

THE NEW TIMES

DECEMBER 2007

LLANVETHERINE
LLANVAPLEY



From the Vicarage

The sun is shining brightly as I write this in mid-November but Christmas is around the corner. I still look forward to every Christmas simply because of the depth of meaning that is in this magical festival.

Not only is it a time for families and children but the sheer joy of the fact that God has come into our world to give us a model of light and love. The angels sang, 'Glory to God in the highest' and that is because we have been given hope beyond our darkness and despair, a little baby who represents peace and love.

I hope that you will choose one of the services to come to this Christmas and bring the family. Most of the services are children-friendly! This year, our midnight service is at Llanvetherine and that service remains for me one of the highlights of Christmas.

The giving of presents at Christmas time becomes evermore problematical. Most of us don't need anything as such so presents are real tokens of love requiring imagination and thought.

I am one of those who can leave present buying until very late but we are challenged to find presents that have meaning. This is what God did for us in Jesus Christ: the most meaningful present he could give us was peace and hope, not just for now, but for eternity.



Sometimes you see in car windows the sign that a dog is for life not just for Christmas. God goes one step further than that and say that his love is for eternity not just for Christmas.

I look forward to seeing at our Christmas services and I wish you and all your loved ones a very Happy Christmas

Yours in Christ

David

News from the Parishes

There will be ONE midnight service in the group this year and it will be at Llanvetherine beginning at 11.30pm. The tradition is that the service rotates on a four-year cycle so the 2008 service will be at Llanvapley!

Congratulations to Luke and Laura Rutter on the birth of their daughter: all appear to be doing well and Father says she is the most beautiful baby ever! Further to David's entry, proud Grandparents inform *TNT* that Luke and Laura have now named their baby; she is Poppy Grace and weighed in at a very healthy 9lbs. 11ozs.

Thank you to Dale and company at the Hog's Head for allowing the Llantilio Crossenny Social Club's Quiz Night to



use the function room. A good time was had by all and lots of people knew the answers to some difficult questions. £80 was raised in the raffle and David and Helen Osborn took this off to The Gambia in West Africa where it will pay for a year's education for two primary school children.

Clarinda Collin was received into the Church in Wales at Penrhos on November 11.

At Llanvapley we said farewell to Barbara and Roger Spells and we wish them well in their new future. They would have pleased with the full church on Remembrance Sunday.

At Llanvetherine on Sunday 2 December the service will be at 2.30pm and **NOT** 9.30am. At the afternoon service we shall be baptising Megan Yeomans the daughter of Tim and Jessica Yeomans.

Then at Penrhos we have another baptism on Sunday December 9 at 9.30am when we shall baptise James Probert the son of Graham and Sarah Probert.

There will be a Memorial Service for Olive James on Saturday 1 December at 3.00pm in Llantilio Crossenny Church

On December 8 Alexander Cooper and Caroline Bailey will be getting married in Llantilio Crossenny Church at 4.00pm

Don't forget to put in your diaries Saturday March 1 St David's Day. On that evening the Cowbridge Male Voice Choir will be giving a St David's Day Concert in Llantilio Crossenny Church in aid of the Building Fund. Tickets will be on sale in the New Year at £8 each.

Festival of Winter Walks 26 December 2007 - 2 January



The Festival of Winter Walks is the Ramblers' Association's annual festival of walks open to everyone, with many hundreds of walks happening across England, Scotland and Wales.

While promising a healthy alternative to yet another mince pie over the festive period, the **family** and **health** walks also offer an opportunity to kick-start a programme of exercise to restore health and vitality in the New Year.

With routes ranging from three to ten miles, all with experienced walk leaders, it is easy to make regular walking a New Year resolution.

Everyone is welcome and you do not have to be a member of the Ramblers to take part. And if you decide to join after the festival walk, you can take advantage of a 20% discount so don't forget to ask a walk leader for a joining form.



Good Friday Walk

Early notice to advise everyone we shall be once again walking up the Skirrid on Good Friday 2008. Plans are to fashion a cross from the Llantilio Crossenny Christmas tree as we have done in the past.



What does Santa call reindeer that don't work?



Dinner.





WEATHER WATCH

Advertiser

links

WEATHER WATCH

October Weather Statistics (Wales)

It was a very quiet October with high pressure over or near to Wales for much of the month. October was one of the driest Octobers since the 1970s.

October passed with no significant cold spell. Indeed, temperatures were above average in many areas for a good part of the month. November started in a similar vein and records were set at the beginning of the month across eastern Scotland, both by day and night.

Although some areas saw above-average figures of around 18C, it falls short of the all time record, which was set at Prestatyn, Flintshire on 4th November 1946. The figure on that day was 21.7C.

Advent



Advent is the season four weeks before Christmas in which we prepare for the coming of Christ. It begins on the Sunday nearest to 30th November. Advent is the period of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus and its name comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming".

The season of Advent came into being toward the middle of



the sixth century. At first, the Advent Season was determined as the six Sundays leading up to Christmas. This was then reduced to four Sundays by Pope St. Gregory the Great (591-604).

St Stephen and Boxing Day

All we know of St Stephen is found in the Acts of the Apostles. He was one of the first of the seven deacons to be chosen by the apostles to spread the word of Jesus. While preaching in the streets, angry Jews who believed him to be speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God, dragged him outside the city and stoned him to death. With the formal establishment of the Church, Stephen became the first Christian Martyr, and his feast day became established as 26th December. In time he became the patron saint of casket makers, coffin makers, deacons, headaches, masons, stone masons and horses!

In Medieval times the farmers in a number of European countries would also decorate their horses on Stephen's Day, and then bring them to the Church to be blessed by the priest.

In south and eastern Ireland, the Isle of Man and West Wales, Saint Stephen's Day was the occasion for boys (the Wren Boys) to go from house to house, one of them carrying a dead wren on a branch decorated with all kinds of gay, streaming ribbons. Stopping in front of each door they sing a song.

St Stephen's Day was also the day when the alms boxes from the monasteries and churches were opened and the money given to the priest or used to help the poor and needy. The carol, Good King Wenceslas, is set on St Stephen's Day and outlines how the Catholic king of Bohemia in the 10th century made charitable attempts to give food to the poor.

The first recorded use of the term Boxing Day for the 26th December was in 1833.

Welsh Grand National 27th December

The jewel in the crown of the jump season at Chepstow is the Welsh National, which is held a few days after Christmas. The Welsh National has attracted good horses in the past because it is the season's first good test of stamina for long distance chasers.

The race is a handicap chase of three miles and about five and a half furlongs. Because of the time of year that it is held, the ground can be very testing and horses, which win this contest in testing ground, will usually go on to win races at the longer distances.

Past winners of the race have gone on to win big races such as Rag Trade who won the race in 1976 and then went on to win the Aintree Grand National, a feat which was repeated by the Jenny Pitman trained Corbiere six years later in 1982.

Other past winners have had glory in the Cheltenham Gold Cup; Burrough Hill Lad won this race in 1983 and then went on to lift the Gold Cup. Cool Ground in 1990 and Master Oats who won in The Welsh National in 1994.



One Christmas, Joe and Peter built a skating rink in the middle of a field. A shepherd leading his flock decided to take a shortcut across the rink. The sheep, however, were afraid of the ice and wouldn't cross it. Desperate, the shepherd began tugging them to the other side.

'Look at that, 'remarked Peter to Joe, 'That guy is trying to pull the wool over our ice!'



Looking Back December 2006

David and Helen Osborn plan to move into the Rectory in Llantilio Crossenny during November. On Saturday 2nd of December there will be a licensing service at St Teilo's church, Llantilio Crossenny at 2.30 pm.

The service is being organised by Canon Jeremy Winston and everyone is welcome to attend. The service will be non Eucharistic and should be accessible to many people.

The service will be attended by the Archdeacon of Monmouth, the Dean of St Woolos, Newport and clergy from the Abergavenny deanery.



What did the reindeer say before launching into his comedy routine?

This will sleigh you.

When is a boat like a pile of snow?

When it's adrift.

How do snowmen get around?

On their icicles.



Tree Dressing Day

Saturday 1 December 2007 - Usk Rural Life Museum.

Tree Dressing as part of Usk Town's Victorian Day. In the lead up to the day local school children will make decorations from local sustainably produced wood and other natural materials.

On Saturday 1st there will be a Tree Dressing workshop at the Museum, open to everyone. There will be wooden circles to decorate with natural materials, paper, ribbons and fabric to be hung on the Museum's tree. Plus the chance to buy wooden puzzles, toys and games made from local sustainable hardwoods.

The event will also be promoting the nearby sustainable timber yard at the Wentwood Timber Centre. Open to all 11am-3pm, free entry.

Poinsettia Day

Did you know that the poinsettia has a special day all its own? By an Act of Congress, December 12 was set aside as National Poinsettia Day. The date marks the death of Joel Roberts Poinsett, who is credited with introducing the native Mexican plant to the United States. The purpose of the day is to enjoy the beauty of this popular holiday plant.



What is the purpose of reindeer?

It makes the grass grow, sweetie.



World AIDS Day

Started on 1st December 1988, World AIDS Day is not just about raising money, but also about increasing awareness, fighting prejudice and improving education. World AIDS Day is important in reminding people that HIV has not gone away, and that there are many things still to be done.

Lacrosse

Well it seems a long time ago since the cricket season, so all attention is now focussed on Lacrosse at the moment.

You may recognise a familiar face on the front row captaining the HMSG 2nd winning team at the South Wales Lacrosse Rally.



Schlumbergera (Christmas Cactus)

Name

The genus Schlumbergera, pronounced SHLOOM-berg-er-a, is named after Frederick Schlumbergera, a Belgian horticulturist in around 1900. Also sometimes called claw cactus. Related to and similar in habit to Easter cactus, Rhipsalidopsis.

Description

Spineless cactus formed of flattened fleshy segments in arching stems. Flowers appear in winter from the ends of a segment. In the wild, many are epiphytic (perching on trees but not taking sustenance from their host).

Origin

Brazilian rainforests

Family

Cactaceae

Colours

Bright pink, red, orange or white.



Care Tips

One of the jungle or rainforest cacti, which, unlike desert cacti, like to be sprayed occasionally, preferably with soft water, or it, will mark the leaves. Thrives in indirect light but flowering may be inhibited if light levels are too high. Give a cool, fairly dry rest period after flowering. After that, feed with half strength liquid feed from spring to late summer. Do not move plant once buds have formed or these may fall off.

Trivia

In the wild Schlumbergera are pollinated by hummingbirds.



Saint Nicholas Day – December 6th



Saint Nicholas, was a Lycian saint and Bishop of Myra (in modern-day Antalya province, Turkey). He was born during the third century in the village of Patara. At the time the area was Greek. He had a reputation for secret gift-giving, but is now commonly identified with Santa Claus.

Nicholas was never officially canonised; his legend simply evolved among the faithful. In 1087 his remains were abducted and removed to Bari in southern Italy, so that he is also Saint Nicholas of Bari. Among Orthodox Christians, the historical Saint Nicholas is remembered and revered.

Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of sailors, merchants, archers, children, and students in Greece, Belgium, Bulgaria, Georgia, Russia, the Republic of Macedonia, Slovakia, Serbia and Montenegro. He is also the patron saint of Barranquilla (Colombia), Bari (Italy), Amsterdam (Netherlands), Beit Jala in the West Bank of Palestine and Russia.

In 1809, the New York Historical Society convened and named Sancte Claus the patron saint of Nieuw Amsterdam, the Dutch name for New York. Thus, Saint Nicholas could also be considered as the patron saint of New York.

The other day I sent my girlfriend a huge pile of snow. I rang her up and asked, 'Did you get my drift?'



What is a Webmaster's favourite hymn?

Oh, .com all ye faithful!



'TNT on Tour'

WHO'S WHO?

The Vicar: Rev. David Odham 01600 780240
07803 615464

The Churchwardens: Richard Price 01600 780248

Penrhos: Jean Pryn 01600 780405

Llanvetherine: David Hughes Jones 01873 821497

Llanvapley: Andrew Dawson 01600 780376

Llantilio Crossenny: Les Taylor 01873 811236
Barbara Spall 01600 780365

Instead of TNT will be: Alison
Or alternatively email directly by July 20th to
llan_news@yahoo.co.uk

THE NEW TIMES
JULY 2007
PENRHOS
LANTILIO CROSSENNY
LLANVETHERINE
LLANVAPLEY
SERVICES IN JULY

Sunday 1st July 08:30am Llanvetherine
11:00am Llantilio Crossenny

Sunday 8th July 08:30am Penrhos
11:00am Llanvapley
08:30am Llanvetherine

Sunday 15th July 08:30am Llanvetherine
11:00am Llantilio Crossenny

Sunday 22nd July 08:30am Penrhos

Sunday 29th July 11:00am Llantilio Crossenny

WENLEYS
HY 96
LUXURY
Five years of Sporting Goods

MILLENNIUM STADIUM
CARDIFF ARMS PARK
STADIUM Y MILENIWM
PARC YR ARFAN CAERDDU



Dear Father Christmas

At this time of year it is a common sight to see little children dropping letters into the post-box addressed to Father Christmas, Lapland.

It seems that the craze for dropping unusual things into letterboxes has spread to some of the older people in Llanvapley. Early this morning the person (who shall remain nameless) responsible for delivering the newsletter in the village was seen dropping off a copy into the post-box rather than the adjacent letter box!

I hope all her wishes come true.

Farewell to Roger and Barbara Spells



A number of Roger and Barbara's friends gathered to say thank-you for their contribution to Llanvapley.



Wassail

Just as we drink mulled wine and punch at Christmas and New Year parties nowadays, a Welsh Christmas at the turn of the century involved drinking from the wassail bowl.

These bowls were often elaborate, ornate and many-handled. The bowl was filled with fruit, sugar, spices and topped up with warm beer. As it was passed around, the drinkers would make a wish for a successful year's farming and a bumper crop at harvest time.

History Lesson from Our Reader

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500s:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, Don't throw the baby out with the Bath water.

Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no



wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying, It's raining cats and dogs.

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, Dirt poor. The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance way. Hence the saying a thresh hold.

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old.

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could bring home the bacon. They would cut off a little to



share with guests and would all sit around and chew the fat.

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or the upper crust.

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a wake.

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house, and reuse the grave. When re opening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, thread it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the graveyard shift.) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be saved by the bell or was considered a dead ringer.



What do lions sing at Christmas?
Jungle bells!



Llanvapley Carol Service

21st December 7pm

**The LSSA Welcomes Everyone to
*Teas, Coffee & Mulled Wine***

At The Pavilion

**'An Opportunity to
Exchange Season's Greetings'**

LSSA Buffet MINCE PIES **CAROLS**



Contact Karen 780306 for details

Especially if you have a Mince Pie Recipe!!

 Maria went to the Post Office to buy stamps for her Christmas cards.' What denomination?' asked the clerk. 'Oh! Good heavens! Have we come to this?' said Maria, 'Well give me 50 Methodist and 50 Church of England ones please.'



Y Fenni Events **Christmas 2007**

This year's events have been brought to you in association with Abergavenny Town Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Abergavenny Chamber of Trade and Abergavenny & District Tourist Association.

Abergavenny Christmas Lights **Saturday November 24th 2007**

- ❖ Christmas disco roadshow from 12.00pm.
- ❖ Santa will be making a special entrance from on high at 4.00pm followed by the switch on of the Christmas lights.

Market Hall Events & Treasure Hunt **Saturday December 1st 2007**

- ❖ Results of local schools art competition at the Market Hall.
- ❖ Valleys Radio roadshow broadcasting live from town centre.
- ❖ Street entertainment throughout the town.
- ❖ Treasure hunt around the town.
- ❖ Craft market in Cross Street.

Christmas Farmers' Market & Victorian Market **Saturday December 8th 2007**

- ❖ Abergavenny Borough Band in town centre.
- ❖ Victorian carol singers in Cibi Walk.
- ❖ Street entertainment throughout the town.
- ❖ Christmas Farmers' market at Cibi Walk.
- ❖ Victorian market at the Market Hall.

School Carol Performance **Saturday December 15th 2007**

- ❖ Carol singing at Cibi Walk, town centre and outside Town Hall.
- ❖ Street entertainment throughout the town.

Bell Ringing & Live Music **Saturday December 22nd 2007**

- ❖ Traditional bell ringing at Cibi Walk and Market Hall.
- ❖ Abergavenny Borough Band in town centre.

After use, please dispose of this flyer responsibly



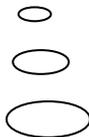
Christmas Postage Stamps

Britain lagged behind other parts of the world in issuing special stamps for Christmas. But why? After all, the world's first-ever stamp - the Penny Black - was a British innovation. To some extent, the Penny Black could be to blame...

With the iconic Penny Black, the Post Office made the head of the monarch the dominant feature of British stamp design for more than a hundred years. It was felt to be impossible to do justice to a representation of the birth of Christ on a stamp, and maintain the monarch's dominance.

When Tony Benn became Postmaster General in 1964, he decided that Christmas stamps should finally be issued in Britain, using the concept of the smaller silhouette of the Queen's head also developed around that time.

Tony Benn also ordered a competition to have the Christmas stamps designed by children, and you can see the winners on this page. There is 'King Wenceslas' by Tasveer Shemza (aged 6) and 'Snowman' by James Berry (aged 6). The stamps were issued in 1966.



**Did You Enter
The Competition
Back In 1966 ????**



Did You Know?

The world's first Christmas card was sent in 1843 – the same year that Charles Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol*;

In 1843, 1000 Christmas cards were made. In 2005, 744 million Christmas cards were delivered by Royal Mail;

On early cards Father Christmas was dressed in green, as he was seen more as the spirit of winter;

Until 1878, Valentine's cards were more popular than Christmas cards. Three years later in 1881, we were first advised to 'Post early for Christmas', to help the Post Office handle the deluge of mail;

Over 17 thousand million Christmas stamps have been printed in Britain since the first ones (designed by children) in 1966;

Post was last delivered on Christmas Day in England in 1960 (Scotland 1966).

Your last posting date for the UK this year is 20th December

Llanvapley Sports and Social Club (LSSA)

The LSSA wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Also a big thankyou goes out to everyone who has supported events throughout the year, joined the 100 Club and/or contributed to the upkeep of the pavillion and grounds.

The winner of the November 100 Club was Dai Lewis.



*Llanddewi Rhydderch Village
Hall*

invites you to a

Traditional Carol Singing Evening

with

*Abergavenny Borough
Band*



on

The Village Green

Wednesday 19th December at 7pm

~~*Back to the Village Hall*~~

*For warming mulled wine and
mince pies*

Everyone Welcome!



Christmas: The time when everyone gets Santamental.

How do you know Santa has to be a man?

No woman is going to wear the same outfit year after year.

Good King Wenceslas phoned for a pizza.

The salesgirl asked him, 'Do you want your usual?

Deep pan, crisp and even?'



✧ Services in December ✧

Christingle

23 December 4.00pm Llanvetherine

Christingle

24 Dec 4.00pm Llantilio Crossenny

Midnight Communion

24 December 11.30pm Llanvetherine

Family Communion

25 December 9.30am Penrhos

Family Communion

25 Dec 11.00am Llantilio Crossenny

Alternative Carol Service

30 Dec 11.00am Llantilio Crossenny



'TNT on Tour'



Llanvapley News

A short note to wish Doris Evans, a very speedy and successful recovery from her recent operation.

If anyone is interested in joining in, or receiving a visit from the Llanvapley Carol Singers on their Christmas Night 'walkabout', we can discuss at the Carol Service.

Similarly anyone interested in organising transport to the midnight service at Llanvetherine, we can discuss at Carols.



What do you call the fear of getting stuck in a chimney?

Santaclaustrophobia



WHO'S WHO?

The Vicar

Rev. David Osborn

01600 780240
07803 618464

The Churchwardens

Penrhos

Richard Price

01600 780246

Jean Flynn

01600 780405

Llanvetherine

David Hughes Jones 01873 821497

Andrew Dawson

Llanvapley

Les Taylor

01600 780376

Llantilio Crossenny

Dennis Ball

01873 821236

Richard Barnfield

01600 780365



The next issue of **TNT** will be January
Please pass any contributions to the above people
Or to TNT, Trothy Cottage, Abergavenny, NP7 8SN
Or alternatively email directly by December 20th to

llan.news@yahoo.co.uk

