

# The New Times

August 2019

The Parish Magazine of Llantilio Crossenny,  
Llanvetherine, Llanvapley and Penrhos



**Find out who made the cake**



**and find out who was playing the ukulele!**

## From the Vicarage

We are now well into one of those endless summer holidays, like the ones of course we remember from childhood. In Welsh tradition one of the events which marks the start of the holidays is the Royal Welsh Show, this year marking its centenary. At a time when it can be easy to focus on the negative, divisive, events happening around us, what a magnificently positive contribution to our lives the Royal Welsh is, as indeed are all our local shows. They are a monument to human endeavour in the best possible way. Isn't it great to see people of all ages, families, bringing their stock, their rare breeds, the best of working breeds, and even pets to shows? The conscientious painstaking time and care that goes into preparing animals for entry, not to forget beautifully made craftwork and artistry, is a fine example to everyone, as is the modest pleasure of a win – and philosophical attitudes to not winning. Triumphalism seems rare, if it happens at all, and grudging, sulky attitudes to losing equally so. This is what genuine pride in achievement and dignified acceptance of loss is about.

In Ecclesiastes 3: 12-14 (GNB) we read: 'So I realized that all we can do is be happy and do the best we can while we are still alive. All of us should eat and drink and enjoy what we have worked for. It is God's gift. I know that everything God does will last forever. You can't add anything to it or take anything away from it. And one thing God does is to make us stand in awe of him.'

Have a great summer and enjoy the fruits of your work.

With all Blessings,  
*Andrew*

### **Dr Anthony (Tony) Griffiths**

People from our four parishes, from Abergavenny, and much wider afield, joined together on 23<sup>rd</sup> June at St Teilo's to celebrate the life of Dr Tony Griffiths, Heidi's father.

Tony was born in Merthyr and brought up in Cefn Coed y Cwmmmer, between the Tâf Fechan and Tâf Fawr, leading Tony to observe that he was 'raised in the arms of the Tâf, and you can't get more Welsh than that!'. He had wide interests and was well known in bell-ringing circles and indeed had been the Captain of the Tower at St Mary's Priory Church. He was a keen mountain walker both in the Brecon Beacons and abroad, including the Tour du Mont Blanc walk. On a gentler note, he enjoyed fly-fishing and he loved showing visitors round his beautifully tended garden. Tony also had an interest in the Arts, writing poetry, and painting, and he was very knowledgeable about Welsh place names.



While readers will know that Tony was a highly respected Consultant in Paediatrics at Nevill Hall Hospital, what might be less well known is that in 1969 he turned down a prestigious post at Great Ormond Street and instead accepted the appointment in the new hospital in Abergavenny, when he was asked to set up the children's department and the Special Care Baby Unit. He had entered Medicine on prestigious scholarships in 1960, and his modesty hid a particularly distinguished time as a student, attracting rarely awarded honours, and a senior career with important influences well beyond Nevill Hall. He spent the first 17 years working single handedly – in effect available 24/7 for nearly all of that time.

In one of his last conversations, he expressed how lucky he had been to have the Beacons to walk in, and the Usk to fish. And he spoke also of his deep, quiet Christian faith which had sustained him through his life.

Tony was buried at St Teilo's Church on 23<sup>rd</sup> June in sight of the Brecon Beacons and to the sound of half-muffled bells which he had himself rung so often. Tony leaves his wife Anne, and his children, Rachel, Heidi and William.

*Andrew Dawson*

## Llantilio Crossenny News

**Are you a farmer, small holder or land manager in the Trothy catchment area?** Jenny Knight from Birmingham

University is at the moment doing a special study of this area and would like to make contact in order to find out your views on how tree planting may enhance the landscape, in order to assess the impact of this on flooding in the Trothy valley. Flood management is one of a series of actions which are discussed in the latest Welsh Government consultation document entitled 'Sustainable Farming and Our Land'. If you would like the opportunity to discuss tree planting and flood management then please contact Jenny. Her email is [JXK850@bham.ac.uk](mailto:JXK850@bham.ac.uk)



**Jessie Tebutt** from Llantilio has recently been enjoying a very exciting expedition in Kenya. During July, Jessie has been working with Welsh Africamp doing charitable works at a school in the Rift Valley. So far they have painted the classrooms, supplied a stash of school supplies and played a lot of football. Jessie has also been teaching the kids to play the ukulele and as you can see from the picture on the front page of TNT the children from the school found this rather interesting! Well done Jessie!



Many thanks to the **Monmouth Male Voice Choir** and the two amazing young soloists (Lucy Merrett and Elinor North) for a wonderful evening's entertainment on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> June at Llantilio Crossenny Church. During the interval, wine and nibbles were served whilst socializing with friends and neighbours. Thank you to everyone who helped to make it a most enjoyable evening and to all who came and helped to raise some much needed funds for Llanvetherine and Llantilio Churches. A special thank you to Dale Jones at the Hogs Head for his generous hospitality and warm welcome after the concert where the choir continued to entertain the large crowd that followed them there. Llanvetherine and Llantilio Churches are delighted to announce that they made a profit of £1,164 on the evening which was amazing! Thanks to everyone who supported the raffle which was held on the evening, especially Jane who was selling the tickets. The raffle made £264 and there were also donations which totalled £18. *Elsie Latham*



**Monmouth Show** was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> July, the second year it has been held on a Saturday. It was lovely weather for a day out, but the numbers did seem to be lower than previous shows. There were certainly fewer entries in the Homecraft section, and I would encourage more people to enter – you don't have to be a world expert, and there is always the chance of coming home with bragging rights, as well as a certificate. Alex won a prize with his decorated cupcakes in the children's section, and I got first for the traybake with apple crumble cake. If you haven't yet entered any competitions in shows, then do have a go: there are lots of shows coming up and it really supports the wonderful volunteers who spend hours planning and organising the events. And even if you don't win a prize, you'll have had a great day out and there is always next year. *Gillian Anthony*



**Llantilio Bell Ringers** meet in Llantilio on the second and third Tuesday of the month. The church bells are rung for services and for weddings and at other times as appropriate. Bell ringing is great fun and good exercise. Llantilio ringers are always looking for new members so please contact TNT if you would like to know more. As you can see from the information below, the group will be on tour in August visiting churches in Herefordshire. Pictured below are some of the bell ringers before they rang the bells for the wedding of Robert Jones & Natalie Donovan in Llantilio on June 15<sup>th</sup>. Also pictured are the Bridges Strings who provided the other musical accompaniment to the ceremony.



### **Llantilio Crossenny Bell Ringing Tour - Saturday 10th August 2019**

- St. David Church, Much Dewchurch at 10.30 am ring until 11.15
- St Andrews Church, Allensmore ring from 11.30 until 12.15
- Kilpeck Inn for lunch from 12.30 until 2.30
- St Micheal and All Angels Church Kingstone ring from 3.00 until 3.45
- The Parish Church, Madley ring from 4.00 until 4.45
- Walk 2 minutes to the Red Lion pub for a well deserved drink

TNT has recently been contacted by **Tricia Wilding** a former Llantilio resident. *If you watched BBC's Countryfile programme on 28<sup>th</sup> July you will have noticed it featured the 50th Anniversary of **Riding for the Disabled** (RDA). RDA are very active in Monmouthshire and hold sessions in Usk, Clytha and Abergavenny. If you are interested in the work of RDA you might like to volunteer to help. Helpers and horses and ponies are always needed. The experience can be very rewarding. The results are remarkable. To hear a previously mute child speak for the first time or guide a pony round an obstacle course unaided can be miraculous. It must be rewarding as I have been helping and coaching since I was in my teens. I recently received the President's Award from HRH the Princess Royal. So you never know who you might meet when you become a volunteer!*



Email [clytha@rdasouthwales.org.uk](mailto:clytha@rdasouthwales.org.uk) for more information or [www.rda.org.uk](http://www.rda.org.uk)

## Llantilio Crossenny Community Church Walk – 28th July 2019

Wow, this was a really lovely walk. Meeting up in front of the church on this beautiful afternoon were a whole crowd of people from the various areas, Llanvapley, Tal Y Coed, Maypole, Llantilio Crossenny and Wernrheolydd. We were also joined by some very friendly dogs.



Elsie gave us the outline of the walk, going along Offa's Dyke to Whitecastle and back via the 'pods' and lower

Whitecastle. Intrigue - what were the 'pods' and where! The first part of the walk was an agricultural lesson: walking through nearly fully ripened wheat fields with the tips just beginning to bend in readiness for harvesting. Next the full flowering potato crop and then the fodder field full of fodder beet and the plant 'fat hen'. Fodder beet is similar to sugar beet but not so sweet, more fibre, and usually fed to cattle all year round. We then walked along some lanes, shady, with welcoming cool corners to rest, allowing us to gather up together before the next turn. The views were stunning and that meant we had to stop to really admire them or to take photographs or to rest.

Chatting with different people was wonderful: some about where they lived, the farming locally, houses being renovated, how fit we were or not (!), how lucky we were to live in such a wonderful area, bats, environmental surveys, the tea we were looking forward to and all the dogs with us enjoying it too. Lots of relaxed and friendly talk.



Ok, now from Lower Whitecastle a turn left, across the field to the 'Pods'. What a revelation to find pods, a loo and bathroom in shady woods! Hearing about the forest school being held in this beautiful woodland was such a joy and walking on a bit further to discover the bigger spaces for play and activities. All this, so imaginatively built and with so much empathy with the surrounding trees and done with a love and understanding of using wood. Needless to say many of us would have liked to have taken a pod home! Gently meandering along the lane back to Llantilio we came across a young family of swans carefully being guarded by Hedwig's cousin and some gorgeously scented roses.

So another community walk came to end with a grand finale of tea and a cool down in the church. The wonderful ladies were ready and waiting for us with an array of tea, sandwiches, cakes and strawberries: a tea that would be very hard to beat! Still chatting away it was a restful place to end the afternoon.

Elsie thanked the tea ladies and we all thanked Elsie and Des for leading the walk and then we were thanked for joining in! *Zara Elrington*

## Llanvapley News

Llanvapley Church held its annual **Strawberry Tea** on Sunday July 7<sup>th</sup>. By this time the dreadful rain of June had been forgotten and visitors were treated to a lovely afternoon tea, warm weather and music from a visiting band of folk musicians known as Derwen. Thanks to everyone who came along to support the event and everyone who worked so hard to make the event a success. The event raised £160 for church funds.



Llanvapley Sports and Social Association

# Summer Barbecue

Llanvapley Sports Pavillion

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August 7pm

£8

Under 10's £4



Apart from burgers and salads there will also be a range of delicious sweets to finish off the meal.

Vegetarian options available.

Please bring your own drinks as we do not have a license to sell alcohol. Everyone welcome.

Tickets can be bought on the night. Please contact Elaine Leader if you prefer to purchase your tickets before the evening.

[elainejleader@gmail.com](mailto:elainejleader@gmail.com)

**Alicia Lowes**, whose parents live in Llanvapley, has had a busy and exciting time in July. Apart from releasing a single and music video, she was invited to sing the national anthem at the British Grand Prix at Silverstone on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>. Alicia received much acclaim for her performance including "Alicia you sang that amazingly and you gave me goosebumps" and "Now that's the way to do an Anthem!" Well done Alicia! Her new single is called 'Ordinary World' and is a cover of a song from the 80s by Duran Duran and you can check it out on Youtube. The music video was filmed around Loch Lomond in Scotland and is well worth watching.

The **LSSA Coffee Morning** was held on 12<sup>th</sup> June. The draw for the 100 Club was held and the winner of the £50 first prize was Sue Hinds. Sue was asked what she intended to do with her new found wealth. *'Well, my rather large ficus needed re-potting so I invested in a very smart new pot (pictured). I wrestled with the tree yesterday and finally got it out of the old pot and into the new one where I hope it will be happy for a few more years. With thanks to the 100 club!'* The next 100 club draw will be at the coffee morning on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August when there will be two draws as there was no draw in July.



**Congratulations** to Max Leader (grandson of Elaine Leader of Llanvapley) who has graduated as a Bachelor of Arts in History from Birmingham University and also Emily Taylor of Llanvapley who graduated with a Post Graduate Certificate in Education from Trinity St David's University, Swansea. Emily will be starting her first teaching post in September in Gran Canaria! Congratulations also to Alice Dawson from Llanvetherine who has completed her Masters Degree in Palliative Care at Cardiff School of Medicine. Well done to them all!



In July, **Llanvapley Walking Group** took a hike to Llanddewi Rhydderch from Llanvapley and enjoyed spectacular scenery, a wonderful church and lots of interesting conversations as always. Many of the group like to bring along a drink and something to eat while out on a walk.



This time we accepted a kind invitation to stop for tea at a walking group member's house in Llanddewi. This was a very pleasant surprise! The brambles and bracken are in full flow right now so secateurs are useful additions to ensure you can follow the paths. The next walk will take place on Saturday 17th August starting at 10.30 from Llanvapley Pavilion (parking available). Hope to see you there! Please email the address below if you want more information. [llanvapleywalkinggroup@gmail.com](mailto:llanvapleywalkinggroup@gmail.com)

## Llanvetherine News

**Whitehouse Farm** in Llanvetherine has quite a history. The present owners were recently contacted by Mrs Mary Stebbings who told them that her great grandmother had lived in Whitehouse Farm in the 1860's. The following details have now been put together which traces the family tree of Mrs Stebbings and her links with Whitehouse Farm.

A few days ago we received a telephone call from a lady who told us that her ancestors had lived in our house, Whitehouse Farm in the 1860's and asked if she could call in with her family when she came to the area the following week. It was agreed that they would come to visit on Monday 15th July when Mrs Mary Stebbings, nee Morgan, her partner Terry, her daughter Helen Rees and Helen's husband Bob came to look around the house and grounds and have tea with us. (pictured on the right)



It transpires that William Morgan who was Mary's Great Grandfather had lived at Whitehouse in the early/middle 1800's, the house passed to his son, Edward William Morgan who married, Mary, the daughter of Benjamin Watkins of Green Court Farm, Kingstone, near Madely in Herefordshire.

They had a daughter, Polly Annie Elizabeth known as Lisette born in 1865 who was Mary Stebbings Grandmother and Helen's Great Grandmother. Polly resided at Whitehouse during her early childhood but went to live with her Grandfather, Benjamin Watkins in Madely when her mother, Mary, died at the age of 32 in 1873. Her father continued to live at Whitehouse for a few more years, marrying a Miss Chambers who was from Huntingdon, St Ives in Cambridgeshire in 1880 and then appears to have fallen on hard times, moving to Cardiff as a labourer and eventually to London. Whitehouse Farm was then acquired by the Crawshay Bailey Estate who eventually leased it to a Mr Lane. In the meantime Polly had a son who was the father of Mary Stebbings. Mary is now residing in Northhamptonshire.

If you have visited **Llanvetherine Church** you may have noticed that on the far side of the graveyard there is a meadow. A public footpath runs through the churchyard and crosses the meadow on the way up the hill towards Llantilio. The upkeep of the churchyard is the responsibility of the church. Thank you to Janet



Phelps who sent in this picture which shows her husband, David, doing the easy work on the tractor while she was grafting with the pitchfork. Thank you to David and Janet for their help in keeping Llanvetherine Church so tidy.

## Penrhos News

On Saturday 29th June the funeral of **Florence (Flo) Wilson** took place at St. Cadoc's Church Penrhos, when the Church was packed with family and friends. Flo has lived and worked in Penrhos all her married life, and will be greatly missed by Mike, Sue, Jenny and family.

Last month we had our annual **Hog Roast** hosted by Ruth & George Phillips at Dairy Farm. Colin and Yvonne had done a brilliant job cleaning out the barn and decorating it so well. The hog roast was delicious and accompanied by some wonderful salads. The choice of puddings was out of this world but I think I still have a few stuck on my hips!! Thank you to everyone who helped to make the lunch so successful. The Phillips family also hosted a BBQ and Auction for the Welsh Ploughing Association. Monmouthshire are hosting next year so fund raising is essential. There was a great turnout and some fantastic lots in the auction including a very pink wheelbarrow which John Biggs very kindly bought for Ann as he had run over hers!!! *Pip Rumsey*

**The Penrhos village website** has recently been updated to include lots of information about the history of the church including some old photos and the recent restoration work, including a link to an interactive 3D laser scan. It is well worth a look [www.penrhosvillage.co.uk](http://www.penrhosvillage.co.uk)



## Looking for an idea for a good day out?

Here is a suggestion from a couple of TNT readers.

**Where?** A day trip to Salisbury (visit <https://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/>)

**Why?** To see as many British cathedrals as possible. Element of 'solidarity' with the people of Salisbury following recent tragic events.

**How?** Senior Railcards return from Newport, no changes, £22 each, about 1¾ hours – pleasant ride with nice views.

We followed our noses (and the spire!) from the station – less than ten minutes' walk, passing through the well-kept Queen Elizabeth Gardens (the recent rather sinister echoes of this route only occurred to us later). Entrance to the cathedral grounds is through beautiful medieval buildings and gateway. First glimpse of the cathedral is a true spectacle. The



RSPB had telescopes to look at the fledgling peregrine falcons wheeling around the highest points of the cathedral. The spire is an amazing testimony to the medieval masons. The West Front is fascinating (detailed description in the cathedral guide). Entering the cathedral through the cloisters there is a modern large restaurant with a good selection and well-stocked gift shop. Entrance to the cathedral is from the cloisters. A modest voluntary entrance donation is requested of £7.50 (senior concession £6.50). Photography is allowed without a permit. The volunteers are friendly and full of knowledge. The nave, crossing and chancel are as impressive as you would expect, and one more recent feature is the cruciate Living Water font about halfway down the nave, consecrated by Archbishop Rowan Williams in 2008. Notable also is the medieval clock in the north aisle, built when clocks didn't have faces but chimed hourly. There is a wealth of other fascinating features not listed here and there are tours of the Tower at extra cost.



In the cloisters near the chapter house is a 1215 version of the Magna Carta (entrance fee extra). In the nearby close is the Mompesson House (National Trust) well worth a visit.

**Overall impression** A really interesting day out. Check to see what's on before you go in case access to any sights is restricted.

*Sally and Andrew Dawson*

## WI News

The Garden Party held in June for the WI centenary was a great success. After a week of constant rain the sun came out in the middle of the day, just in time for the afternoon opening. The soggy ground did not deter the party!

The Mayor of Abergavenny, Jiill Rundle, the chair of Gwent Federation of WIs, Lynne Stubbings the National Chair of WI and Rev. Andrew Dawson, enjoyed the party along with members and local supporters. The guests gave speeches of congratulations and outstanding food was provided by the members. An amazing centenary cake was made by Marion Ashton. Thanks are due for the cake, food and all the hard work of members. The marquee housed a display of wonderful craft provided by Sally Dawson, Margaret Parry, Jane Barnard and Julia Menzies.



A truly talented bunch! There was music and dancing too! The WI choir sang some songs, circle dancers encouraged all to join in and our wonderful local folk musicians provided the music for them and the ceilidh which followed. The whole event provided enjoyment for the whole local community and added to the year of celebrations of the centenary.



The next treat was a super trip to Tyntesfield National Trust House and Gardens in July. The weather was sunny, which enabled everyone to enjoy the grounds and gardens. The house was full of an eclectic collection and the attached chapel was interesting too. It was a relaxing and fun day. August will provide more fun. Another outing on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> will take members to the Gliffaes Hotel for coffee and then on to Brecon for a canal trip with lunch. This will be followed on the 14<sup>th</sup> August by a picnic at White Castle (weather permitting). The September meeting has a change of speaker. A representative of the NHS will come to explain how the new hospital at Llanfrechfa will operate. *Lin Morris*

## The Garden in August

This month we have a cautionary tale in our regular gardening section. You have been warned!

Whilst cutting back euphorbia myrsinites not long ago, some of the milky fluid splashed upwards into my face. Now I know about this plant. Euphorbias or spurges to give them their common name all have a milky latex fluid to prevent them being eaten by herbivores. I always wear gloves when dealing with them, but did not expect this one to squirt me, so I dashed inside and washed my face. Unfortunately some must have got into one of my eyes and very quickly afterwards it began to sting with a

vengeance. My husband took me to a chemist who promptly sent me to an optician who poured masses of saline liquid into my eye and then checked everything before letting me go home – feeling much more comfortable. If I had left it I could have lost the sight of my eye as the milky liquid is highly toxic. Next time I shall wear goggles.

This incident made me think of other plants in the garden. I remember once pruning rue - *ruta graveolens* wearing a pair of shorts and later found lots of blisters on my legs. I am surprised to read that in some books they suggest you cook with it. It has a rather unpleasant smell but has beautiful blue grey rounded leaves and in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Ophelia calls it the 'Herb-grace o' Sundays'. Gerard mentions that *Ruta sylvestris* or wild rue is 'more pernicious and causes blisters, but I would be wary of both.

Another 'dangerous' plant is the giant hogweed – *Herculeum mantegazzianum*. Rising to about six feet when in flower, this is a spectacular plant. There is a large clump of it at Usk Castle and also along the banks of the river Usk. However it can cause blisters and in some cases *Phytophotodermatitis* or Lime disease a serious condition so you have been warned! I think a far better and nicer substitute would be *Angelica*. It is graceful and also tall and generally much more pleasant to have in your garden.

## Services in August

### **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August** *Trinity 7*

Llanvetherine 9.30am

Llantilio 11.00am

### **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August** *Trinity 8*

Penrhos 9.30am

Llanvapley 11.00am

### **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August** *Trinity 9*

Llanvetherine 9.30am

Llantilio 11.00am

### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August** *Trinity 10*

Penrhos 9.30am

Llanvapley 11.00am

### **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September** *Trinity 11*

Llanvetherine 9.30am

Llantilio 11.00am

## Dates for your Diary

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August** Llangattock Lingoed Village Fun Day 1.00pm onwards

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August** Llanddewi Rhydderch Coffee Morning 10.30am

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August** Llanvapley Coffee Morning 10.30am

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August** Llanvapley Walking Group 10.30am

**Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August** LSSA End of Summer BBQ 7.00pm

*Contributions for the September issue of TNT by 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019*

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**Don't forget our website [llantiliogroup.info](http://llantiliogroup.info) for the latest information**  
*as well as information about all our churches. We are also on Twitter @LlantilioG*