, as a woman's interests are often rather trivial compared to men's.

At the end of the evening tidy the home ready for the morning and again think ahead to his breakfast needs. Your husband's breakfast is vital if he is to face the outside world in a positive fashion.

Once you have both retired to the bedroom, prepare yourself for bed as promptly as possible. Whilst feminine hygiene is of the utmost importance, your tired husband does not want to queue for the bathroom as he would for a train. But remember to look your best when going to bed. Try to achieve a look, which is welcoming without being obvious. If you need to apply face cream or hair rollers wait until he is asleep as this can be shocking to a man last thing at night.

When it comes to the possibility of intimate relations with your husband, it is important to remember your marriage vows and in particular your commitment to obey him. If he feels that he needs to sleep immediately then so be it. In all things be lead by your husband's wishes; do not

pressure him in any way to stimulate intimacy. Should your husband suggest congress then accept humbly, all the while being mindful that a man's satisfaction is more important than a woman's. When he reaches his moment of fulfilment, a small moan from yourself is encouraging to him and quite sufficient to indicate any enjoyment that you may have had. Should your husband suggest any of the more unusual practices; be obedient and uncomplaining but register your reluctance by remaining silent.

It is likely that your husband will fall promptly asleep, so adjust your clothing; freshen up and apply night-time and hair care products. You may then set the alarm so that you arise shortly before him in the morning. This will enable you to have his morning cup of tea ready when he wakes.

HOTELS & PUBLIC HOUSES OF LLANELLI 1897

Als Square

The Half Moon Inn

Ann Street

Beaufort Arms, Bull Inn, Oddfellows Arms, Prince of ales



Above: Beaufort Arms

Biddulph Street

Mermaid Inn

Bridge Street

King's Head

Bryn Terrace

Bryn Terrace Hotel, Britannia Arms

Bryn Road

Lord Nelson Inn

Bwlch y Gwynt

Sea View Inn

Cambrian Street

The Cornish Arms

Church Street
Salutation Hotel, British Tar, Union Inn

Upper Church Street
Ship Inn, Three Crowns

Dafen Row
Marquis of Granby Inn

Dillwyn Street
Dillwyn Arms, Duke of Wellington

Dimpath Terrace
Dimpath Inn

Dolau Road
Sloop Aground, Smith's Arms

Embankment Road
Dock Hotel

Glanmor Road
Trevose Inn

Globe Row, Dafen
Globe Inn

Hall Street
Black Horse, Castle Inn, George & Dragon, Old Red Cow, Prince of Wales, Union Hall

King's Square
Cornish Arms, Royal Park

Maliphant Row
Globe Hotel

Marine Street
Albion Inn, Cambrian Hotel, Cardigan Arms, Friend's Inn, Glanmor Inn, Sailor's Home, Ship & Pilot Inn, Trafalgar Inn



Above: Railway Station Hotel

Market Street
Barley Mow Inn, Bird in Hand, Black Lion, Bush Inn, Dynevor Castle, Greyhound Inn, Golden Lion, Royal Exchange, Stepney Arms

Murray Street
Albion Inn, Bres Arms, Clarence Hotel, Cricketer's Arms, Malabar Hotel, Raven Inn, Queen Victoria

New Dock Street
Bird In Hand, Harbour View Hotel, Marine Hotel Neptune Inn, New Inn, Northumberland Hotel, Penrhos Inn, Rose & Crown, Steam Packet Inn, Three Mariners, Whitstable Inn,

New Street,
Biddulph Inn

Old Castle Road
Old Castle Inn

Paddock Street
Rose & Crown

Park Street
Bristol Tavern, Ivy Bush Inn, Stepney Arms Hotel, Ty Melyn Hotel

Upper Park Street
Swansea Castle

Pembrey Road
Stag's Head Inn

Prospect Place
New Market House

Railway Terrace
Welsh Star



Above: Melbourne Inn

Station Road
Apple Tree Inn, Forester's Arms, Melbourne Hotel, Oddfellows Inn, Pemberton Arms, Railway Hotel, Railway Station Hotel, Rolling Mill, Vine Inn, Waterloo Inn, Whitehall Inn

Stepney Street
North Gate Hotel, Centre Hotel, Cambrian Hotel

Swan Street
Brecon Arms

Swansea Road
Boar's Head, Lamb & Flag, Start Hotel

Thomas Street
Crown & Anchor, Drover's Arms, Farmers Arms, Hotel, Fountain Inn, Mason's Arms, Rose & Crown, Thomas Arms Hotel

Tinwork Row, Morfa
Anchor Inn

Tunnel Road
Vale of Neath

Union Square
Bisley Arms

Victoria Road
Greenfield Inn, Hope & Anchor, Union Inn

Water Street
Angel Inn, Square & Compass, Stevenson's Bottling Stores, Swan & Theatre Vaults, White Hart Hotel

West End
Princess Head, West End Inn

Wind Street
Saddler's Arms

(Note: To save you counting them there are 120 – ED)

MESSAGE FOR THE OVER 30's

If you are under 30, you may not wish to read this BUT ... for the rest of us it would appear that we are *awesome!*

People over 30 should be dead and here's why –

According to today's regulators and bureaucrats, those of us who were kids in the 40's, 50's, 60's or even maybe the early 70's probably shouldn't have survived.

Our cots were covered with bright coloured lead-based paint. We had no childproof tops on medicine bottles, door or cabinets. And when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets! (Not to mention the risk we took hitchhiking).

As children, we would ride in cars with no seatbelts or air bags. Riding in the back of a truck or on the trailer of a tractor on a warm day was always a special treat. We drank water from the garden hose or the tap and not from a bottle.

Horrors!

We ate cakes, bread and butter with dripping on and drank lemonade and pop with sugar in it, but we were never overweight because we were always outside playing.



We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle, and no one actually died from this. We would spend hours building our carts out of old prams and then rode them down the hill, only to find out we had forgotten the brake. After running into the bushes a few times we learned to solve the problem.

We would leave home in the morning and play outside all day, as long as we were back when the street lights came on. No one was able to reach us all day.

No mobile phones! Unthinkable!!

We did not have Playstations, Nintyedo 64, X-Boxes. No video games at all. No 99 channels on TV, VHS, VCR's, DVD's, surround sound, personal mobile phones, personal computers, or Internet chat rooms.

We had friends! We went outside and found them. We played rounders and sometimes the ball would really hurt. We fell out of trees, got cut and broke bones and teeth, and there was no litigation from these accidents. They were just accidents. No one was to blame but us.

Remember accidents?

We had fights and we punched each other and got black and blue and learned to get over it.

We made up games with sticks and tennis balls and ate worms – and although we were told it would happen, we were not put out, and the worms didn't live inside us forever.

We rode bikes or walked to a friend's home and knocked on the door, or rang a bell, or just walked in and talked to them. Some school children weren't as smart as others. So they failed a grade and were held back to repeat the same grade. Some were relegated.

Horrors!

Tests were not adjusted for any reason. Our Actions were our own. Consequences were expected. The idea of our parents bailing us out if we broke a law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law. Imagine that!

This generation has produced some of the best risk takers, problem solvers and inventors ever. The last 50 years has been an explosion of innovation and new ideas.

We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all. Any you're one of them. Congratulations!

Please show this article to others who have had the luck to grow up as kids before lawyers, governments and 'do gooders' regulated our lives for our own good.