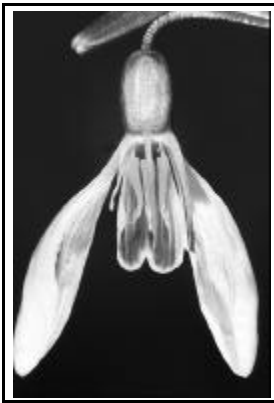


THE BRIDGE



To see the nodding heads of snowdrops peeping through is to know that winter is coming to an end. Snowdrops are hardy plants, and will flower from January through to March whatever the weather - in fact, the colder the better, for then the flowers last longer. Snowdrops are happy and look their best in light shade, so plant under trees. They appreciate well-drained soil, so adding sharp sand when planting bulbs is a good idea. They don't establish themselves easily when planted as dry bulbs, and are best planted out when still in full leaf, and with the bulb wrapped to preserve moisture. Once established however, a colony of snowdrops will persist well, and spread fairly easily if allowed to. Divide clumps of plants every three years (especially if growing some of the garden varieties) as this will avoid overcrowding. Spread them into suitable places around the garden, and they will make a lovely feature, to see when the winter winds are at their harshest and we're most in need of cheering up!

JANUARY 2008

No. 289

DIARY OF EVENTS - JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2008

Tue 1st Jan	NEW YEAR'S DAY 2008
Thur 3rd Jan	Four Crosses WI, 7.30 pm
Sun 6th Jan	Cast Meeting for the 'Show' at Llandrinio Village Hall
Tue 8th Jan	School Term begins Llanymynech Gardeners' Association
Wed 9th Jan	Prayer Meeting at the Rectory, 11 am
Thur 10th Jan	Llandrinio Village Hall Committee, 7.30 pm
Sun 13th Jan	Llandrinio Mothers' Union Christmas Lunch
Mon 14th Jan	Heartstart Training, 7 pm, Llandrinio Village Hall
Wed 16th Jan	Mexican Evening at the Punch Bowl
Thur 17th Jan	Llandysilio School Governors' Meeting
Fri 18th Jan	Race Nite at Four Crosses Village Centre English Plygain, Arddleen Tabernacle "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" begins
Sun 20th Jan	Plough Sunday Service, Llandrinio Parish Church
Mon 21st Jan	Christian Unity Week service, Llandrinio Village Hall, 7.30 Llanymynech Historical Society
Tue 22nd Jan	Heartstart Training, 1 pm, Four Crosses Village Centre
Sun 27th Jan	Joint Service, Llandrinio Parish Church / Tabernacle
Fri 1st Feb	Closing date for the Talent Show
Tue 5th Feb	Shrove Tuesday
Wed 6th Feb	Ash Wednesday
Mon 11th Feb	Llandrinio Mothers' Union
Thur 14th Feb	Llandysilio Mothers' Union
Sat 16th Feb	Llanymynech Gardeners' Association annual lunch
Tue 19th Feb	Deanery Conference
Sat 23rd Feb	Llandrinio MU Coffee Morning ('Make a Mother's Day')
Mon 25th Feb	Beginning of 'Fairtrade Fortnight'

Please note that meetings, events etc will be included here only if requested - please provide information to the Shop or via bridgemag@bilkro.fsnet.co.uk. Please note also that it may be a week or so into the month before the magazine reaches readers.

LLANDRINIO VILLAGE HALL

available for
meetings, parties, dances etc
Fully licensed bar

Booking Secretary

Mrs Olive Evans
01938 556680

Some future events :-

1st March - Concert in support of Llandysilio Parish Church
2nd March - Mothering Sunday
11th March - Royal British Legion
16th March - Palm Sunday
23rd March - Easter Day (Special service with Easter Egg Hunt at Llandrinio Parish Church)
4th April - Concert in support of Llandrinio Village Hall
25th April - Variety Evening, Llandrinio Village Hall
11th May - County Service of Remembrance, Montgomery

Thanks and Good Wishes

● Gwyneth & Jack Evans wish to congratulate their daughter Maggie on completing the 250 mile sponsored cycle ride in India, raising over £3,000 in the process for the charity Women for Women.

● I would like to thank all who helped with the Over 60's Christmas Lunch, and those who donated items, including two wines, Mrs C Griffith, Sherry, Mrs E Walker and the lady who donated the fruit, also Steve, Becky, Hannah and Harriet for the entertainment.
Olive

● Thanks to everyone who supported Santa's Tour of the Village on 16th December - obviously particular thanks to Santa himself and his team of helpers raising money for Hope House - and of course to Aubrey Kirkham for loaning his vintage fire engine, and being an enthusiastic driver and ringer of bells!

● Thanks to all members of the Benefice Choir who worked very hard to prepare Christmas music for the carol services at Llandrinio and Penrhos Parish Churches. There were many appreciative comments, and they were well deserved!

● Mark and Stella, the Old Cat People, would like to say a big thank-you for all the help and support they have received during 2007. Special thanks go to Leigh and Declan of the Rendezvous Cattery, who gave us the use of their big shed for our Christmas bazaar, which raised £196. It was so good to see such a good local turnout, as well as loyal supporters and helpers. Many thanks go to Jean and her staff at the local Post Office, who let us have a cat food donation box there so that people can donate cat food to help keep all the old cats going. Let's hope 2008 is just as good - and we wish everybody a happy New Year.

● A happy New Year to all readers of 'The Bridge' from Mrs Joyce Burgoyne - and thanks to all who work so hard within the churches and community organisations and activities of our parish of Llandrinio.

● All our good wishes to 'The Bridge' for 2008 - Elsie Thomas, Joan Beaumont and Nansi Williams.

● The family of Tom Richards would like to thank all the people who helped to celebrate Tom's 80th birthday, and who gave so generously to his chosen charity. £325 was raised and a certificate of appreciation has been received from the Air Ambulance crew. We hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did, and we thank you all very much.

**Happy
New Year!**

*... to all our readers, from everyone
involved in preparing, producing and
distributing 'The Bridge'.*

2008

THE W C

An English schoolteacher was in Switzerland looking for a room to rent when she would begin her teaching there the following year. She asked the schoolmaster if he could recommend any. He took her to see several rooms, and when everything was settled she returned home to make final preparations for the move. When she arrived home, the thought suddenly occurred to her that she had not seen a WC around the place. She immediately wrote a note to the schoolmaster asking him if there was a WC close to the room. The schoolmaster, being a poor master of English, consulted with the local parish priest, but the only solution they could come up with for the letters 'WC' was 'Wesleyan Chapel'. The schoolmaster therefore wrote as follows to the English lady :-

Dear Madam,

I take great comfort in informing you that a WC is situated nine miles from the house in the corner of a beautiful grove of pine trees, surrounded by lovely grounds. It is capable of holding 229 people, and it is open on Sundays and Thursdays only.

As there are a great many people expected during the summer months, I would suggest that you come early, although there is usually plenty of standing room. This is an unfortunate situation, particularly if you are in the habit of going regularly. You will no doubt be glad to hear that a good many bring their lunch and make a day of it, while others, who can't afford to go by car, arrive just in time. I would especially advise your ladyship to go on Thursdays when there is an organ accompanist. The acoustics are excellent and even the most delicate sounds can be heard everywhere. It may interest you to know that my daughter was married in the WC and it was there she met her husband. I can remember the rush there was for seats. There were ten people to a seat usually reserved for one, and it was wonderful to see the expression on their faces.

The newest attraction is a bell, donated by a wealthy resident of the district, which rings every time a person enters. A Bazaar is to be held to raise money for plush seats for all, since the people believe it is a long-felt want.

My wife is rather delicate so she can't go regularly: it is almost a year since she went last. Naturally it pains her not to be able to go more often. I shall be delighted to reserve the best seat for you, if you wish, where you will be seen by all. For the children there is a special time so that they will not disturb the elders.

Hoping to have been of service to you, I remain,

Sincerely,

The Schoolmaster.

(Sent in by Olive)

SOME JANUARY REFLECTIONS

Older people in the area where I grew up used sometimes to call January the 'Wolf Month', but without really knowing why. I suspect, though, that, back in the days when there were still wolves around, this hard winter month would have found them at their most dangerous. Their hunger would have made them more likely to attack the flocks and even to enter the villages, and travellers would need to be wary.

One of my January memories is of my father 'first-footing' us on New Year's Eve. Dad was originally from the North-East of England where, as in Scotland, New Year was a more important festival than Christmas. We would listen for the last stroke of midnight on the church clock - our own clocks didn't count, it was the public clock that told us the old year had passed and January 1st had begun. The custom then was that you would wait behind the front door for a dark haired person to arrive. For us this person would always be a lightly disguised version of our Dad, but he would carry with him a lump of coal and a piece of bread, a silver coin and a sprig of holly. The coal promised that the house would always be warm, and the bread and the coin that all in the house would have enough to eat and to spend, while the greenery symbolised the wish for a long and healthy life. After a nip of whisky, Dad would then take a pan of ashes out, which I suppose was a sign of the departing Old Year.

There is an old belief dating from Saxon times that the second day of January is one of the unluckiest of the year, and not therefore an auspicious day on which to be born. Certainly January is often the coldest month, with a strong chance of bitter weather spreading in from continental Europe at this time. St Hilary's Day, 13th January, is reputedly the coldest day of the year, a tradition that may well date back to the Great Frost of 1086, which began on this day and lasted until well into March. Other severe cold spells were experienced between the mid 16th and mid 18th centuries, sometimes called the Little Ice Age. The Thames would freeze over each winter, and Frost Fairs were held on the ice. Henry VIII is said to have travelled all the way from central London to Greenwich over the ice during the winter of 1536. The last Frost Fair was held in the winter of 1814, and lasted only four days, during which time an elephant was led across the river below Blackfriars Bridge.

The first Monday after Twelfth Night (5th January, the eve of the Epiphany) was known as Plough Monday, and my grandfather could remember this day as having its own customs. The only one that survived into my childhood was of a plough being brought into church on the Sunday to be blessed at the end of the service - but Granddad recalled the eve of Plough Monday as a night of partying and singing, with groups going from house to house around the village.

**QUOTABLE
QUOTE**

"The trouble with telling a good story is that it usually reminds the other fellow of a dull one" - Sid Caesar

The closing date for the **TALENT SHOW** (see article in last month's 'Bridge') is February 1st. Please join in!
Stacey

QUIZ - Thanks to everyone who entered the Quiz at the Christmas Fair. No-one had them all correct. Three had four answers wrong, and of those the winner was Mr Frank Hillidge, Arddleen.

Answers - Sunny, A40, Escort, Civic, Legend, Cortina, Montego, Senator, Austin, Audi, Colt, Lotus, Cavalier, Rover, Passat, Ital, Yugo, Fiat, Princess, Marina, Ford, Morris, Minor, Triumph, Acclaim, Cherry, Lada, Accord, Charade, Mini, Golf, Shogun, Santana, Viva.
Olive

LLANMYNECH GARDENERS' ASSOCIATION - There were several rival attractions - i.e. Christmas dinners - on December 11th, so several members were away, but an eager group sat down for the Quiz compiled by Jane Postings. Some members are vary knowledgeable, too! The winning table was led by Isobel Jones. Our next meeting, on January 8th, is a 'bring and share' supper, and a home grown 'tell a tale'. In February we have our annual lunch, on 16th, and in March and April there are two competitions to prepare for - a planted container of foliage plants, for March, and a planted container of flowering plants for April.
JP

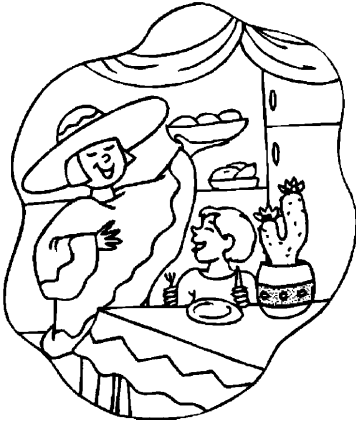
CHORAL CONCERT - A choral concert at Four Crosses Village Centre, in support of Llandysilio Parish Church is planned for Saturday 1st March, St David's Day. More details of this next month.

THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY takes place each year between 18th and 25th January, and there is a service at which members of all Christian denominations in and around Four Crosses, Llandrinio, Llanymynech, Pant and Arddleen are welcome. This year's service will be held at Llandrinio Village Hall on Monday 21st January, at 7.30 pm.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION, Llandrinio Branch, held its AGM on Monday 10th December at the Golden Lion Hotel, Four Crosses. Those attending specially remembered Mr Jack Jenkins and Mr Henry Vaughan, at the opening Exhortation. Officers of the Branch will remain the same for the coming year, and reports of the year's events made particular mention of the good attendances at Remembrancetide events and the support given for the Poppy Appeal which had ensured that the year's total was higher than that for 2006. Thanks were expressed to all who work for and support the Branch, and particularly for Mr Bryan Foulkes' work as County Chairman, and Mr Ken Lambourne's organisation of the Poppy Appeal. The next Branch Meeting will be held on Tuesday 11th March.

LLANDRINIO VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE meets at the Hall on Thursday 10th January, at 7.30 pm. Please come and support your community hall - new members are always very welcome!

IN THE BLEAK MIDWINTER, TRY A LITTLE MEXICAN!



It's cold outside, it's wet, it's dreary. Bring a bit of warmth and spice into Winter with a Mexican night at The Punch Bowl! On Wednesday 16th January we are holding a speciality Mexican night - a three course Mexican meal plus a Margarita or Corona, all for £14.95. The menu - **Starters:** choice of Sopa De Tortilla (tomato based soup with crispy tortilla strips, fresh avocado and crumbly cheese), Nachos (tortilla chips with melted cheese served with Jalapenos, Guacamole and sour cream) or Quesa Fundido (melted cheese with chorizo or mushrooms with warm flour tortillas); **Main Course:** Mole Poblamo

(the national dish of Mexico, chicken based), Pollo De Chipotle (chicken strips in a smoky, spicy sauce), Swordfish Steak (with mango salsa, chipotle mash & salad), Beef Baritto (beef, cheese, lettuce, onion, tomato and chilli with Guacamole sour cream on top), Chick Pea & Potato Chimichanga; **Sweets:** Flan Especial, Banana & Toffee Chimichanga with Vanilla Ice Cream, Pecan Pie. If this seems a nice change from all that turkey, or you just fancy a special night out with the opportunity to try genuine, Mexican dishes, please call to book a table on 830247 (due to the limited space, if there is sufficient demand we will have another Mexican evening on Saturday 19th January and, if successful, make these a regular event).

Sue and Graham

LLANDYSILIO CHURCH IN WALES SCHOOL

At the end of term assembly on Friday 21st December, Mrs Kath Owen was presented with a card and gifts by the children, staff and governors on her retirement. Kath has been much more than school cleaner during her time at the school, and she will be greatly missed. A huge card, made by children and signed by everyone, was accompanied by garden tokens, flowers and other gifts.

Mrs Alison Ellis, head teacher, also reported on the progress of the new building. At one time the expectation had been that it would have been ready for use by about now, but we do now expect the preparation work to be under way soon after the half-term break next term, with the building seriously taking shape during the Easter holidays.

Termly awards were given for school work, attendance and behaviour, and the assembly also included a photocall following the Macmillan Coffee Afternoon organised by Mrs Kath Jones, which raised £375.

MORE ON ROAD SPEEDS

At the suggestion of Graham Brown, I contacted Inspector Graeme Dickson of Welshpool Police to ask about initiating a "Community Speed Watch" scheme in Llandrinio.

I have had a phone call from Inspector Dickson who explained that his force were not going to get involved in such an initiative because of "Health & Safety" concerns. Also, the force would need to administer and monitor such an initiative, and they do not have the time or funds to do this. However, there will be a change to policing in the area. This will include a "Police & Community Team" (PACT). I have been asked if I would like to be involved and will be invited to the first meeting.

The details of this meeting will be published in The Bridge. I understand that it will be a forum, open to all residents to put forward their local concerns. This will allow the local officer to concentrate on areas of priority for the area - including excess speed. Inspector Dickson will keep me posted on progress, and is happy for this information to be circulated in "The Bridge"

Malcolm Turner

BUY LOCAL - IT MAKES SENSE!

If you shop at a big supermarket, everything's so much cheaper, isn't it? Or is it? Tins of beans may be cheap, but fresh fruit, vegetables and meat can often be more expensive in fact - in terms of what you and I pay at the till - at a big store than in your local village store, market or farm shop. Add into the mix all the other costs we don't think about - how much it costs me and you to drive to the supermarket, how much it costs the environment when big trucks are ferrying products up and down the country, and how much it costs our farmers when their market is limited to just one or two big and powerful players - and things don't look quite so clear. The convenience of being able to buy so many things all in one place is, of course, undeniable, and the big stores are here to stay, but it really is worth while making the effort to shop local for at least some of what we need - and we may well also find there are some bargains to be had!

HEART START TRAINING

Vital First Aid training, free of charge

Llandrinio Village Hall -

Monday 14th January, 7-9 pm

Four Crosses Village Centre - Tuesday
22nd January 1 - 3 pm

To book your place or to ask any questions please ring Carol Davies on 01691 831008.

**LIGHT BUFFET &
RACE NIGHT**

Friday 18th January 2008
in aid of Four Crosses Village
Centre

Under starting orders at 8 pm

Licensed Bar

Admission by Ticket - £3 from
Dennis 830845 or Carol 831008

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

AMERICAN APPLE AND PARSNIP SOUP

Ingredients, for approximately 2 pints of soup:

¼ lb butter	1 medium onion, diced
4-6 parsnips, peeled and diced	2 medium cooking apples, peeled and diced
1 pint apple juice	1 pint chicken or vegetable stock
Sea salt and black pepper	(sufficient to cover vegetables)
2 teaspoons honey	

Method:

- 1 Melt the butter in a heavy saucepan of sufficient size for the soup.
- 2 Sauté the onions until they are translucent.
- 3 Add the apple juice or cider and reduce to about half to two-thirds of the original volume.
- 4 Add the parsnips and stock, cover and cook at a steady heat until parsnips are fully cooked, then add the apples.
- 5 Continue to cook for about two minutes.
- 6 Puree soup until smooth, reducing on a low heat, stirring from time to time to ensure it does not burn. Add the honey, plus salt and pepper to taste towards the end of this time.

Double cream may be added to the soup before serving.

DECEMBER WHIST DRIVE

11 tables + 1 - M/C Dai Lewis

Ladies: 1 Martin Evans 2 Margaret Williams 3 Mari Jones

Gents: 1 B Watkins 2 Marion Downes 3 E Thomas

Knockout - 1 Gwyn Ashton and Ida Powell
 2 B Watkins and Martin Evans

A POEM FOR THE NEW YEAR

Like open windows may your decisions be,
 Fields of promise, vistas of serenity.
 May no dark clouds ever rob you of sight,
 Let the road to the horizon be radiant and bright.
 Though stormy weather may bring times of pain,
 May happenings of joy be there to gain.
 Take time to listen, never hurry away
 When friends and companions have greetings to say.

Joyce Burgoyne

LLANDRINIO METHODIST CHAPEL, RHOS COMMON

No details of who is to lead services during January had reached 'The Bridge' in time for this month's publication.

Services at Llandrinio Methodist Chapel are held at 11 am each Sunday, except that there is no service on the first Sunday of the month (in January, Sunday 6th).

There will be a Guild Meeting at Pant Methodist Chapel on Wednesday 9th January, at 7.30 pm.



CAROLS

More than 50 people gathered to sing 'Carols Round the Tree' on Sunday 23rd December. Thanks to Ann Dackevych for playing, and to all who helped with refreshments!

POPPY APPEAL

THANK YOU to everyone who helped with the 2007 appeal, which raised £1634.60 for the work of the Royal British Legion, made up as follows :-

Daisy Morris, Pant - £438.53	Bryn Offa School - £37.16
Cross Guns - £31.53	Llanymynech Golf Club - £35.32
Pryce Southerton, Llandysilio - £155.28	Ashton's/Costcutter - £57.12
Four Crosses Inn - £24.88	Golden Lion Hotel - £10.50
Spar, Four Crosses - £21.61	Llandysilio School - £18.51
Hairdressers, Llanymynech - £8.19	Chinese Takeaway - £21.23
Dolphin Hotel - £8.04	Cross Keys - £18.87
Bradford Arms - £28.43	Pant Motor Bodies - £36.39
Llanymynech Post Office - £41.63	Indian Restaurant - £11.48
Bourton Grange - £6.32	Marion Ingram, Ll'm'nch - £19.24
Carreghofa School - £14.31	1st Llanymynech Brownies - £5.00
Horseshoe Inn - £20.03	Arddleen School - £36.40
Jack Evans, Pool Quay - £36.07	Punch Bowl Inn - £22.58
Bryn Hafren School - £39.48	Mary Marshall, Bausley - £87.16
Mark Nixon, Haimwood - £46.20	Admiral Rodney Inn - £31.31
Criggion Quarry - £8.69	Llandrinio Post Office - £87.44
Gavin & Erin Ellis, Fxn Mnr - £56.60	Brian Foulkes (Enfield) - £27.06
Four Crosses Surgery - £17.96	Glad Jones, Rhos Common - £7.62
Powys Arms - £21.42	Festival, Llandrinio VH - £31.00
Joan Levin Shop, Pant - £8.00	



Winter is icumen in,
Lhude [*loud*] sing Goddamm,
Raineth drop and staineth slop,
And how the wind doth ramm !
Sing : Goddamm.

K. Lambourne

*Ezra Pound "Ancient Music",
a parody of the Old English
"Summer is icumen in, lhude
sing cuccu."*

A Word to the WISE¹¹

And so begins the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Eight. 07 ended with some uncertainties about, both nationally and internationally, so I wonder how the year to come will develop? Will our lads come home from Basra? Will our homes all take a sudden dip in value? Will there be anything left in my size by the time I get to the Sales? Oh, so many questions!

In times gone by oracular visionaries used to do strange things with the entrails of chickens in order to discern and predict the future. Or wise men like the ones who journeyed to Bethlehem scanned and measured the skies. Mind you, using the stars to foretell the future is still big business, isn't it? Jonathan Caynor and Russell Grant can't claim to have done so badly, can they? I do wonder whether they could predict their success when they first started out!

Anyway, nowadays it's more respectable to predict the future using focus groups and think tanks. Groups of experts emerge from huddling around their computers to assure us that by the year 2050 the Arctic and Antarctic ice caps will both have boiled away, while the M1 will have had to expand to 25 lanes in each direction to cope with all the traffic, but none of that traffic will be able to move because the world's oil supplies will have run out, and in any case most of us will be far too obese to fit behind the wheel even if we'd wanted to.

There are lies, damned lies, and statistics, as the saying goes (no-one seems to know WHO said it, by the way - possibly Mark Twain, who was good at soundbites, or maybe Benjamin Disraeli). Anyway, even worse than ordinary statistics, which do at least represent an attempt to give chapter and verse about something real that can be observed and measured, are the made up facts and figures that emerge when you (or, more likely, THEY) have fed stuff into a computer and asked it to predict what happens next.

People used to ask me for provide stuff to feed into a computer (since you asked, details of standard, boiler and electrical service operations performed on railway locomotives). The engineers would report to me what they'd done, and I would convert that into the relevant figures and send them in. But all too often the operation performed didn't relate to any particular figures in the manual I was supposed to use. I'm not an engineer, so I had to ask the engineers to point me in the right direction; but they were often too busy to answer my questions, so I did the sensible thing and made things up - educated guesses, which might alas have been miles off. But I bet that once they got into the computer they became gospel truth. So treat with extreme scepticism the fruit of the computer - it's only as good as the information that's been fed in, and THAT's only as good as the idiot providing it. And I remember all too well when that idiot was me!

So my words as I look into the new year are simply 'Que sera, sera', what will be will be. 'There may be troubles ahead . . .' - or there might not be, who knows? Enjoy it while you can - and if on your way through the year you can help a few others enjoy it more than they might have, well then, so much the better!

LLANDRINIO PARISH CHURCH and the churches of the Border **Bridges Group**
SUNDAY SERVICES THIS MONTH **FLOWERS**

6th	Epiphany	9.00 Holy Communion	<i>New flower rota not available as 'The Bridge' went to press - see notices in church.</i>
13th	Bapt of Christ	6.30 Evening Prayer	
20th	Epiphany 3	11.15 Family Communion	
27th	Epiphany 4	11.15 Holy Communion	

The service on Sunday 27th January will be a United Service to which we warmly welcome our friends from Arddleen Tabernacle.

MOTHERS' UNION

Llandrinio Mothers' Union Christmas Lunch will take place at the Punch Bowl, Llandrinio, on Sunday 13th January. The next meeting will be on Monday 11th February at 7.30 pm. This will be the Annual General Meeting. Visitors, friends and prospective members are always very welcome at our meetings. Llandrinio Mothers' Union will be taking part in the annual MU Mothering Sunday appeal, and a coffee morning is planned for Saturday 23rd February - more about this next month.

PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY

The next meeting for Prayer and Bible Study will be on Wednesday 9th January at the Rectory. We meet at 11 am for a time of discussion, followed by prayer and a simple 'soup and rolls' lunch. Everyone is warmly welcomed.

FAMILY COMMUNION

Our Family Communion on Sunday 20th January will have a 'Plough Sunday' theme, and is an opportunity to pray for our farms and farmers at the beginning of the New Year. Children attending are invited to bring toy tractors etc, to be blessed at the altar as symbols of the 'real thing'.

ASH WEDNESDAY

An early Easter means an early start to Lent. Ash Wednesday is on 6th February, and there will be a service of Holy Communion on that day at Llandysilio Church, at 7.30 pm.

DEANERY CONFERENCE

A Deanery Conference meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 19th February. More details next month.

SERVICES AT THE OTHER CHURCHES [* = Holy Communion]

	Llandysilio	Penrhos	Criggion
6th	11.15 *	11.15	10.00 *
13th	9.00 * & 11.15	11.15 *	10.00 *
20th	11.15	9.00 *	10.00 *
27th	9.00 *	10.00 *	10.00 *

FEATHER REPORT Musings from the Rectory Garden

More and more species of birds are beginning to visit gardens and feeders on a regular basis. The great-spotted woodpecker is a good example, which I've written about in past months. Tree creepers were regular visitors to our previous garden, whose mature trees included a redwood, whose soft bark has become a favourite hunting-ground for tree creepers, as they probe for insects with their long, slightly curved beaks. I love to see them spiralling upwards around the trunk of a tree like little creeping mice. One of my neighbours back then had a tree creeper which regularly came to a feeder on his patio to take peanuts; this is very unusual tree creeper behaviour, but I've read recently that they can be fairly easily persuaded to take food from a feeder fixed to the trunk of a tree. I've not tested this myself, though.

Another bird we saw in our winter garden back then was the blackcap. This is a member of the warbler family, almost all of whose members are summer visitors to these islands. The scarce Dartford warbler does stay here through the winter, as do small numbers of chiffchaffs and Cetti's warblers, all in the south of England. Then there are the goldcrest and the firecrest, our two tiniest British species: goldcrests are here all year round, and they are regular visitors to my garden in winter, while firecrests actually arrive here in small numbers to over-winter, mostly in Cornwall and Devon.

The blackcap used to be entirely a summer visitor, arriving in March and leaving in August or September; but in recent years these birds have become winter regulars in some gardens. In fact they may well not be the same birds we have seen (or heard - the blackcap has a rich and melodious sing) in summer, as research suggests that some at least of those seen in winter gardens are continental birds that have learned to travel west instead of south.

I'm happy to say that a pair has been spending a lot of time in my present garden through December. I say a pair - there is indeed a male and a female, but I'm not presuming to know their marital relationship outside the breeding season - some birds mate for life, but I don't know whether blackcaps do. Both sexes have soft grey plumage, a little browner on the back, and with no obvious markings save the one that gives the bird its name - the male has a very distinct black cap to his head. The female has a chestnut-brown cap, and young blackcaps are also 'brown-caps' until they achieve full adult plumage.

Blackcaps are quite shy birds, so I'm lucky to have glimpsed these. They are really quite abundant in summer, but much more often heard than seen. They will nest in gardens, especially if they're a bit overgrown, as they like to hide among the brambles and briars. A typical blackcap family will have four to six youngsters.

Like all warblers, blackcaps are insect-eaters, but they are of course much less fussy in the winter. My visitors have spent most of their time eating the berries of my pyracantha, which are also popular with winter blackbirds and thrushes.

TABERNACLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ARDDLEEN

Sunday services for January :-

6th	11.00 am	Philip Langford
13th	11.00 am	Pastor S. Donohoe
20th	10.30 am	Joint Communion Service at Welshpool
27th	11.15 am	Joint service at Llandrinio Church'

'Come and Worship' is held on the first and third Sunday of each month in the schoolroom at 7.00 pm

The annual carol service for the village was held on Saturday 15th December at 7.00 pm As well as carols and readings, puppet sketches were performed by Nick James, Jane James and Stephanie Benbow, from Llanfair. The collection was donated to 'Age Concern' to assist local projects.

Our annual English 'plygain' will be held on Friday evening, 18th January.

For any enquiries, please contact our church secretary, Mrs Vena Jones on 01938 590350.

**A WARM WELCOME TO ALL.
REQUESTS FOR PRAYER ARE INVITED.**

ADVERTISERS

We are very grateful to the advertisers who support the production and printing of this magazine, and at the same time we are pleased to support local business by providing a platform. We ask advertisers to make a donation of £5 per quarter, £10 per half year, £15-£20 for a year. Regular advertisers please note that many of our ads are due for renewal this month: please contact Llandrinio Shop or Revd Bill Rowell to ensure we continue to carry your ad.

We are always happy to carry want-ads or adverts for local and social events, and we make no charge for this, though we do appreciate donations towards our costs. The magazine is of course distributed to every household in Llandrinio, and to many beyond.

Please note that the web version of 'The Bridge' does not carry advertisements. If you are interested in a listing on our web pages, please contact the Webmaster.

COVER PICTURES

Our cover picture through 2008 will be an appropriate flower for the month, beginning this month with the snowdrop. Genuinely wild snowdrops are rather scarce, but this flower has been widely naturalised along hedgerows and in woodland, as well as escaping quite readily from our gardens.

LLANDRINIO CONSOLIDATED CHARITIES

Despite the impressive title, the Consolidated Charities is a very small charity fund, which over recent years has had an annual income of not much more than £60. As with other small charities, the Trustees have faced pressure over recent years from the Charity Commissioners, who would like small charities like this one to be wound up or merged with a larger charity. However, so far this has not proved possible as the Trustees' preferred choice of charity with which to merge was not acceptable to the Charity Commissioners.

The purpose of the Charities is to support poor people within the historic parish of Llandrinio (it is not specifically for widows or any other group). Seeking a way of obtaining the maximum spread of benefit from a small fund, the Trustees agreed at Christmas 2006 to grant the whole of the monies available towards the cost of the Over 60's Lunch rather than to individual applicants. But since we are not sure quite what the future of the Lunch will be, the Trustees have reconsidered this, and in 2007 did once again to respond to specific requests.

The land known as Poor's Patch was the source of most of the annual income of the Charities, along with a small income from investments and some very small rental payments. This land has now been sold, which means that the Trustees have some decisions to make as to the future - keeping in mind of course the original purposes of the Charities, and the wellbeing of the community these monies were given to support. Once a decision is taken, and subject to the approval of the Charity Commissioners, details will be published in 'The Bridge', as will a version of this letter, so that residents are consulted and kept fully informed of what is proposed.

The Trustees, The Llandrinio Consolidated Charities.

LLANMYNECH HISTORICAL SOCIETY - MEMBERS WANTED!

As you may know, Llanymynech Historical Society has been established for many years and meets monthly, in pleasant company and surroundings, to hear about and discuss a wide range of historical subjects from the very earliest periods up to recent times.

We are beginning to experience the effect of a falling membership and urgently need to reverse this trend. A paid-up membership of forty-plus is needed to meet our outgoings whilst, at the same time, keeping our annual subscription at a reasonable level. The main expenditure is the fees which we pay guest speakers. These often travel some distance in difficult winter weather. If we are to attract good speakers we must be prepared to pay their reasonable fees and travel costs. Our other expenditure is the modest rent which we pay for the use of the hall. If we are unable to improve our membership numbers we will, over the next year or so, use up our small balance in hand and the Society will close. This I believe would be a loss to Llanymynech and the surrounding area. *PTO*

So, if you are interested in history, local or general, and would like to spend an evening in pleasant company, come to our first meeting of 2008 on Monday 21st January, in the Presbyterian Chapel Hall in Chapel Lane, Llanymynech, for a 7.30 pm start. There will be a very short AGM followed by a 'members' evening' when members will have an opportunity to talk on a subject which is special to them. The evening is always rounded off with tea and biscuits.

Of course we'd love also to see again those who have come to our meetings in the past.

Chris Backshall, Chairman



REPORTS

FOUR CROSSES

There was an air of Christmas festivity at the meeting held on December 6th. Christmas cards were being exchanged and there seemed to be smiles all round. A Christmas card had been received from the County Chairman, also wishing us all a happy New Year.

The business meeting didn't take very long. Several dates of special events between December and June were noted, including a trip to Amsterdam from 28th April to 2nd May. Isobel Jones gave her report of the Autumn Council Meeting. Thanks had been received from the Llandysilio School PTA for the bags of clothing they had received. In all they collected 360 bags, which brought in £600 - a great help to school funds.

The winners of the monthly competitions were announced: (1) Jean Foulkes, (2) Christine Savage, (3) Kathleen Foulkes. The Attendance Cup will be shared between Kathleen Foulkes, Isobel Jones, Susie Jay and Marion James. The draw prize winners for the evening were Susie Jay, Jean Rhodes and Jean Foulkes.

Our speaker was one of our own members, Isobel Jones, who had brought with her numerous items using different crafts. They were so interesting - hand crocheted lace, hand knitted garments, dolls, a machine embroidered picture and a water colour painted by Isobel, to name but a few! The lucky winner of the painting was Jean Rhodes. Instead of our usual biscuits, scones and cuppa we enjoyed a 'bring and share' supper, and a natter! Trifle to follow!!! Who said that WI was dull? We always enjoy ourselves, and would welcome new members.

Glad Jones

ARDDLEEN

A good time was had by all at our Christmas party. A quiz was organised by Sue Lampshire and Chris Hillidge. We also celebrated a special birthday of our ex-President, Pat Barnet. A lovely cake was made by Elaine Gittins for the occasion, followed by a glass of Buck's Fizz and supper. Two trophies for the year were presented to the winners: Pauline Dawkins won the rose bowl, and Daisy Jones the cup for the Flower of the Month. The raffle was won by Pauline

Dawkins, and Sue Lampshire won the monthly competition, for a 'fancy Christmas hat'. Daisy Jones won the Flower of the Month competition. Our next meeting is on Wednesday January 2nd 2008 at 7.30 pm.

WINTER FLOWERS

January is probably the least colourful month of the year in our gardens and our countryside. Many of the brightly coloured berries will have gone, harvested by birds and other creatures, and there's nothing left of the autumn leaves. But all is not completely bare, and there are some colourful flowers about if one knows where to look.

Some flowers, like daisies on our lawns, can turn up at any season, and a spell of mild winter weather can open up a few of them. In our gardens, the bright yellow of winter jasmine is a delight - usually out by mid November, it will flower on through the winter, as will certain mahonias (or Oregon grape), with their evergreen, slightly prickly leaves. Witch hazel, grown by gardeners as much for their colourful autumn leaves as anything, will produce spidery yellow blooms through the winter. There is also a shrubby honeysuckle, *Lonicera fragrantissima* (very fragrant, as the name suggests) that will flower in January and February: its flowers are creamy white on bare stems - the leaves will follow later. The first bulbs of spring will offer flowers in January too, though the timing will depend on how mild the weather has been. Winter aconite has yellow flowers, and does well naturalised in shady areas; glory of the snow (*Chionodoxa*) presents bright blue stars of flowers, and is always one of the first-flowering bulbs - it's a native of Turkey; and first of all is the snowdrop, of which there are several different garden types, some of which have become widely naturalised in hedgerows, woodlands and churchyards.

Genuinely wild snowdrops, where you can find them, can be quite a spectacle from late January onwards. Another wild flower to be seen at this time of the year - it grows opposite Penrhos Church, for example - is the butterbur, a pink flowered relative of the daisy. Its spikes of tufty flowers are visible from early December onwards, while the large leaves - like those of its relative the coltsfoot - appear after the flowers. It tends to prefer rather damp places.

Some of our earliest flowers are less immediately attractive, because they are dependant on wind pollination, but they are still a delight to see. Catkins of various kinds will begin to show by the end of the month - again, the speed at which they open will depend on the weather, but hazel is often the first, and it's lovely to see the 'lamb's tails' swaying in the breeze along our hedges, a sign that spring, though not here yet, really is on its way.

Ivy is another unseasonal flowerer, and though its fragrant clusters of greenish flowers will have finished by now - it's more of a late autumn flower - through January the black berries of ivy will provide sustenance to birds and animals who may have used up other sources of food by then.

Thank You!

... to everyone who helps produce, print and deliver 'The Bridge' month by month. Thanks also to the many people who give donations, this month including :-

D.V. & A.M. Lewis, Rhos Newydd
Rector & Churchwardens, Llandrinio
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The
Back Page

A man walks into a bar, sits down, and the bartender asks him, "What'll you have?" The guy answers, "I'll have a scotch, please." So the bartender gets him the drink, which the man downs straight away. "That'll be £2.50," says the bartender, to which the guy replies, "What do you mean? I don't owe you anything. You said nothing about charging me for it when you offered me that drink"

As it happened there's a lawyer sitting just along the bar. Overhearing the conversation, he speaks up. "He'd got you there, you know. In the original offer, which constitutes a binding contract upon acceptance, there was no stipulation of remuneration." Needless to say, this doesn't impress the bartender, but with a sigh he says to the guy, "Okay, you beat me; you can have your drink for free. But don't ever let me catch you in here again!"

Anyway, the very next day, the same guy walks into the bar. The bartender says to him, "What the heck are you doing in here? I can't believe you've got the brass neck to walk back into my bar after what you did yesterday!"

The guy looks absolutely amazed, and says, "What on earth are you talking about? I've never been in this bar before in my life!"

"I'm really sorry," the bartender replies. "It's quite uncanny - you must have a double."

To which the guy replies, "Thank you, I will. Make it a scotch!"

A tramp calls at the George & Dragon. "Could I have . . ." he begins to ask. "No you may not!" replies the lady of the house. "Get back in the gutter where you belong." "All right," says the tramp, "but could I have a word with George first?"

**Copy for the February 'Bridge' by 18th January, please, to:
Mrs Jean Lewis, The Garage, Llandrinio SY22 6SB (830102) or
Revd W Rowell, The Rectory, Four Crosses SY22 6RW (830533)
Electronic copy is very acceptable, preferably as MS Word file -
Email to - bridgemag@bilkro.fsnet.co.uk**