

The New Times

May 2022

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



Holy Week was celebrated on top of the Skirrid



and in the remotest churches of our ministry area

From the Vicarage

What a memorable Holy Week and Easter we have just had. I found it both deeply enriching and spiritually nourishing to share in such a rich variety of worship with those around us. There were many moments that will stay with me from the week – among them were the re-enactment of Jesus washing his disciples' feet; The walk up the Holy Mountain and the deeply moving music of Stainer's crucifixion.



Thank you to all those who made the week such a moving and memorable one.

As I assisted in the footwashing, I thought of how we often under-value our feet, and generally take them for granted until they cause us problems. Our feet have carried us and literally walked with us throughout our lives. From our tentative first toddler steps, running to school when we're late; taking us to meet up with friends; walking up the aisle on our wedding day; running towards children to save them from harm to carrying us to be with our loved ones as they make the final journey. Our feet rarely get a second thought – and they never complain about their low status!

And then I think about the feet of Jesus – toddling around in Joseph's carpenter workshop; walking the dusty roads of Palestine, dancing at weddings, walking to the grave of his friend, being soothed with ointment, being nailed to the cross of wood; And then finally, and surprisingly, to dancing to the music of eternity in the heights of heaven.

So, treasure your feet – and thank them for their company. As St. Teresa of Avila said:

Christ has no feet but yours. Yours are the feet with which he walks on earth to do good now.

May God bless you as you walk in his way and follow in the footsteps of his Son.

With every blessing at this joyful Eastertide,
Heidi.

Election Day 2022 May 5th

A little bit of history first. County councils have been in existence since 1888. Parish councils came into existence in 1894 after a campaign by the Liberal Party which claimed '*New depths of life will have been stirred in the*

most neglected portions of our community, and we shall find among the labourers of the fields, as we have found among the artisans of the towns, a resolution that the condition of our people shall, so far as laws can better it, be bettered'. In 1972 parish councils in Wales were renamed community councils. On May 4th we will be saying goodbye to Llantilio Crossenny Community Council after 128 years of faithful service given by hundreds of voluntary councillors.

Parishes as ecclesiastical areas have been in existence since the 4th century but now even this may be changing as we move into the new system of ministry areas. So how do our four parishes fit into the new system of county and community councils which is being brought in on 5th May? It's complicated that's for sure.

The parish of **Llantilio Crossenny** is in the community council area of Whitecastle and in the county council ward of Llantilio Crossenny which includes the community councils of Llantilio Crossenny and Skenfrith. In Llantilio Crossenny there is no election for Whitecastle Community Council as the required two candidates were nominated. There are three candidates for the county council election for Llantilio Crossenny. The polling station is at The Hogs Head.

The parish of **Llanvapley** is in the community council area of Gobion Fawr and in the county council ward of Gobion Fawr which includes the community councils of Gobion Fawr and Llanarth. In Llanvapley there is no election for Gobion Fawr Community Council as there were no nominations. There are four candidates for the county council election for Gobion Fawr. The polling station is in Llanvapley pavilion.

The parish of **Penrhos** is in the community council area of Whitecastle and in the county council ward of Llantilio Crossenny which includes the community councils of Whitecastle and Skenfrith. In Penrhos there is no election for Whitecastle Community Council as only one candidate was nominated. There are three candidates for the county council election for Llantilio Crossenny. The polling station is at The Hogs Head.

The parish of **Llanvetherine** is in the community council area of Skenfrith and in the county council ward of Llantilio Crossenny which includes the community councils of Llantilio Crossenny and Skenfrith. In Llanvetherine there is no election for Skenfrith Community Council as the required two candidates were nominated. There are three candidates for the county council election for Llantilio Crossenny. The polling station is at Lanes Garage.

Llantilio Crossenny News

Plant Sale at Llantilio Church Bank Holiday Monday, May 2nd 2pm

Beautiful plants, a cake stall, teas and refreshments and a raffle

Holy Week

Palm Sunday was the start of a week of celebrations with Bishop Cherry Vann. At St Teilo's Bishop Cherry led a procession around the churchyard (unfortunately no donkey could be found) in glorious sunshine before the service in St Teilos. Following the service refreshments were served in the Lady Chapel where everyone could meet and chat with our Bishop and clergy.



The Maundy Thursday service at Llanddewi Rhydderch was again led by Bishop Cherry. It was very well attended and during the service twelve people were selected to get their feet washed by the Bishop. I was fortunate to be one of the twelve and I shall always remember the gentle care that Bishop Cherry took when washing and drying my feet .

Good Friday morning and a large group of people including the Bishop and several dogs set off for our annual pilgrimage up the Skirrid mountain pausing on the way for our Stations of the Cross readings. The beautiful weather added much enjoyment to the occasion and the fantastic views drew many wonderful comments.



In the evening we were treated to a wonderful feast of music in St Teilo's with a performance of Steiner's Crucifixion produced by Jeannette Massochi and an amazing group of very talented singers.



Easter Sunday morning and a good congregation came along for Holy Communion led by Revd. Heidi and following the service there was an Easter egg hunt.

Many thanks are due to Revd. Heidi for arranging all the lovely services. Thanks also to Bishop Cherry, Revd. Julian Gray and all the clergy for all the help given in what was a very busy Holy Week.

Many thanks to all the ladies who came along to St Teilo's to help with the spring cleaning before Easter. There were lots of lovely comments about polished wood and gleaming brass. Many thanks too to the ladies for the lovely flower arrangements.

Elsie Latham





Llantilio Crossenny Area Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend

Everyone invited to all events (free of charge)

4th June - Jubilee Ramble 9.30am @ St Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny

4th June - Live Stream of Platinum Party at the Palace & Live Band @ The Hogs Head- 7pm

5th June - Jubilee Big Lunch (bring your own picnic) @ The Hogs Head- 12pm onwards

Please see our Facebook page for more details- Search- Llantilio Crossenny Jubilee Celebrations
or @LlantilioCrossennyPlatinumJubileeBash

Or Contact: Jane- 07799 774053





**Llantilio Crossenny, Llanvapley,
Llanvetherine & Penrhos Churches**



Invite you to join us for a Special Service marking the
Queens Platinum Jubilee followed by Prosecco to
celebrate in style!

@ St Teilo's, Llantilio Crossenny

SUNDAY 5TH JUNE, 11AM SERVICE

Hope to see you all there !

Llantilio Crossenny Festival

After 59 years, Llantilio Crossenny Festival is moving from the first weekend in May to the last weekend in June: 24-26th June 2022 at Treadam Barn. The Festival's 60th anniversary will include "A trip to Tin Pan Alley", a show which has come straight from Ronnie Scotts' Jazz Club in London, "The Theatre Director" opera by Mozart, a variety of musical workshops and a Young Artists' Concert.



COMMUNITY GREEN ENERGY ADVISORY GROUP

COMMUNITY BENEFIT GRANT 2022

FUNDING IS AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY BENEFIT PROJECTS, IN THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL AREAS OF LLANARTH FAWR COMMUNITY COUNCIL, LLANTILIO CROSSENNY COMMUNITY COUNCIL AND GROSMONT FAWR COMMUNITY COUNCIL, AS AT 28/4/22.

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THIS YEAR'S GRANT ALLOCATION IN THE ABOVE AREAS – APPLICATIONS THAT ARE CLOSE TO THESE AREAS AND CAN PROVE THAT THEY BENEFIT THE RESIDENTS OF THIS AREA, MAY BE CONSIDERED IF FUNDING IS AVAILABILE.

FULL DETAILS OF HOW TO APPLY, ELIGIBLTY, SUMS AVAILABLE ETC. CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEBSITE.

www.communitygreenenergy.co.uk

APPLICATION FORMS WILL AVAILABLE FROM 21.05.2022 AND THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS 16.07.2022

FULL DETAILS / FORMS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE ABOVE WEBSITE, BY EMAILING cgeag01@gmail.com OR BY APPLYING, IN WRITING, TO:-

THE ADMINISTRATOR, COMMUNITY GREEN ENERGY ADVISORY GROUP,

C/O Pant Farm, Llanvetherine, Abergavenny, NP7 8RH.

Llanvapley News



Picture Postcards Exhibition

A display of postcards exchanged with members of London based group *Migrants Organise*, remembering their experiences of visiting Llanvapley.

A chance to make your own postcard about Llanvapley and the surrounding area (or anywhere else you choose!) Catch a movement / dance session in beautiful surroundings (times for these to be confirmed - for contact see below).

Refreshments available

Saturday 7th May 2022 2 pm - 5 pm
Sunday 8th May 2022 10.30 am - 12.30 pm

Llanvapley Pavilion
Llanvapley
Abergavenny
NP7 8SH

Parking on site

For further information, please contact:
sarahafoster@googlemail.com

Arddangosfa o Gardiau Post

Arddangosiad o gardiau post wedi'u cyfnewid ag aelodau'r grŵp o Lundain *Migrants Organise*, gan gofio eu profiadau o ymweld â Llanfabe.

Cyfle i greu eich cerdyn post eich hun am Lanfabe a'r cyffiniau (neu unrhyw le o'ch dewis!) a chymryd rhan mewn sesiwn symud / ddawnsio mewn amgylchoedd hardd (mae amserau'r rhain i'w cadarnhau - am fanylion cyswllt, gweler isod).

Lluniaeth ar gael

Dydd Sadwrn 7 Mai 2022 2 pm - 5 pm
Dydd Sul 8 Mai 2022 10.30 am - 12.30 pm

Pafiliwn Llanfabe
Llanfabe
Y Fenni
NP7 8SH

Parcio ar y safle

Am ragor o wybodaeth, e-bostiwch:
sarahafoster@googlemail.com

Llanvapley Church Parochial Church Council held its Easter Vestry meeting on 20th April. The annual accounts were presented and approved and PCC officers were nominated and elected. Following the church fabric report, Revd. Heidi thanked the maintenance team and all the PCC for their help and support over the last year. The Easter Vestry meeting was followed by a meeting of the new PCC at which it was proposed to fund the purchase of a new carpet runner for the nave. The runner will be 37 feet long and 3 feet wide with a colour to be decided. For many years the church had a red carpet throughout the church but this was thrown out at the time of the restoration in 2006.

Thanks go to Pete and Gen Marchant for their recent work in the churchyard. The new paths have been greatly admired but the edges were generally bare earth. Pete and Gen suggested putting turf down rather than grass seed. They recently turfed part of their garden and had used turf from Ormskirk in Lancashire. The turf was a little disappointing and they decided to buy Welsh turf from a local garden centre. After a great deal of hard work the new turf is in place and the paths look better than ever. As someone who believes that Lancashire turf is the best, their choice of turf goes to show that the 'grass is always greener' on the Welsh side of the border!

Spring Clean in Llanvapley

Volunteers are required at Llanvapley Church on Saturday 7th May from 10am to 12 noon when the annual churchyard and church spring clean will take place. The churchyard is an important public space in the village and it would be great if as many people as possible were able to come along to help. It is always a very sociable occasion and there will be a chance to have a



very pleasant chat over a coffee. Volunteers are asked to bring their own tools and will be given guidance on how to stay safe. It is possible to choose whatever you would like to do – polishing, dusting, mopping, weeding, pruning, sweeping up – the possibilities are endless. Many hands make light work and there is always the satisfaction of finishing and seeing how tidy everything looks.

A date for your diary

Llanvapley Church will be hosting a Strawberry Tea on Sunday 3rd July in the afternoon.



Abergavenny RFC youth team travelled to the Principality Stadium Saturday on 23th April. Having enjoyed a successful season they were excited to play in the finals against Cwmavon for the WRU plate. Final score was Abergavenny 22 Cwmavon 10. Three of the players taking part were from our surrounding villages of Cross Ash, Llantilio Crossenny and Llandewi Rhydderch. *Elaine Leader*



Llanvapley Walking Group

In April we walked through Llanthewy Wood and down to Llandewi Rhydderch and saw lots of wild flowers and emerging hedgerows as well as some fallen trees as evidence of the winter winds. As always, the walkers were rewarded for the four-mile round trip with lovely views and a good social occasion. Looking forward to May, we are breaking with our 'first Saturday of the month' tradition and walking instead



on Saturday 14th May, by which time it will be late spring and hopefully time for lighter clothes. So, to recap: we will be walking from Llanvapley Village Pavilion at 10.30am on Saturday 14th May. Parking is available and everyone is welcome. If you'd like to keep in touch, please let me know on llanvapleywalkinggroup@gmail.com

Phil Allsopp

Llanvapley Sports and Social Association News

Annual General Meeting

The LSSA held its AGM on 31th March. The meeting was well attended and the events of the last year were reviewed by Carole Brown on behalf of the chair, Lynda Caster who was unable to attend. Phil Allsopp was thanked for his work as treasurer but he wished to step down from this position. Mary Davies was welcomed as a new committee member.

The new committee met on 12th April to discuss plans for the new year. It was decided to hold an open meeting on Wednesday 4th May to discuss plans for the Jubilee. The committee would like to invite all village / association members to attend this meeting in the hope they will be able to offer their help and support in arranging the village celebrations on Friday 3rd June

The LSSA is still able to rely upon the services of Phil Allsopp to manage the finances in the short term. However, the LSSA needs to appoint a treasurer. If there is anyone in the village who would like to put themselves forward to do this important work then please contact a committee member as soon as possible.

Afternoon Tea

The next afternoon tea is on Monday 9th May 2pm – all welcome – come along for a cuppa and a catch-up in the pavilion. At the last afternoon tea the 100 Club was won by Brenda Allen. Brenda was the LSSA treasurer for many years and has recently moved to Abergavenny. She was delighted to receive her £50 prize and said she was going to treat some members of the family to a lunch out.

Village v Llanvapley Cricket Club Match

As a curtain raiser to the 2022 season, Llanvapley cricket club has challenged Llanvapley village to a fun match on Saturday 28th May. Everyone is welcome to come along and either play or spectate. It promises to be more fun than serious! The photo on the right shows Llanvapley Cricket Club members from 40 years ago. Will any of these be playing on the 28th?



The following event takes place in the pavilion

Rewilding Talk- 20th June- 7pm

Rewilding is a bit of a buzz word these days, but what does it mean? Is it even relevant to the average gardener & landowner? Could you rewild your own patch? Cherry has been exploring these issues with Gwent Wildlife Trust & has recently returned from the 3,500 acre Knepp Estate – the rewilding mecca in the UK – full of inspiration, ideas and images. But most importantly, she will be able to relay the advice from the Knepp ecologists on how to apply these principles to a smaller amount of land, or garden.

To book, contact: lucindajames@monmouthshire.gov.uk or 01633644779

Penrhos News

My fundraising by Albie Howe

I have been busy with three fundraising activities over March and the beginning of April. I started off by selling cakes at school. These proved very popular especially the ones with mini eggs on top! Then I sold more cakes at my brother's rugby club after school and rugby training. I was also selling Paracord people alongside, and together these sales raised £91. Then on Easter Sunday I sold bird boxes at Woodlands Farm open gardens. I had made the bird boxes myself and I have managed to sell all of them with an order for 4 more, giving me another £190 towards my total. I was feeling good about the fundraiser over Easter as that was very successful for one day. On Easter Monday I helped Lemmiout activities at the Coleford Festival of Transport. This involved making the go-karts, setting up and testing the track and then supervising challenges. It was great fun and even better to get paid for it! The £30 I was paid has gone straight to my fund raising. I am very happy with how my Easter holiday fundraising has gone and I am now just under £2200!



If you would like to donate to help me reach my goal here is the link: <https://gofund.me/d6217e65> or visit the Go Fund Me site and search for Albie South Korea!

If you would like a bird box please email me at viks@sun-fish.co.uk

Other news from Penrhos.

William Macdonald is a relatively new member of the Penrhos community. Kate (mum) and William moved to Penrhos in 2019. William (age 11) is sports mad... show jumping, football, rugby, cricket, triathlon, tennis AND he also rides for Monmouthshire Pony Club. Easter Sunday was the Pony Club Area mounted games which is entered by a number of different Pony Clubs including Monmouthshire PC. It was held the other side of Carmarthen so involved a very early start for William and his pony Nigel, but at least it was dry and sunny. This was only William's



second competition as this is a relatively new sport for him and the first time the five team members had all ridden together. The two older girls are on the Welsh team but the other three members are still eligible for junior competitions. Mounted games is basically a combination of speed, accuracy, athleticism, skill and a lot of teamwork between not just the riders but the ponies as well! Kate was delighted to report that William and his team won the competition and William can't wait for the next one! A few years ago Monmouthshire Pony Club competed at Horse of the Year Show in the Prince Phillip cup final so hopefully in a few years' time Monmouthshire Pony club might have a repeat and maybe William will be on the team!

Did you know?

The 14th of April is St Tiburtius Day and is traditionally when you hear the first cuckoo, as celebrated in Rudyard Kipling's Cuckoo Song:

*“Cuckoo, bring your song here!
Warrant, Act and Summons, please,
For spring to pass along here”*

Have you heard a cuckoo yet this year? Cuckoos have a red conservation status which means they are endangered due to historical decline in population numbers. Cuckoos are summer visitors which migrate from Northern Africa in the spring. They are known to be brood parasites and so instead of building their own nests the females lay their eggs in other birds' nests. The main threats to the cuckoo are habitat loss to the species the cuckoo relies on for nests – their host species. Their scientific name is *Cuculus canorus* and they are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Woodlands Farm Open Garden

I have grown up visiting Woodlands Farm. Mum and Dad say it was just like a field with not much there when they moved into the village in 2002. When I was little, I liked playing hide and seek in the gardens as there are so many nooks and crannies and intriguing places to hide. Now I like the wildlife pond which, at the moment, is overflowing with tadpoles.

What else can I say about Woodlands Farm? The gardens have developed to such an extent that they were opened for two whole weeks this April when the cherry blossom looked amazing and the spring bulbs were in full bloom. With well over 500 visitors it raised over £5,000 for NGS nursing charities and over £1,000 for Ukrainian relief charities. Mum got roped into the washing up; serves her right for turning up and not looking busy! This is another triumph for Woodlands Farm and I would like to thank Craig and Charles for giving me the opportunity to fundraise there over Easter. *Albie*

Can you help?

Thanks to a TNT reader who has been in touch to give advice and to ask for help following an incident at their home in Penrhos.

'As most of you are aware, on Thursday 21st April, our property at Pretty Hedges was the subject of a burglary. Colin and I had left for work at 7-15. I returned home at 4pm to find kitchen door had been smashed, gun cabinet had been ripped off the wall, and two guns stolen. Then you gingerly walk upstairs to find every door wide open (something I always do when I leave for work is close every door) then you find they have been through every room, every drawer has been rummaged through, then the worst, you find ALL of your jewellery has gone. All your cash, I could go on, but if I was to urge anybody to do one thing, it's please please take photos of your valuables, I wish I had, trying to describe your precious valuables is no easy task. It seems the vehicle of interest is a grey Volvo, maybe an estate, slightly older one. Two lads in baseball caps. Could you please check your dash cam or CCTV, any info gratefully received.' *Yvonne Phillips*

Llantilio Crossenny WI News

The April meeting was much appreciated, especially by the gardeners of WI which is pretty much the whole membership! Jan Eastment stepped into Lin's shoes to take the meeting. Jan did a super job and the president was very grateful as she was ill and not able to attend. Roger Lloyd from Highfield Gardens gave an interesting presentation which was well received by all. Beautiful spring flowers adorned the table too.

The choir continues to perfect their song for the Gwent centenary service and to consider songs for the Jubilee. New WI singers are always welcome. The next practice is 5th May 6.30pm at Llanvapley hall.

Our WI has been amazing in their support of our Ukranian member Zhenya. Her daughter and grandson have now received their visas for Britain at last. However, they are unsure of how they will be able to travel to the UK, especially as they have their dog with them and the ferry companies are not allowing free passage. They have waited months to get their visas but now there are more obstacles in their way. Otherwise they will remain in Poland where they are being well received.

A reminder that the church plant sale is Monday 2nd May at 2pm. Lots of beautiful plants for the gardens and cake too.

The next WI meeting will be the 11th May at 7pm when there will be one of Marion's marvellous quizzes and we will also be voting for the committee and president for the next year. So members are urged to come along and vote or volunteer for the committee. We do need more help and support.

Also please let Lin know if you wish to come on the trip to Aberglasney on 13th July hopefully. A coach has to be booked soon. So if members, friends and family want to come please call; 01873 850 939 or 07840641856 or email; Lin.tedit@btinternet.com

The Garden in April

Our daughter is moving and although the 'new' house already has a garden she was asking about trees that she could plant that would not be too big and also put up with the wind as it is quite exposed.

Jo Swift wrote an article in the Times not long ago about his favourite spring flowering trees. They included *Prunus x Yedoensis* (Yoshino Cherry), the Judas tree *Cercis siliquastrum*, *Cornus Kousa chinensis* (dogwood), *Pyrus calleryana chanticler* (ornamental pear), *Paulownia tomentosa* (empress tree or foxglove tree), *Laburnum x watereri*, *Amelancia x grandiflora* 'Ballerina', *Crataegus persimillis* and *Magnolia Loebneri* Leonard Messel (pictured). The latter is a really lovely tree but it might be a bit tender for a windy spot. Magnolia's can get hit by a late frosts unless like ours they are on a north facing slope and with luck the frost rolls down the



hill leaving them unharmed. The foxglove tree is also a good choice and it can be pruned hard in the winter which results in huge quite exotic leaves but not any foxglove like flowers, however it needs a sheltered position. Laburnums are pretty hardy but you do have to be careful with the seedpods (shades of my cousin Rachel!) We had a Judas tree here but it died our first winter sadly. It flowers on naked stems and the flowers can get damaged in late frosts. *Cornus Kousa* is a good choice but takes a bit of time to get going, *Cornus controversa Varietata*, the wedding cake tree is spectacular and pretty tough. The thorn tree can be a bit of a thug, as it can grow very quickly and might outgrow its space. The *Amelanchia* also called 'Beauty Bush' is very pretty but it needs a sunny spot and lasts a nano second if there is any wind. However it does have the bonus of good autumn colouring. He does not mention *Prunus subhirtella Autumnalis* which I think is a brilliant choice for a small garden as it does not cast a lot of shade and can flower for months early in the year. *Salix purpurpea* 'Nancy Saunders' was one of the first little trees we planted. Actually it is more like a bush as I cut it right back every spring, but it is a dainty willow with dark red stems and slender leaves and it looks good swaying in the wind. What about *Catalpa bignonioides* – the Indian Bean tree – which also has large leaves and foxglove like flowers but it might not put up with wind and needs a sunny sheltered spot. There are any number of ornamental cherries to choose from and in general they are hardy. Of course a good Bramley apple tree is hard to beat and bears fruit as a bonus!

In the Spotlight

In this month's edition the spotlight has fallen on a well known figure in our local area who is very closely connected with the Village Alive Trust. But how well do we really know **Pat Griffiths**? The New Times tried to find out more by putting her 'In the Spotlight'.

How long have you been chair of the Village Alive Trust?

I was a Trustee and founder chairman in 2004, and apart from a short break I have continued in both roles since.



The Village Alive Trust has been responsible for a number of successful projects in the area. Which one of these are you most proud of?

I think I am most proud of us conserving the Grade II* Great Trethew Barn, as it has enabled it to be used for many social and fundraising events as well as continuing as part of the Beavan family farm enterprise. It is a living memorial to dear Anne and Trevor too who asked for the Trust's help.

At the moment the trust is working on bringing Llanarth Church back to the heart of the community. What makes this church so special for you?

As children living on Clytha Hill the churches of Bryngwyn, Bettws Newydd and Llanarth were all special to us because of family connections. Roger and I were married at Llanarth, my mum and dad, and her parents, are buried there now. It was always an impressive sanctuary to enter with the beautiful bells which were preserved by Rev'd Ivor Richards. Both mum and dad had served as churchwardens and fundraisers when it was in use. It can't be our generation that lets it just disappear as a community building.

Where were you born and brought up?

I was born in the sitting room at rented Nant-y-carw Farm, Clytha Hill (on the due date) with the help of the district nurse and the local doctor! I lived there with my sisters and brother until age 13 when we moved to a neighbouring farm that our parents had managed to buy. It was an idyllic childhood but not because of material wealth. We were taught good values and felt secure.

What is your earliest memory?

It's actually a traumatic one. I was aged about 30 months old and was at the Cottage Hospital in Abergavenny and had a chloroform mask put over

my face to knock me out for a short operation. I recall being told to look at the clock and seeing this metal bowl-like cage with a white pad over it, being brought down over my face. It's probably why I have absolutely hated wearing masks during Covid. Bad memories.

Where did you go to school? Do you have any special memories of school?

I attended the former Bryngwyn primary school which only had two classes and about 30 pupils. Miss Jones, the wonderful junior teacher was tiny but so able. She drove a Morris 1000 car from Blaina each day...before the Heads of the Valleys road so she came down Blackrock through the Clydach Gorge. After 11 plus I went to King Henry VIII Grammar School where I was one of the youngest in the year and I so small that I had to get a gym slip on order! Luckily I had older siblings at school so wasn't bullied. The two buses we had to take each morning and night to and from school made me feel sick, but I held my own in school and surprised the teachers at O and A Level.

What was your first job and can you remember how much you were paid?

I had gone to University but gave up after the first year as I was desperate to get out in the real world away from academia and get life started. I joined the South Wales Argus as an indentured trainee journalist in 1974, after the Western Mail spelled my name wrong in their offer, and I was paid while learning which was great. My first pay packet was £17 and living at home I was able to save!



Describe the view from your kitchen window.

I can see the Bloreng, Skirrid, Sugaf Loaf and Black Mountains from the front window and the Greig Hill from the back window of the kitchen. We live on a ridge in a house we built in the 1980s while living in an old caravan.

Are you going away on holiday this year?

Not booked anything yet. It won't be abroad but maybe we will get some short breaks in the UK. I love travelling by train to Italy as a holiday destination and we have been on the evocative Orient Express.

Do you have a favourite sport?

Not really. I take an interest in it as it helps with answering quiz questions.

What is your favourite food and do you have a favourite place to eat

out?

Steak and chips and all the trimmings cooked properly will always be a favourite and it is a great way to cook local produce. We have so many good places to eat out around here but for the service and ambience I would say The Angel in Abergavenny is my favourite place, simply because I can walk in alone and feel welcome.

How do you keep fit?

Not sure that I am very fit...I try to keep going by doing my own housework, weeding, car washing, cooking, shopping and playing with the grandchildren. Cleaning windows always seemed more productive than jogging. I do like a good walk, especially at bluebell time or at the seaside.

Have you ever met anyone famous?

I have met several famous people and have been in the company of even more, but my first was meeting Sir Harry Secombe who was signing books and I was sent to do the 'story'. He gave me a great one liner when I asked, "Where are you going next?" He said, "lunch!"

What sort of music do you enjoy?

All sorts from moving classical pieces to rock and roll and dance tunes. An Italian group of three young men, Il Volo, got us through lockdown as we watched a recording of their open air Florence concert, a tribute to the three tenors, virtually every day. Their latest CD is a tribute to Ennio Morricone. Stirring stuff. Would love to see them perform.

Do you have any pets?

Not these days but cats seem to like me, while dogs don't.

What do you enjoying watching on television?

Not so much these days, but old films and sitcoms can be relaxing. Not a lover of seeing violence as entertainment and there also seems to be a lot of preaching in some modern programmes. Even documentaries often seem staged and fake.

What occasion has caused you the most embarrassment?

Ooh, when our first son was born we received a beautiful pink Viyella smocked dress in the post. I rang the giver thinking she had got us mixed up with her niece who had given birth to a girl. But, no, it was intentional! I said to her people might think I was odd dressing him in a pink dress as I had dearly hoped for a baby girl! Her answer was: "Oh Patti don't you put them in little dresses anymore...then I will get a sailor suit". But ringing her up and complaining thinking I was doing her a favour and being wrong was so awful... but this was not 1900 when boys still wore dresses! Anyway I

returned the expensive item and sure enough a beautiful French-made soft and modern gorgeous blue top and trousers set arrived. When the second son arrived she sent a matching zip-up hoodie. Beautiful presents and passed on lovingly afterwards but I wished the ground would open up when I rang her to say thanks, but no thanks!

If you could invite three famous people to a meal at your house who would they be?

The late Duke of Edinburgh was apparently wonderful company according to a High Sheriff friend who sat next to him on occasion; Tom Jones is such a natural, with a twinkle in his eye and would probably give us a song and I think Jane Austen would have been great to meet too as she had the measure of people!

Do you have a favourite drink?

My own blend of hot chocolate which is not too sweet or milky, or champagne, as it doesn't give me a hangover.

Do you have any special skills?

No, I am not double jointed or musical or anything unfortunately!

How do you see rural Monmouthshire changing in the next 50 years?

Probably not for the better. We risk losing our family farms and green fields through over development. New farm sheds have increased in number and then risk being converted when a farm is sold. Our native oak and ash trees are dying, like the elms, and are not being replaced and our quaint small cottages are becoming enlarged and put out of the reach of young people who want to stay here. Planning policy has changed in the last 30 years and now not allowing poor development because of 'being in an area of prominent landscape' has been swept aside.

If you could go back in time and give one message to your younger self what would it be?

The usual, I guess, aim high and have more confidence in your own abilities (and revel in those years of being a size 10 and able to wear anything).

Do you have any interesting facts about yourself you can share?

I turned down the chance to go on TV's Wife Swap and to write a column for The Sun newspaper after winning the Lottery, but I did write a piece on the value of money for the Observer Book of Money and part of it appeared in a GCSE English exam comprehension, without them asking!



Grosmont and District Garden Club

Annual Plant Sale

Saturday 28th May 9am to 1pm

Ewyas Harold Memorial Hall

Cash only – free entry

Stock up on lovely plants grown by the members!

Calon Llanarth

The Village Alive Trust continues work to secure the closed St Teilo's Church at Llanarth as a restored and useful landmark building with a project aptly named Calon Llanarth... Heart of Llanarth.

A Grand Draw to aid fund raising will be drawn at 12 noon at a Coffee Morning at **Llanarth Village Hall on Saturday, May 7th**. As well as coffee and cake and the main draw, there will be a varied stall of books etc to browse and a raffle for small prizes. Everyone is welcome to come to the Coffee Morning from 11am. Information from Pat Griffiths 01873 821418.



Come to Llanarth Open Church Day

St. Teilo's church, Llanarth will be open again on Saturday 7th May from 10.00 – 11.00am.

Church Services in May

Sunday 1st May

9.30am Llanvetherine.
11am Llantilio Crossenny

Sunday 15th May Easter 5

9.30am Llanvetherine
11am. Llantilio Crossenny

Monday May 2nd Bank Holiday

2pm Plant Sale with cakes, raffle and tea
Llantilio Crossenny Church

Sunday 22nd May Easter 6

Rogation Sunday
9.30am Penrhos
11am Llanvapley

Saturday 7th May

10am Llanvapley Churchyard Tidy-up.

Thursday 26th May Ascension Day

Sunday 29th May

No Services

Sunday 8th May Easter 4

9.30am Penrhos
11am Llanvapley

Can you help?

Llanvapley Church is looking for people to be part of its flower rota. Flowers are a wonderful way to decorate a church and to show how well loved a place is. The Llanvapley Church flower rota was, like so many other plans, thrown into disarray by the pandemic, so now is a good time to relaunch it. You don't have to be a regular worshipper to be part of the rota. You may simply enjoy making beautiful flower arrangements or you may like to join because you have a special connection with the church. Perhaps you may have someone buried in the churchyard or you may like to remember someone at a special time of year. You don't have to be an expert flower arranger. If you are happy arranging flowers in a vase and putting them on the kitchen table then that would be perfect. Being part of the rota is not a big commitment. You may volunteer to do it once or twice a year and join others at important times of year such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas. If you would like to support the church but don't think you can be part of the rota then why not make a donation which will help to support the work of others. If you are interested then please contact the church using the information below or speak to any of the church members. We hope you can help. Thank you. Les Taylor



You can keep in touch with what is happening in our church communities via our website www.llantiliogroup.info Our website has the latest news as well as information about all our churches. We are also on Twitter @LlantilioG

*Contributions for the June issue of The New Times by 20th May 2022
Please send your emails to tnparishmag@gmail.com or lestaylor.taylor@gmail.com*