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HANES

NEWSLETTER OF THE CYNON VALLEY HISTORY SOCIETY
CYLCHLYTHYR CYMDEITHAS HANES CWM CYNON

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THE HISTORY OF PENRHIWCEIBER PART 3 AND QUOITING IN THE VALLEY

Welcome to this delayed yet bumper issue of Hanes in which we come to the end of our history of Penrhiwceiber. In this issue we sadly report the passing of Nansi Selwood and Dafydd Roberts, with obituaries for both individuals. On a happier note we record the commemoration of George Ewart Evans of Abercynon; tell the story of William Dice Davies of Cwmaman, the Grand Old Man of Welsh Quoiting; and recall Lucy Parry's trip to Patagonia last October. I was hoping to include more articles about sport but they will have to wait till the next issue. Happy reading!

The Lee Hotel



The Lee hotel, which cost £3000, was built in 1879, the same year as the colliery opened.

Sometimes the drinking could get out of hand: in May 1881, Frederick Hill and John Roach were refused more alcohol by Mr James Phillips the landlord so they stamped the floor with their heavy boots. He told them they would break the floor in. Roach swung a heavy

fender about. They refused to leave and for two hours they shouted and created a terrible disturbance. This lasted so long because no constable was stationed at the village; consequently, it took an hour to fetch one from Mountain Ash. P.C. James came at last and turned them out, by which time both men were quite sober. Each of the defendants was fined 10s and costs, in default 14 days imprisonment.

(*S. Wales Daily News*, 1st June, 1881)

The Lee was also used for philanthropic occasions. In September of the following year, the quarterly meeting of the Cynon & Neath Valley Loyal Order of Ivorites was held here. Rev B. Evans, Gadlys, Aberdare was the vice-chair. The meeting was well attended with 39 lodges being represented. There were four applications for assistance and it was agreed to give £4 cash to each of the men.

(Cardiff Times, 9th September, 1881)

A sad occasion took place in June that year when an inquest was held there. It concerned the death of a door boy at Penrhiwceiber colliery — John Jenkins aged 13 years who was dragged to his death between the wheels of coal trams.

(Merthyr Express 17th June, 1881)

The Lee was gutted by fire at the end of 2012 and was demolished early in the following year.

The Osborne Hotel



This hotel was built at a cost of £4,000 in 1899. How do we know it was built then? Because a William McCoy pleaded guilty to stealing timber, the property of William Williams, the contractor for the building of the Osborne Hotel in March that year. McCoy was fined £1 or 14 days imprisonment.

(S. Wales Echo, 8th March, 1899)

A provisional granting of a licence had been made but in the next ten years the hotel had a fight to obtain the licence as it was refused many times; one of the reasons being that the Lee Hotel was only 153 yards away from The Osborne so the Osborne would be directly opposing it.

Like many public houses, it was where inquests were held. A most tragic inquest was held there just before Easter in 1914 following the death of William Sadler aged 25 who had died in an accident at Penrikyber colliery on the eve of his marriage. He was killed when some timbers fell down and 25 trams of rubbish came down on him. Sadler was from Malvern and came to the village the previous Christmas. He was to have been married on Easter Monday and his shift was to be his last before leaving for Malvern for his wedding. His remains were conveyed by rail from Penrhiwceiber to Malvern on Saturday.

(Aberdare Leader, 18th April, 1914)

The hotel is still open for business.

The Park Hotel



This hotel was probably built in the early 1890s.

In October 1898 the landlord applied for a provisional alehouse licence. The landlords of the Mount Pleasant, Osborne and Lee Hotels objected understandably. Their counsel said there was no need for further accommodation and claimed that the facilities of the proposed new premises were inadequate, the headroom of

bedrooms and the sanitary arrangements being alleged to be insufficient. Despite this opposition, the licence was granted.

The game of billiards was very popular there. One Saturday at the end of January 1899, E. Brewer of Cardiff concluded his unfinished break of 1,102, but only adding 58 more. He broke down by the balls touching. The break consisted wholly of nursery cannons. The finish took place before a full room.

(S. Wales Daily News, 30 Jan, 1899).

Things were not always quiet there. In the same year, Maria Edmunds was charged with stealing a glass, the property of Mr William M. George. She was fined 10 shillings or seven days in prison.

(Evening Express, 9th August, 1899)

This was small beer (!) compared to what John Mahoney did in May 1902. He threw a glass of beer at the bar fixtures. He collected all the other vessels which were on the counter and tables, and hurling them also, breaking the woodwork and smashing four mirrors and a number of bottles of spirits and glasses, thus doing damage amounting to £3 10s. He was ejected, but about half an hour later, he returned with stones in his pockets when he threw these stones at the same fixtures and destroyed two 2-gallon urns containing whisky, and committed further damage to the extent of £6 10s. The prisoner was arrested by P.C. John Evans and was sent for trial at the next quarter sessions.

(Evening Express, 21st May, 1902.)

The hotel was also used as a coroner's court. An inquest was held there concerning the death of David Williams, collier of 44 Park Street who was fatally injured at Penrhiwceiber Navigation Colliery. He was standing on the roadway when seven trams broke loose and came down the heading killing him.

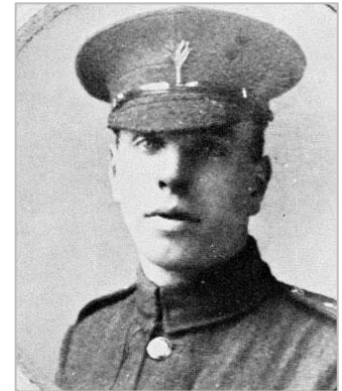
(Evening Express, 24th Dec 1906).

The hotel much later became known as the Harlequin. In the 1990s it closed down, but it would soon take on a new lease of life. It was converted into 15 flats for the elderly by the Aelwyd Housing Association. It was re-named "Hill View," and Jill Dando, the TV presenter performed the opening ceremony on 25th April 1995.

Notable People

Sgt. Robert Bye, V.C.

Robert James Bye was born on December 12, 1889 at 13 Maritime Street, Graig, Pontypridd. Subsequently, his parents Martin and Sarah Jane Bye moved to 21 Woodfield Street, Penrhiwceiber, and Robert was educated at the local school there. After leaving school, he worked at Deep Dyffryn Colliery, Mountain Ash, before joining the Welsh Guards on April 3, 1915. Advancement through the ranks was rapid when he was promoted to Lance Corporal in March 1916, Corporal in September of that year and then to Sergeant in April 1917. He served in France and Flanders and was discharged in February 1919. Six months later, he re-enlisted in the Notts and Derby Regiment, remaining with it until 1925, and finally re-enlisting again in the Sherwood Foresters in World War 2. After the War he worked at Warsop Main, Firbeck and Welbeck Collieries in the Nottinghamshire coalfield and also became a temporary police constable at Mansfield, Notts.



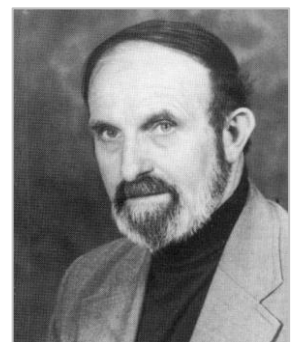
He married a Welsh girl from Penrhiwceiber, Mabel Lloyd, at Pontypridd on October 14, 1912 and they had two sons and two daughters. He died in 1962, aged 72, and was buried at Warsop Cemetery, Nottingham.

Sgt. Bye won his VC on 31 July 1917 at the Yser Canal, Belgium, where he displayed the utmost courage and devotion to duty during an attack on the enemy's position. During the attack, at the third Battle of Ypres, Sgt. Bye saw that the leading waves were being troubled by two enemy blockhouses. He rushed at one of them and put the German garrison out of action. He then rejoined his company and went forward to the second objective. Later he volunteered to take charge of a party detailed to clear up a line of blockhouses that had been passed. He accomplished this, taking many prisoners, and then advanced to the third objective, again taking a number of prisoners. During the action he accounted for over 70 of the enemy. His actions in Woods 15 and 16 and at the Yser Canal on the same day were also taken into account. Sgt. Bye's citation appeared in the London Gazette on September 6, 1917 and he was invested with his VC by King George V on September 27, 1917.

(Information from <http://www.powell76.talktalk.net>)

Robert Morgan

He was born in Penrhiwceiber in 1921. The son of a miner, he worked together with his father in the local colliery from the age of fourteen. At that time, the mine seemed to him to be an Aladdin's cave with fairy lights! His father had worked as a coal miner for 50 years and his grandfather was also coal miner. He said "For 12 years (1935-48) in the earth's hive he worked like a mole in the dark, which left its marks. He worked in a seam just two feet wide where boys transferred the coal to the trams. (Not quite like an Aladdin's cave!) He was advised to take up mining engineering as a career but the urge to write proved too strong.



At the first Welsh Miners' Eisteddfod held in Porthcawl (1948), he won the short story competition about the day's work of a collier and repeated this success in the following year with his short story "Reality," which brought forth still greater distinction over all the other competitors. The story was published in "The Weekly Mail" and the "Cardiff Times"

In 1950 he entered Fircroft College (Birmingham) where he studied English literature.

He then went to Bognor Regis College of Education, West Sussex, where he qualified as a teacher in 1953. He taught boys with special needs and later he obtained an Advanced Diploma in Special Education at Southampton University.

From 1981 he became a full time writer as well as a painter.

He held a poetry workshop at Aberdare Boys Comprehensive School in 1990 and was so impressed with the boys' work that he presented them with a selection of his illustrated poems, which were later displayed in the school's corridors.

His last years were spent in Hampshire with his wife. He died in July 1994.

His published poems include: "On the banks of the Cynon," "Memoir, Landmarks," "The Storm" and "The Pass" to name but a few.

He has written several plays: Rainbow valley, Voices in the Dark, The Master Miners and Fragments of a dream. In addition, he wrote some volumes of short stories entitled "The Miner and Other stories," and "In the dark".

His autobiography *My Lamp Still Burns*, (1981), portrays his recollections of working in Penrikyber colliery. The terrible, dangerous, wet conditions of his work make fascinating reading. I thoroughly recommend that you borrow the book from your local library or buy a copy.

John Peregrine

He was the Secretary of the Penrhiwceiber Workmen's Hall and Institute from 1913-1958. He was born in 1893 and died on 14th December, aged 67

Ron Blacker



Ron was born and bred in Penrhiwceiber. He served with the Royal Army Medical Corps in Germany and the Second Battalion of the Black Watch. He then joined the ambulance service, where he worked until his retirement, after which he was presented with the Queen's Medal for long and exemplary service. He was a former professional singer and even once shared the bill with Matt Monro.

For many years Mr Blacker was chairman of governors at Pengeulan Primary School, and was respected by staff, pupils and parents.

Ron was married to Pam for 58 years and was Penrhiwceiber's district correspondent for the Cynon Valley Leader for 13 years writing his final column in January 2009. He was also chairman of Penrhiwceiber Hall and Institute for many years.

He died aged 80 in March 2015 after a short illness.

Former editor of the "Leader," Gary Marsh, said, "Ron will be remembered with great fondness by the people of the village that held a special place in his heart."

Dorothy Jean Head, M.B.E.



Dorothy Head was born in Birmingham in 1936. In 1940 she was evacuated to Wales. Her mother quickly followed her and the two of them set-up home in Miskin Terrace, Mountain Ash where her mother was a housekeeper.

In 1955 she married Dennis Head and had three daughters.

Mrs Head always had a strong belief in the church, family and community. She was a volunteer with The Guide Association for many years as Assistant Brownie Guider, Guide Guider, Ranger Guider and Ranger Advisor for Central Glamorgan.

Dennis, her husband, was very supportive and joined in on many camping expeditions.

Her heart lay in the community and she was a member of Penrhiwceiber Revival Strategy.

Over her life, she fought for many causes: after British Rail took away a bridge over the railway line at Penrhiwceiber, she fought a one-woman battle to get a replacement; she successfully got a replacement from the Rhondda. To save the Lee Gardens Pool from becoming a lay-by for buses she founded the Penrhiwceiber Action Committee.

She also leased land from British Rail to preserve a green area for the Guides and local school pupils to enjoy. In so doing, she gained the 'Green Wellie Award' from Groundwork Trust.

For her voluntary work, Mrs Head was awarded the MBE in the New Year Honours List of 2002. This was in recognition of her services to her community especially to the young people of Penrhiwceiber. She said, "I am absolutely delighted with this great honour and this award is really the highlight of my life".

From 2004 she suffered poor health; sadly, she died in June 2011.

QUOITS

William Dice Davies

At 14 Gooseberry Hill, Cwmaman on 13th May 1870 was born the Greatest Welsh Quoits Champion. He was William Dice Davies the son of Thomas and Elizabeth Davies.

He worked at Bwllfa Colliery as a winding engineman for most of his life.

In 1890, he married Hannah Jones the daughter of Evan Jones and Elizabeth Parker. Dice and Hannah had twelve children. After they married, they moved to 32 Mill Street, Trecynon.



When a young man, Dice's great pastime was playing quoits. He devoted much of his leisure time to mastering the art of quoit throwing. After perseverance, practice and patience, he was rewarded with success.

In the year 1899 he reached the pinnacle of fame, being honoured by representing Wales in an international match against England at the grounds of the Castle Hotel, Merthyr Tydfil. So it was on August Bank Holiday Monday that Dice beat T. Hitchens of Somerset in a most

evenly contested game with Dice winning by a single point, 21-20, thus helping Wales to beat England 293 to 257. Also in the Welsh team were three men from Mountain Ash: D. Jones, E. Bramwell and W. Anderson. When they returned to the Cynon Valley there was great rejoicing as these four men, with a total of 78 points, had helped to beat the old enemy!

Back in Merthyr two years later but on the Gwynne's Field, at Cefn Coed, Dice was again in the Welsh team that beat England, this time by 293 to 259.

At the Abercynon Quoiting Grounds in August 1907, he won the South Wales Individual Championship cup. This was despite very unfavourable weather, and darkness had set in before the last two players (including Dice) concluded their games.

In the same year at Heolgerrig, Merthyr, Dice reached the apex of his career when he became the Welsh champion.

He was to go even higher when he beat H. Kirby the captain of England by seven points in an international match in 1920 at Ystrad Rhondda where he helped Wales to beat England once again. So now he was the Champion of Britain!

Davies was a giant of a man, he was about six feet three inches, and weighed in his prime, about sixteen stone — yet he was a gentle giant. He used heavy quoits, so heavy that it took two boys to carry one of his quoits.

Dice represented Wales on 24 occasions and he won the Welsh Championship five times.

At Whitechapel in London in 1923, in a match between England and Wales, Dice was the captain and he and Peake (his assistant) were dressed to kill. The captain started rolling up his shirtsleeves. That was the signal for destruction. Both had the English captain and spectators bamboozled, for their conversation was entirely in Welsh, with no inhibitions at all, even in the enemy stronghold. Dice's opponent was bewildered by the language and his playing and could do nothing right at all. Peake was also a psychologist. Seeing how dispirited the English captain was getting, Peake shouted, "Mae'r diawl wedi torri i galon," (The devil has broken his heart.), "Nawr amdani!" (Now for it!) Dice beat his struggling opponent and Wales won a resounding victory!

What a happy proud man Dice was when the Wales-England International match was held on 3rd August 1936 on the road of his birth; now called Brynmair Road where he had spent his happy boyhood days. Before the

opening, Cwmaman Institute Silver Band played a musical programme. The English team and their supporters were so enthralled with the reception that they asked for the contest to be delayed so they could listen to more of the music!

George Hall, the local M.P., opened the proceedings in front of 2,000 enthusiastic fans. The English were trounced 113 points to the Welsh team's 205 points in a game that lasted for almost five hours. Dice as captain naturally won his game easily. A civic dinner was given at the Institute. Dice aged then 66 stated that he was retiring, although he actually played his last international game against England the following year.

In the 1930s he opened the Park View Billiards Hall at Trecynon, which is now the Park Church.

Dice was a man and a quoter who commanded respect; he was loved and respected by all. He possessed a ready wit, which made him an enjoyable companion and he helped to enrich many a discussion.

This "Grand Old Man of Quoits" died in September 1942, aged 72.

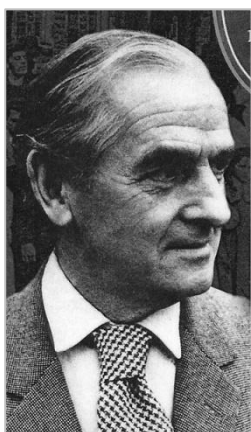
Cwmaman also had another quoits champion. Griff James was a Welsh Champion and International player. In 1935, he pulled off a unique double by winning both the Junior and Senior Welsh championships.

Many valley villages had quoits teams: Trecynon, Abercynon and Newtown (Mountain Ash). Between the wars, Newtown was famous for its quoits internationals: Danny England (1925), Bill Melhuish (1928), Billy Hooper (1935), Billy Bray (1938), Bill Perkins (1939-51) and Orlando Stevens (1948).

Bill Perkins who lived in High Street captained Wales in 1951 and scored 153 points in eight appearances in Welsh colours.

(Information about Griff James was from The Cwmaman Files by Terry Couzens and information about the Newtown Quoits players from Mountain Ash remembered by Bernard Baldwin.)

George Ewart Evans honoured



The neglected father of oral history George Ewart Evans had almost been forgotten in his home town of Abercynon. This was rectified on Saturday, 1st April, 2017 when there was a special commemorative event held there to honour him. He was born that same day in 1909 at 53 Glancynon Terrace.

There, a handsome plaque made of Welsh slate was unveiled. This was done under the auspices of The Rhys Davies Trust (a literary charity) and by the endeavours of Professor Gareth Williams and David Maddox O.B.E., (historian and himself a native of Abercynon).

The plaque was jointly unveiled on the day by Ewart Evans' three daughters, Jane Palmer, Mary Gerson and Susan Gentleman.

Also present were Prof. Dai Smith (chair of the Rhys Davies Trust), Meic Stephens (past director of the Welsh Arts Council), the mayor of RCT and various illuminati of Welsh history including Mrs Celia Thomas, Jeremy Morgan and David Leslie Davies of the CVHS (the Society having contributed towards

the project's expenses). Following the unveiling, a reception was held at Llancaiach Fawr with David Maddox as 'MC'. A lecture on Ewart Evans was also delivered by Prof. Gareth Williams, and there were musical items contributed by Abercynon Male Voice Choir who sang very effectively.

A hardcover book entitled *Ask the Fellows Who Cut the Coal*, (64 pp with a host of colour photos), by Gareth Williams about Evans's work has been published to coincide with the unveiling of the plaque. It is for sale (at £10) in Cynon Valley libraries and soon (hopefully) at the Cynon Valley Museum.

For more information about Ewart Evans, please see Hanes Issue 74.

(This is an edited article by D.L.Davies of the original that first appeared in 'Clochdar', the Cynon Valley's Welsh-language district paper.)

Obituaries

The Society was saddened to hear of the deaths of two individuals who had both made significant contributions to the cultural life of the Aberdare and district.

NANSI SELWOOD (1921-2017)

By David Leslie Davies



Nansi Selwood of Penderyn was the *doyenne* of literary and historical writing in both languages in these parts of Glamorgan and (old) Breconshire. Sadly, she passed away at the age of 95 on 18 February 2017 at 'The Laurels' care home, Trecynon.

She was an accomplished novelist; historian; teacher; pillar of her church and community; a committed Welshwoman; farmer; and a devoted mother and grandmother.

Nansi first attended school at Pontbren-llwyd where her uncle was headmaster, and then Vaynor and Penderyn Grammar School at Cefn Coed. From there, she went to Cardiff University to study history and Welsh. After graduating and completing teacher training, her first post was at Pwllheli before returning south to teach history at Cathays High School, Cardiff where she met her late husband, Jack, who taught French there. They married at Siloam Baptist chapel, Penderyn in 1948 and settled at Pen-cae: Jack farming and Nansi teaching (mainly Welsh) at schools in the Cynon Valley. That is how I met her.

In later years, I and many others enjoyed reading her historical novels, books and articles - in English and Welsh - about the history, farms, estates, families, schools, place-names and social patterns of southern Breconshire and this part of Glamorgan.

Her most widely known work is probably the novel *Brychan Dir*, which won the *Prof. G.J. Williams Memorial Award* in 1987. It was translated into English by her husband as *The Land of Brychan* in 1994 and traces the fortunes of the Bodwigiad (Penderyn), Aberaman Isaf and Llancaeach Fawr families during the Civil War era, 1642-60. She also published a sequel, *Y Rhod yn Troi (The Wheel Turns)* in 1993; a children's novel *Dan Fanner Dafydd Gam (Beneath the*

Banner of Dafydd Gam) in 1991, about a Breconshire gentleman at Agincourt; and various articles in *Llafar Gwlad*, *Brycheiniog* and elsewhere.

She also wrote and published *Penderyn – a history* in 1990, *A History of the Villages of Hirwaun and Rhigos* in 1997 which both drew on her unrivalled knowledge of the area; and *A Portrait of Life in a Welsh Village School, 1874–1906*, about Pontbren-llwyd in 2003.

It was humbling to witness the courage with which Mrs. Selwood faced the vicissitudes of high old age as her eyesight worsened over time, and also the determination she displayed in her 90th year as she renewed her reading ability by mastering Braille. It was an honour to share a platform with her when she unveiled a commemorative plaque on the office of the old Hirwaun ironworks (1757) at Tŷ Mawr in 2009, and to attend her 90th birthday party at Penderyn in October 2011.

Mrs. Selwood's final months were not without challenge as she ultimately lost her sight, had to surrender the independence she valued so greatly and had to leave her beloved Pen-cae for 'The Laurels', Trecynon. It was there she died in February.

In acknowledging my personal debt to her, I can but quote (in free translation) one *englyn* of several composed for her in 2013 on her 92nd birthday:

We are impelled to honour – a lady
who commands our respect;
we craft for her, now, with one voice,
fluent and appropriate praise.

(This note is based on an obituary published in the journal 'Barn' ['Opinion'] in May 2017).

Dafydd Roberts, Dental Surgeon.



David (Dafydd) Gethin Edwards Roberts, who was dentist to many of us, died at Plas Abermad Nursing Home near Aberystwyth on March 5th, aged 98. He was born in 19 Bwllfa Road on November 20th, 1918. For most of his adult life, he lived at Ynyswen, 1 Broniestyn Terrace, Trecynon. As well as dentistry, he was heavily involved in The Little Theatre, and in local politics — being the first elected Plaid Cymru councillor on the Aberdare Urban District Council. He was President of the British Dental Association in 1979. Dafydd attended Cowbridge Grammar School, and then Pontypridd Boys County School for his sixth form years. His father was D.O. Roberts, a former pupil of Aberdare Boys County School, who became Headmaster of Gadlys Boys Central School. D.O. was also Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Aberdare National Eisteddfod in 1956.

Dafydd edited a book of the lectures given by the Rev. Ivor Parry on the history of Aberdare.

My Trip to Patagonia by Lucy Parry

(Below is an edited version of Lucy's account of her visit to Patagonia.
The CVHS made a financial contribution to the costs of Lucy's trip.)



The Chapel House where Lucy met Elis

We arrived in Patagonia on the 20th of October 2016. This was an amazing feeling as we were met by Welsh people who lived there. The picture I had imagined of what it would look like was very different to the Patagonia I was faced with, it was more modern than I expected. We stayed in La Estancia for the first 4 days where we met many different people.

On the first night we met young people, (aged 14–18), who were learning how to speak Welsh. They loved the Welsh language and were very excited to meet us. We played games with them in Welsh so that we could get to know them. Their Welsh speaking skills were amazing — and to think that they lived on the other side of the world!

On day 2, four others and I met a man called Elis; he was 80 years old and lived in the Chapel house next to Bethel Chapel. He had spoken Welsh all his life, which made him very proud to come from Welsh descendants. I had taken with me a plaque dedicated to Alun Jenkins from the Cynon Valley History Society that I gave to Elis to see if he would be able to place this in the chapel in memory of him. We then saw a Welsh Primary school where 100 pupils pay 1500 pesos a term to attend so they can keep the Welsh language going. In the night, we hosted a concert in the primary school could attend. The turnout was amazing and the community were very kind and loved the Welsh language.

On day 3 we went rafting down the river Corcafado. This was a fun experience and the views were amazing. We went for tea in 'Ty Te Nain Maggie' which was a Welsh teashop. There we had seven different types of cake and we sung the Welsh national anthem for the owners, who cried with pride.

The eighth day was the hardest day in the trip for me. We went to Ysgol Y Hendre to see the children and play games with them. The pupils in this school were about 5–12 years old and had to take suitcases to school every day because the school didn't have the equipment for the pupils to use. They had to take their own pens, pencils, rubbers, paper, even toys. It was heartbreaking to see 5-year-olds carrying bags bigger than their bodies on their backs to be able to do things we take for granted. We gave to the school many things that we had brought from Wales such as pencils, crayons etc., and saying goodbye to the children was extremely hard, especially saying goodbye to a little girl called Roselin who stayed by my side throughout the day, and when we took the children to see the

penguins. That night we went to watch the Eisteddfod and some of the group competed, getting first and second places.

On day 9 we went to a dinosaur museum and then to the Eisteddfod where we competed in the choir and came first, this was an amazing feeling.

Overall, I feel immensely proud of having attended such an eye-opening trip. It was an amazing experience that I will never forget. I had the pleasure of meeting people who I will remember for the rest of my life, not just those from Patagonia but also the other 24 young people who went with me. I have realised that Patagonians are extremely proud of their Welsh descendants and that they eat more cakes than meat. They have cakes for breakfast, lunch and dinner!

Recent Historical Television programmes

Vienna: Empire, Dynasty and Dream. BBC4. A three part series by Simon Sebag Montefiore. He explores how the Habsburg dynasty dominated central Europe for nearly 1,000 years.

George III: The Genius of the Mad King. BBC2. Although he is infamous for his madness, for the first 50 years of his reign he was a restless patron of the arts and science and a man driven by his sense of duty to family and country. The makers of this film obtained a preview of his letters, diaries and family documents that have been under lock and key for 200 years in Windsor Castle. They are now available on the internet at

<https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/georgian-papers-programme#/>

1066: A year to Conquer England. BBC2. A 3-part series. With its documentary elements steered by Dan Snow and the drama led by Ed Stoppard, (as Duke William), and Adam James, (as Harold), it recounts the events of this momentous, fateful year that led to the Battle of Hastings.

Versailles: BBC2 .Second series. 10 parts. This historical romp about the reign of King Louis XIV continues. The locations, costumes and wigs are marvellous.

Recent Historical books

Lorenz: Breaking Hitler's Top Secret Code at Bletchley Park by Jerry Roberts.

Ann Clwyd: Rebel with a Cause, the autobiography of Ann Clwyd, our M.P. since 1984, and who aged 80, will be standing for re-election in June in the General Election.

Feedback

I would be grateful for feedback about any articles in this issue. It is always good to know what members think of them or if you have any additional information about them. I also welcome articles on any subject about our valley's history for possible publication, Ed.

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