

St Mary's RC Church
Merthyr Tydfil
Parish Advisory Council

ST MARY'S MAGAZINE



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EDITORIAL

This is the fourteenth edition of the magazine since it has been published as one of the many initiatives undertaken by the Parish Advisory Council. Looking back to the first issue I think that we have made progress and improved. The best issue, I think, was our last one in December, 1999, which celebrated the beginning of the year of the Great Jubilee. A special effort was made by many parishioners to make it a success.

The theme for this issue is the people of the parish. We feature one of our oldest active parishioners, Ellis Hall, and at the other end of the age-range, sixteen year-old rugby international Gary Horrigan. We also reminisce about a well-known parish priest of the past - Father, later Monsignor Flood.

What we need for future editions is an infusion of new and radical thoughts and ideas to keep the momentum going. This would bring greater variety to the magazine. The aim of the magazine has always been to involve parishioners in the life of the parish.

Since May 1996, I have undertaken the job of editor. This is a grand title but in essence it has meant chasing and collecting contributions, putting them together, re-typing or scanning in the copy, setting them out attractively, arranging the printing, posting copies to friends outside the parish. It has involved quite a bit of routine and mundane work. It has been an experience that I have enjoyed but I feel that we now need a fresh approach. For that reason this will be my last magazine as editor and the Parish Advisory Council has accepted my resignation. I would like to thank them and the Editorial Group for their complete support for the past three years. I hope that my successor finds it just as enjoyable. Thank you for your support.

Hywel Mathews
Editor

A PERFECT DAY

Some while ago, but now so strangely already tucked securely behind the doors of the last century and millennium, the BBC decide to interweave certain programmes with a happy, slick and cheerful little musical whimsy. It was called *A Perfect Day*. I liked it and I have since found out that many other people liked it too. Perfect moments are all things to all men. Sometimes they catch us unawares, especially during momentous times such as in war. The *Monsignor Renard* programme on television brought it all back to me.

It was the third week of June, 1941. We had just finished our Finals examinations. We should have

been in Kensington but had been evacuated to a convent high on a hill overlooking the Newbury racecourse. We could never see the racecourse as the valley below seemed to be filled with a thick milky mist. We were given permission to hike from Newbury to Oxford, with the promise that we would return before dark. The Thursday before a bomb had fallen nearby in the early hours of the morning and our place had shaken like a jelly. On the Saturday we did the weekly trip in a small bus, down from the village to Newbury. We went to the pictures. The word film was not used in those days. It seemed that the cinema was filled with just ourselves and the Forces.

We had not been long in the middle of the country, Berkshire, when we realised that everyone seemed to be in the country with us. The Black Watch was down the road in the big village. Harwell aerodrome was over a few downs in one direction and other things were happening in Pangbourne, a down or two in a different direction, alongside the river Thames. Douai Abbey was just a few miles away.

That Saturday in the Newbury cinema we were not prepared for the Pathe News. All the news was of courageous little Malta. We saw that small island, especially Valletta the capital, being bombed into the ground. Nina, my Maltese college friend - I still visit her - began to weep. There was consternation in the row behind us. I turned and told them it was Nina's home. A wonderful feeling of sympathy came surging over that row of seats from the soldiers behind us plus a huge army handkerchief. I can not put down, in cold print, what they would do to Hitler once they had the chance to do so.

That scenario behind us we set forth, having borrowed bikes, on our journey from Newbury to Oxford. After indifferent weather that, Monday turned out to be a gem of a day. We had no wardrobe in wartime so we went off in our sky-blue cotton all-in-one PT (PE now) top and shorts. We called them our rompers. We biked over the North Downs, free-wheeling down and plugging up. It was a glorious, perfect day. There was not a sound except for the singing of the birds - no animals, no animal sounds. The world just seemed to be a gentle oasis of the deepest blue sky and the loveliest, freshest green of the grassy downs. It was a bit of Heaven as God intended that our world should be - while just a bomber-flight away was the torn, brutalised and devastated Europe. Only people who lived in those times could really appreciate what a bonus a tiny bit of perfect peace could mean.

We went along it seemed for miles and miles. Then Nina began to sing *Santa Lucia*. I joined in. It was then that we saw the only human being on our trip. Driving down the opposite tump was a sole airman in a small car. He heard us singing and joined in. We all waved as we passed - ships that pass in the night. We were beginning to feel hot, hungry and tired. We

wondered if we should ever see Oxford. Then as we reached the crest of a hill it was suddenly there below us. We both saw the city of dreaming spires the only way it should be seen. All was so very, very quiet. We just stood there mesmerised. Every mile had been worth the trouble. All the spires rose, surely and proudly, through the most flimsy light mist. It looked such as maybe a desert mirage would appear, something not part of our humdrum world. We stayed awhile and then pedalled down into the city. Mindful of the long return journey one could call it at best a cursory visit. Our bikes in those days had no mod cons whatsoever. It was freewheel or push all the way.

As we much later neared our home village, at the cutting edge of twilight and darkness, our bikes were surrounded with what seemed to be thousands of small, shadowy, scuttling grey shapes. Little wild rabbits ran in droves around our bikes on that lonely country road.

I did not visit Oxford again until the 1980s. I went by train to a wedding. It was a different world. Having no sense of direction whatsoever, I could not figure out where in that built-up area we had actually stood on that silent day forty years ago. The wedding had its moments! When we all tripped out at the entrance of Oxford's most well known hotel there was mayhem. The entrance to the hotel was blocked with fire-engines and firemen with hoses. When we heard that the fire was in the kitchens the poor bride's parents must have died a thousand deaths in one minute flat. The fire was not as bad as it was thought to be. With much jollity and quips the bride was most daintily passed over pools of water and fire-fighting paraphernalia into the hotel entrance, the dress being cared for all along the way. We did have the breakfast served with much professional aplomb, just as if nothing had ever happened.

When I was young in school I had read so much of Oxford and its prestigious colleges. I think that on that perfect day, in the midst of war, I saw it at its most beautiful and best. High up on that silent hill I saw its spires reach up to touch a gentle summer sky.

Mary Gaiter (Williams)

A MILLENNIUM THOUGHT

I said to the man who stood at *The Gate of the Year*, "give me a light that I may tread softly into the unknown."

Submitted by Mary Gaiter

CANON FLOOD'S MAGIC LANTERN

Following a discovery of some photographs and glass slides in the church's archives we made an appeal in last September's issue for more information on Canon Flood, who had come to the parish in 1929. This led to a very interesting invitation from Mrs Liz Jones for me to meet three cousins - herself, Mrs Rita Morgan and Kathleen Griffiths (Hall). I spent a very interesting evening reminiscing about old times and past priests. Although I had gone with the intention of learning about Canon Flood I spent some time enjoying their stories about Canon Rohan during his time as parish priest. It so happens that he - then Father Rohan - officiated when I married Mary, whose cousin he was. I once refereed a rugby match in Maesteg in which Fr Rohan played in the front row. I discovered found that, when men of the cloth put on a rugby shirt, they behave in exactly the same way as other forwards when packing down against the opposition.

Kathleen Griffiths, who now lives in Ascot, was about nine years old when Canon Flood came to the parish. She remembers that her father, Billy Hall, used to help Canon by putting the slides in the magic lantern - later they were called projectors. Canon stood at the front of the room near the screen with his pointing stick. Billy was also very active in St Mary's CYMS in the

'Rooms'. Canon was apparently an excellent lecturer, she told me, and had many talents. He played the church organ very well, enjoyed painting and was very knowledgeable about wines. A man of tremendous presence, he also produced operas in the parish - in one of which Liz Jones was a lead singer, she told me quietly. Kathleen recalls one story told to her by her father. Canon gave magic lantern shows all over the place, in parishes in the Merthyr area and further afield. On a visit to one such show one evening at Bargoed parish, Canon had been invited to stay the night, leaving Billy to make his own arrangements to get home. This meant that he had to leave early to catch a train back to Merthyr. An appeal to the audience for a helper to insert the glass slides brought forward a volunteer. Unfortunately, being inexperienced, he kept on putting them in the wrong way round and they were projected upside down on the screen, much to the annoyance of Canon. He shouted to Billy to come back but by then Billy was on his way to Bargoed station to begin his long journey home..

I also discovered that Liz Jones had been a parlour maid in the presbytery for a while, during a time when there were three priests in the parish.

Hywel Mathews

CRUNCHY OAT BISCUITS

8 oz. Margarine

8 oz. Sugar

2 tsp. Syrup

2 tsp. Bicarbonate Soda

2 tsp. Boiling water

Gently melt all the above ingredients in a saucepan. Remove from the heat and add:

8 oz. SR Flour

8 oz. Porridge oats

Mix well together. Roll the mixture into small balls (approximately the size of maltesers), place on a baking tray and flatten slightly with your thumb. Leave plenty of space between each ball to allow to spread into biscuit shape during cooking. Bake in a ready heated oven 180° / Gas 4 for 5 to 10 minutes. When you remove the tray from the oven leave the biscuits for a minute or two to harden, before placing on a wire rack to cool. When I made these biscuits for the Church Bazaar, I was very pleased to hear that the people who bought them wished they'd bought more!

Mabel Szyndra

CORNY CORNER

What do you get if you pour boiling water down a rabbit hole?

Hot cross bunnies.

Why do bees hum?

Because they don't know the words.

Why didn't the viper vipe 'er nose?

Because the adder 'ad 'er 'ankerchief.

What's brown and sounds like a bell?

Dung.

What do sea monsters eat?

Fish and ships.

What do you get if you cross an owl and a skunk?

A bird that smells but doesn't give a hoot.

Amelia England

CHRISTIANA

What's in a name?
asked Juliet.

And yet,
in her Love's name
Death came.

And it was much the same
for my Love, too.

They asked him who
he was, and though he knew
they had no wish to see,
he told them true:

I AM, he said.

They heard with enmity.

For very dread
his blood grew to a sweat.

They scourged him, just the same,
pressed thorns into his head -
in all his frame
no part but bled -
then nailed him to a tree
till he was dead.

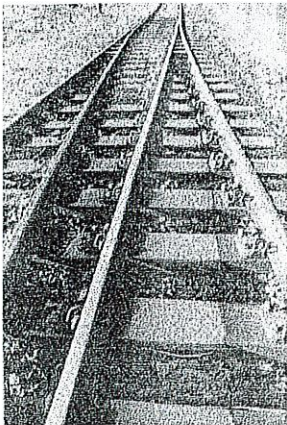
And now, because of His,
My name is what it is.

Sr. Mary-Justin, OP



*design above by
Jonathan Morgan
a grandson of
Selwyn and Audrey Morgan*

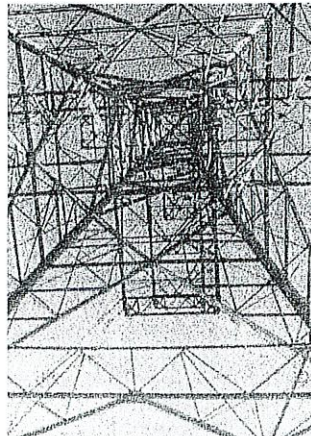
1



2



3



PICTURE SEARCH

Where were these
pictures taken?

Answers on page 11

WORDSEARCH

H	E	L	E	M	A	R	G	E	N	E	V	I	E	V	E	R	O	N
N	U	R	S	U	L	A	N	M	A	D	Z	L	S	O	L	I	V	E
A	D	Y	M	J	T	E	R	E	S	C	E	C	I	L	I	A	Y	P
C	P	H	I	L	O	L	I	Z	A	L	F	R	A	N	Z	R	M	E
I	S	A	N	B	I	A	N	N	E	A	M	A	B	E	A	N	A	T
N	A	T	U	R	S	U	N	L	A	R	F	L	N	E	B	S	D	Y
O	D	I	L	L	H	E	L	O	P	E	N	E	R	T	E	H	E	J
R	J	O	A	U	A	C	A	R	F	I	L	M	O	N	T	R	L	E
E	L	I	Z	C	L	A	M	A	N	A	S	U	M	P	H	F	E	L
V	E	R	D	Y	M	P	N	A	D	F	R	A	N	C	A	T	I	Y
D	B	E	R	N	A	R	Y	G	L	O	I	C	L	E	T	E	N	Z
F	R	A	N	C	E	S	A	N	B	E	R	A	N	D	E	T	E	S
H	E	L	E	Y	A	M	I	E	L	I	Z	T	H	E	R	E	S	A
E	B	E	R	N	Y	O	U	S	R	U	A	H	E	R	E	S	U	E
A	L	O	I	R	B	E	A	T	H	E	L	E	N	A	S	A	Z	D
T	I	R	A	P	A	U	C	L	A	U	I	R	U	T	A	M	A	Y
R	U	M	O	N	I	C	A	T	I	R	T	I	Y	M	O	D	N	L
E	B	E	R	N	A	D	E	O	D	I	L	N	M	I	L	Y	A	T
M	O	D	I	L	I	A	M	B	E	T	T	E	D	A	N	R	E	B

SAINTS TO FIND:

<i>Agnes</i>	<i>Frances</i>	<i>Odilia</i>
<i>Anne</i>	<i>Genevieve</i>	<i>Paula</i>
<i>Bernadette</i>	<i>Helena</i>	<i>Rita</i>
<i>Catherine</i>	<i>Joan of Arc</i>	<i>Teresa</i>
<i>Cecilia</i>	<i>Lucy</i>	<i>Theresa</i>
<i>Clare</i>	<i>Madeleine</i>	<i>Ursula</i>
<i>Dympna</i>	<i>Mary Magdalene</i>	<i>Veronica</i>
<i>Elizabeth</i>	<i>Monica</i>	

All these Saints can be found in the wordsearch grid, reading in straight lines, horizontally, vertically or diagonally, either backwards or forwards.

Answers on page nine.

Try to find 33 animals by reading the letters below in rotation. You may use the same letter more than once. *Answers on page nine.*

Zebrabbitjackalioncatig
eratapistagnucowol
foxpumarelkdeeramul
emurcameldogslortho
gdingoatmoleopardoe
apeyak

Wordsearch grid and animals search by Amelia England

PILOT IN THE PULPIT

Things have not been the same since Father Boxall came to dinner. During an enjoyable evening we had an interesting discussion about homilies, especially on how to finish. Since that evening I now

see, not a priest, but a pilot in the pulpit. I listen to homilies more earnestly and I evaluate them by the following criteria. Think of a homily as a journey in an aeroplane. It is a flight - of rhetoric - assessed under the

headings of take-off, flight and landing. The pilot's, sorry priest's, control is critical and his success all hinges on the quality of his landing. A good landing salvages a bad flight and vice versa. Once he decides that it is time to land he must come down. Dummy landings are *verboden*. I am now an expert on the landing phenomenon, especially the false alarm. Not all priests, we agreed, know how to land or are aware that they have already landed. Some keep on flying well after touch-down.

The best is short and smooth. There is a commentary to inform you where you are and where you are going. You do not need to be told that you are about to land. With good pilots you can tell from the sound of the engines and the movement of the plane. You anticipate the landing and you get it. There are exceptions to this, but that is all right if you know what the pilot is doing. Let me give an example. On one occasion I was en route to Cardiff Airport and was diverted to Birmingham. The pilot was approaching for his final descent. He was looking for a gap in the clouds, failed twice and had to put his foot down, regain height, and make for the Midlands. I was not too disturbed - a little maybe - because I knew beforehand what he was trying to do. He had explained the situation to us. Forgive me for using the flying analogy here, but it is the easiest way to make my point. What I am trying to say is that, in a homily, the landing must be in the right place and at the right time. Cardiff not Birmingham. Today not tomorrow.

MEMORIES OF MY GRANDMOTHER

In our Jubilee edition Jack Walsh reminisced about his days as an altar boy. He mentioned how he tagged along with his elder brother and learned Latin from a lady teacher who operated from her own home. This brought a response from Jack Driscoll who believes that his grandmother was that Latin teacher. I met Jack Driscoll and his Scottish-born (from Fife) wife Betty some time later. Jack was good enough to give me more details of his grandparents.

"My grandmother (nee Widows) was born in about 1880 in Chipping Norton, where her father had a saddler's business. Her mother was French and she died in childbirth; her father married again. Gran was educated and brought up in a convent. She came to Dowlais at the turn of the century to teach in St Iltyd's Girls School. Some years later she gave up the teaching profession to be housekeeper to the parish priest, at that time Father Lucan.

The best homily has a good take-off. You can feel the thrust in your back as the Boeing 747 accelerates. The flight is short and you stay awake. So far so good. Landings, however, can be a problem. I, we, us passengers are helpless when this happens. We are not qualified to interfere and we can only hope and pray. A few homilies are smooth and you can see the land below, you follow with interest the designated flight path and as you make contact with the runway and land gently, you feel that you want to applaud. Such things do occur. However, I have experienced - not in this parish of course - the Barnes Wallace touch-down. This homily bounces a few times before landing and can do more harm than good. The most frustrating one is when the pilot teases the passengers with a false touch-down, then soars back into orbit. That is clerical joy-riding. It is the Achilles heel of the clergyman. It is not good for your physical and spiritual health. It should be accompanied by a health warning. It must be outlawed.

So there you have it. I feel better for sharing my secret with you. I will know that I have been cured when I no longer see a Biggles in the pulpit. Please let me know if you develop similar symptoms. If so, parish counselling sessions can be arranged. Chocks away and happy landings.

Hywel Mathews

My grandfather, John Driscoll, was born in 1865. He was a staunch Catholic and became a widower about 1910, leaving him with two sons and a daughter - who sadly died aged 21 years. The two sons, the eldest being my father, were both in the First World War. My grandmother married Miss Widows in 1917/1918 and went to live at 6 Haydn Terrace, Penydarren. This is where the altar boys used to come for lessons. I remember it well. I must have been five to six years old.

In 1932 Canon Flood of St Mary's advertised for a housekeeper. He had no success from the advertisement and my grandmother volunteered to do the job temporarily. This lasted until 1939 when she returned home suffering from cancer. She died in January 1940. The two young priests were Fr O'Leary and Fr Creed."

HM

THE BURIAL OF TWO AIRMAN

Parishioner Jack Driscoll gave me this account of a fatal collision between two Canadian airmen who died in a war-time accident over Merthyr Tydfil. Each was piloting a Spitfire on a training exercise when they collided and landed on a house in Mount Pleasant. One was a Jew and the other a Catholic. They were later buried in Cefn Cemetery but in different graveyards.

The Merthyr Express, 12 July, 1941, reports:

“The funeral took place at Cefn Cemetery on Wednesday of Sgt. Pilot Louis Goldberg of Montreal (Canada) and Sgt. Pilot Gerald Fenwick Manuel (Canada). Both funerals were attended by officers and men of the Royal Air Force, members of a military unit and the Home Guard under Sgt. Major D R Llewellyn. The bearers were personal friends in the RAF of the two men.

At the funeral of Sgt. Pilot Manuel the Rev. T Canon Flood officiated and Mass was also held at St Mary's RC Church.

The Rev. Unterman, Cardiff (Padre) and the Rev. K Jaffe, Merthyr, officiated at the funeral of Sgt. Pilot Louis Goldberg. Among those who attended the funeral were the Town Clerk (Mr Edward Roberts) and Deputy Mayor (Mr T J Evans) and the Chief Constable (Mr T A Goodwin). The arrangements for the burial of Sgt. Pilot Louis Goldberg were made by Messrs. I & B Hamilton and A Moscovitch.

The RAF officers and men were afterwards entertained at the Peter Pan Cafe by the Jewish Community of the town.”



The Peter Pan Cafe, so Jack and his wife Betty told me, was a very good cafe that was located in the High Street opposite where the Central Library is today. Jack informed me that the headstone at Cefn Cemetery reads, ‘R69888, Sgt. Pilot Manuel, G F, Royal Canadian Air Force, July 1941, age 25.’ He was the son of Harold Philip and Frances Mary Manuel of Nova Scotia, Canada. Jack subsequently told me that Gerald Fenwick Manuel was the 1933 Elocution Winner at St Mary's College, Halifax, Nova Scotia in 1933.

I searched among the gravestones in the small Jewish cemetery across the road from the main cemetery. I located the grave of Louis Goldberg. His headstone reads ‘R56185 Sergeant Louis (Curly) Goldberg, Pilot, Royal Canadian Air Force, 7 July 1941. Age 27.’ Underneath, there is a Hebrew inscription. These are two Canadians, buried in Merthyr, half a mile apart, so far from home.



design by Jonathan Strand

I followed up this story with a visit to the Central Library to look through past copies of the Merthyr Express for July, 1941. The account of what had happened to the people on whose house one of the planes landed does not appear in the Merthyr Express until nearly two weeks after the accident. It had been delayed because it needed to receive the approval of the war censor. A full account appears on July, 19, 1941. It states that three people in one house were killed, Alice Cox and her daughters Evelyn and Doreen. The accident happened at 6.30 pm and the house was completely destroyed. The second aircraft crashed into a field.

HM

PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS

You can take some very good photographs into the sun. The effect is often more interesting than with the sun behind you. This one was taken in Cyfarthfa Park. The sun was at an angle in front of the camera, as you can see from the shadow on the tree. Two tips for you if you try this:

- Shade the camera lens - I used the big tree here; or put your hand in front of the lens but to the side. Don't get your hand in the picture.
- Open up the aperture by one stop or more if your camera allows you to, otherwise you will get a very dark picture. *HM*

WORDSEARCH SOLUTION

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I	L	I	A					E	T	T	E	D	A	N	R	E	B

Answers to the 33 animals:

Zebra, rabbit, jackal, lion, cat, tiger, rat, tapir, stag, gnu, cow, wolf, fox, ox, puma, mare, elk, deer, ram, mule, lemur, emu, camel, dog, sloth, hog, dingo, goat, mole, leopard, doe, ape, yak.

YOUNG RUGBY INTERNATIONAL

Terry Williams is well known to most of us in the parish. He, Tom Long and Terry O'Neill are usually the two parishioners who hand out the Newsletters as we enter the church. Terry suggested that it would be interesting to write a feature on one of his nephews, Gary Horrigan, an under-16 Welsh rugby international player. It is typical of the Welsh to want to know more about a person's family background, so I was very pleased to find out that I could place Gary quite easily. I learned that Gary's father was Danny who had married Sharon Thomas - of Thomas and Davies (Citroen) - and that his grandfather was Gary Thomas. I had played bowls against Gary Thomas; Danny and Sharon were pupils at Bishop Hedley when I taught there. Things fell into place. To complete the Horrigan family setting, Gary and Steven are twins who will be sixteen in May. They have older sisters Leanne, Joanne and Danielle.

I met Gary at the Citroen showrooms after school. He told me that he will leave Bishop Hedley this year after his GCSE examinations. His long term ambition is to become a professional rugby player and to play for

Wales as a full international. He will apply to join the Welsh Rugby Academy in Newport and hopes to go there if he is successful. An option is to go to the Neath Sports Tertiary College where his sister Danielle, a Welsh hockey international player, is currently taking a sports qualification. Gary's favourite subjects are PE and Geography.

Although he is only sixteen, Gary's playing career goes back eight years. He began as a blind side flanker then changed to scrum half where he has played since. He progressed from the Merthyr under eights and went on to play for the under sixteens, which he captained. He also played for the mid district under thirteens and then county at under sixteen. His three caps for the Boys Clubs of Wales were against England, which they lost in a hard fought game at Gloucester. The other two were against the Independent Schools and the Welsh Exiles, the latter played at the Old Deer Park, the home of London Welsh. Gary rates Rob Howley as the best scrum half that Wales have at the moment. However he has a high regard for the current holder of the Wales

number nine shirt, Rupert Moon, whom he has met on a number of occasions.

Gary's father, Danny, still does some rugby coaching. Danny was himself a very good, strong scrum half and played for Merthyr and subsequently Newbridge, Ebbw Vale, Cross Keys and Glamorgan Wanderers. Gary is

now looking forward to the presentation of his three caps that takes place later this month. He seems to me to be a very level-headed young man with a good future. I hope that he makes it at the next levels that lead to the top.

HM

ELLIS HALL: OLD BOY OF THE PARISH

Ellis Hall celebrated his 90th birthday at the beginning of the year of the Great Jubilee. Born on 11th January, 1910, he lived in the Grawen, Brecon Road and went to the Catholic Infants school in Morgantown. After a few years there he went to Court St. Catholic School, St. Mary's. In January, 1917, the then Parish Priest Father Austin Hind visited the school, looking for a few lads who lived near the Church to serve on the altar. Three were chosen and he was one of them. The first 7.30 am Mass that he served was on his seventh birthday. It wasn't easy because of the Latin, but with the help of the Priest, he managed to get along. The years 1917 to 1924 were spent serving Mass with his partner the late Con Hegarty; in those days, there was a flourishing CYMS in the old rooms at Bethesda Street, where he played billiards, snooker, table tennis and cards.

The Church was then run by Benedictines. Father Austin Hind was the Parish Priest and he was helped by his brother Father Elphage Hind and Father Baines. At the age of fourteen, Ellis started work in Cyfarthfa Park for twelve shillings a week, so his early morning Mass came to an end. Once a month the CYMS had their communion at 8.00 am on Sunday morning, wearing their medals of white, red and green - the colours of the medals worn depended on which part of the town they lived. The coming of the Missions was eagerly awaited and the church was packed. Some of the priests of that time who belonged to the OSB were Fr Laughlin, Fr. Murray, Fr White and Fr Parker - who was very hard of hearing. Whenever Father Parker came to visit my home he always brought his father a twopenny packet of Woodbine cigarettes. Between 1927 and 1928 the Benedictines left the parish and the secular clergy took over with the arrival of Canon Thomas Flood. He was noted for his fine sermons and later became Monsignor. Following him came Fr S Watkins, Fr R Kean, Fr P Creed, Fr P O'Connell and Fr E Butler. June 6th was a red letter day for St. Mary's Parish because on that day Rev. Father James Hennessy, elder son of the Mr and Mrs Daniel Hennessy. Father James was educated in St. Mary's School Merthyr and Prior Park Bath. He was ordained in St Mary's by the Rt Rev Francis Mostyn, Archbishop of Cardiff. Father James died in

Cardiff in 1974 and after solemn Requiem Mass he was interred at Llantarnam Abbey, Newport. The parishioners of Merthyr had presented Father Hennessy with a magnificent chalice with jeweled cross suitably inscribed in memory of his unique distinction of being the first Merthyr Ordinand. It was Father James's last wish that the chalice be returned for use in St. Mary's as he deeply appreciated this gift purchased for him in the days of the great Depression.

On the 31st. August 1935 Ellis was married in St. Mary's by Father Greedy who told him that it was his first Marriage Service. In January 1940 he volunteered for the Royal Navy and was sent to the Mediterranean to serve on a torpedo motor boat, visiting North Africa, Malta, Sicily, Italy, Corsica, Sardinia, Elba, the South of France and Greece. The war ended in Europe while he was in Malta. Ellis served many times for priests on shore, and in different kinds of ships.

In Merthyr Monsignor Flood was Parish Priest and Fr B. Morris, Fr B McLiam, Fr G Daniels, Fr A M Madden and Fr J Magner had all been there during the war. In February, 1947, Monsignor Flood died and was succeeded by Canon Timothy O'Leary as Parish Priest. On Easter Sunday 1974 Ellis was honoured by The Pope with the Benemerenti Medal "in recognition of fifty five years service". It was presented to him by Canon T O'Leary at St. Mary's Church, Merthyr. It was Ellis's mother's dearest wish to see him receive the medal but she died in 1973.

Ellis recalls, in 1983, that, when the parish began having readers, he was the first to start. It had been arranged for one of the older altar boys to read, but when the time came he got cold feet and Father Mulverhill called upon Ellis to do it. Not knowing what he had to read, to use his words, "I may say I made a hell of a mess of it - I think the year was 1969". As he wrote in a parish magazine seventeen years ago, being an altar boy has given Ellis great joy and comfort.

This account is based on one that Ellis himself wrote for the 1983 Parish Magazine.

ST MARY'S - LOOKING FORWARD

Events like Canon Kearney's absence from the parish, to recover from illness, usually set me thinking how well our parish will fare in the future. We are very lucky to have Father Mark Rowles to help us this time, but in future we might not be so lucky. We have been reminded many times of the shortage of priests. Several parishes in the Archdiocese already share a priest.

There are other aspects of parish activity that give concern. In the last twenty years the numbers attending Mass have dropped from 900 to 700. We use a church building which is over 100 years old. The need for expensive maintenance is evident to all, with peeling plaster and periodic leaks. Also we have a quickly deteriorating church hall in Morgantown.

Our current situation is still very healthy. We still have a large congregation. Our collections adequately cover the parish's day to day expenses. Many activities within the parish are very well administered and receive very healthy support. There is every reason to believe this will

continue. However, if we are to flourish as a parish in the future we need to start facing the problems now. How do we generate funds for necessary maintenance and improvements to buildings? How do we maintain the size of our congregation? How do we effectively assist the clergy in administering parish affairs? These are all questions that we need to start answering.

The lead will, I am sure, be taken by the many committed parishioners, who already contribute time, energy and money in supporting the parish, but we all need to play our part.

I started writing these few words shortly after morning Mass on Easter Sunday. The sight of people pouring out of morning Mass, greeting each other as friends, often with three generations of a family together, makes a great impression. I am sure that we all hope that there is the will to work together to make sure that we keep our parish community as healthy as it has been in the past.

John Strand

THANK YOU TO THE PEOPLE OF OUR PARISH

We are glad of this opportunity to write our views about the people of the parish. During the past year Charlene, our daughter, has had two operations. The first, in 1999, was a major one that left her in bandage and plaster for six weeks. This resulted in her being in a wheelchair and using crutches. Prior to the operation we mentioned to a friend in the church that we would have difficulty in getting Charlene around and about due to her bandages. He offered us the lend of a wheel chair for "as long as we wanted".

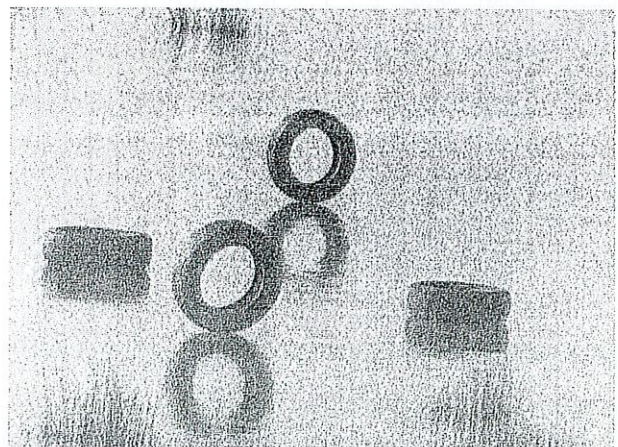
The staff of Bishop Hedley were wonderful. Not only did they keep in touch during her time away from school but on her return they made every attempt to make her feel as comfortable as possible. They accommodated her in lessons as best as they could and realised that, due to painkilling tablets, she was not able to concentrate as she would normally. Her friends in school were great. They kept up her morale and helped her in any way that they could, even carrying her books and bag when she was on crutches. Charlene later became Head Girl, which was a real boost to her morale.

Canon, the people of the parish and church members were amazing and kept Charlene in their prayers constantly. Not a day went by without someone asking how she was and saying that they would continue to pray

for her. Charlene is now fine and is back to normal. We thank God, as a family, that we are part of a community that we feel has the Holy Spirit among them.

Thank you everyone for all your support, kindness and prayers.

The Dacey family



Pond on the Bogey Road to Fochriw

PICTURE SEARCH ANSWERS (from page five)

- 1 Railway on way to Fochriw;
- 2 Cefn High Street;
- 3 Abercanaid.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CARDIFF
ST MARY'S
 at
MERTHYR TYDFEL

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT
For the year ended 31 March 2000

		DIOCESAN COLLECTIONS
CRIB OFFERINGS		
FAMILY FAST	OCTOBER 1999	£546.25
	MARCH 2000	£866.86
HOLY PLACES		£238.42
LENTEN ALMS		
PETER'S PENCE		£246.76
TOTAL		£1,898.29
THESE COLLECTIONS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED AS FOLLOWS:-		
PAID TO ARCHDIOCESE		£485.18
PAID TO CAPOD		£1,413.11
PAID ELSEWHERE		
TOTAL AS ABOVE		£1,898.29
BANK RECONCILIATION		
BALANCE PER BANK STATEMENT 31st March 2000		£25,359.99
ADD: MONIES DEPOSITED BUT NOT ON STATEMENT		
LESS: CHEQUES PAID, BUT NOT ON STATEMENT		£1,944.28
TRUE "BANK BALANCE" - AS SHOWN OVERLEAF - "C"		£23,415.71

COLUMN	RECEIPTS	COLUMN	PAYMENTS
1	COVENANTED	1-3	CLERGY EXPENSES
2	NON-COVENANTED OFFERTORY	4	DOMESTIC WAGES
3	GIFT AID	5	HOUSEKEEPING
4	OTHER COLLECTIONS	6	HOUSE EXPENSES
5	TAX REFUNDS	7-8	CHURCH
6	FUND RAISING	9	REPAIRS
7	INVESTMENT INCOME	10	HEAT & LIGHT
8	CHAPLAINCIES	11	RATES & INSURANCES
9-10	RENTS	12	SCHOOLS
11-12	BOOK / NEWSPAPERS	13	OFFICE WAGES
13	CLUB INCOME	14	PRINTING & STATIONERY
14	MISCELLANEOUS	15	TELEPHONE
15		16	FINANCIAL Interest on Archdiocese Loan
16		17	DONATIONS Levy paid to Archdiocese
17		18	MISCELLANEOUS
18	COVENANTED	19	
19	NON-COVENANTED	20	
20	OTHER THIRD PARTY	21	
21	CASH WITHDRAWN FROM ARCHDIOCESE	22	THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS
21	PARISH ACCOUNTS PAID BY ARCHDIOCESE	23	LOAN REPAYMENTS TO &/OR DEPOSITS WITH ARCHDIOCESE
21	OTHER EXTRAORDINARY INCOME	23	PARISH INCOME RETAINED BY ARCHDIOCESE OTHER EXTRAORDINARY PAYMENTS
	TOTAL RECEIPTS DURING THE YEAR		TOTAL PAYMENTS DURING YEAR
	£63,315.88		£62,636.99
Balance on hand at 1st April 1999:-		Balance on hand at 31st March 2000:-	
	Bank current account(s) £22,736.82		Bank current account(s) - as "C" overleaf £23,415.71
	Cash in hand £69.00		Cash in hand £69.00
	TOTAL "A" £86,121.70		TOTAL "B" £86,121.70

Total "A" should equal Total "B"