



Welcome to this, the first of the occasional newsletters of the Cowbridge Record Society. It was decided at a recent Committee meeting that a newsletter would be a useful way of communicating developments within the Record Society to its members.

The Society aims to record, research and preserve aspects of the history of Cowbridge and district - and part of this task includes encouraging people to treasure their own records and information, and to get our help in finding out how these can best be conserved. We have already been instrumental in depositing in the Glamorgan Record Office some valuable material - the first Cowbridge Board School admissions book for 1874-1875, and three account books of the Griffiths family of blacksmiths, dating around the mid-nineteenth century. Other donations have been received - such as some interesting family and other photographs - and it is very much hoped that these could be deposited in the Cowbridge Museum where they will be available for public inspection. We hope too that copies of research documents - such as some wills and inventories of neighbouring parishes which I hold at the moment - could also go there.

If you are aware of the existence of valuable documents, photographs or memorabilia which you feel should be preserved, do please get in touch with members of the committee to see if we can help. The Local History Society has been actively involved in interviewing some of the older residents of the area, and this too is an aspect which could be expanded as we are closely linked with the History Society.

Some of the interviews have already been published in the *LHS Newsletter*, which has also printed at least one article which came as a response to *Cowbridge Buildings and People*. One of the pleasing aspects of being the Record Society editor is the amount of correspondence I get, sometimes just seeking information but sometimes adding to our knowledge as well. For members' information, I enclose a few extracts on page 3.

SOME DECISIONS...

Membership costs £3 a year

The price of publications to members is £3.95, which is a discount of £1 on the published price. This relates to the three books published so far (*Cowbridge Buildings and People*, *Llanblethian Buildings and People*, and *At Cowbridge Grammar School, 1949 - 1966*) if collected from the secretary, treasurer or editor. Full post and packing would have to be added for posted items.

Future publications

Next in line is a collection of reminiscences of life in Cowbridge and Llanblethian in the early years of the twentieth century. Some contributions have already been submitted - but if anyone has particular suggestions regarding contributors, please contact the editor.

The next Cardiff University Lifelong Learning class, due to start in Old Hall, Cowbridge in September - which was the starting point for the Society - will deal with *Inns and Alehouses of Cowbridge and District*, and it is hoped that this too may provide a stimulus to a further publication.

A catalogue of records

We aim to provide a list of historical material, relating to Cowbridge and district, which will be made available to members and to the interested public. Cataloguing will soon be under way, but this will take time.

Recent acquisitions

Mr Colin Rees, son of Idwal Rees, former headmaster of Cowbridge GS, has donated his father's bound copies of *The Bovian*, from 1918 to 1971, and we hope to be able to place these in the Local History bookcase in the Cowbridge Library. Slipped among these volumes was the copy of the funeral oration to Mr Richard Williams, who was Idwal's predecessor as headmaster. That

will go the Glamorgan Record Office in Cardiff, as it is an original document.

We have been loaned an excellent collection of photographs of Crossways hospital, with a brief history. This arrived only a few weeks ago, and unfortunately after the publication of the *Llanblethian* book. We intend to copy the photographs, and the history, for our records.

Two photographs of the Glamorgan Hunt, taken in the late 1940s, have been given by Mrs Dot Thomas. I have used the picture of Capt Homfray on Dumbo, taken at the clump of trees on Stalling Down, for the cover picture of this newsletter.

BOOK SALE

I have been asked to advertise the following books of local interest (all in very good condition, with dust wrappers where relevant):

- Saints & Sailing Ships (Vale Series, pub Stewart Williams): £10
- Glamorgan Historian, Vol IV (pub Stewart Williams): £10
- Vale of Glamorgan in Old Photographs, Vol I, Roy Denning: £8
- Artorius Rex discovered, Blackett and Wilson: £8
- Wreck & Rescue in the Bristol Channel, G Farr: £8
- Cowbridge, David Robinson (GGAT Town Survey): £8
- Monmouthshire Sketch Book, Fred Hando: £10

Letters to the Editor..

THE BENNETT EDWARDS FAMILY

"I was delighted to see my late husband's family, the Bennett Edwards of Porth y Green, mentioned in the Llanblethian book. There was a large age gap between Evan who had the butcher's shop in Cowbridge, and my father-in-law, John Edwards, who was always called Jack. He was born in Porth y Green in 1884, and kept farming. He farmed for a while at Old Beaupre and in the early 1920s he bought a small farm of 30 acres in Sigginstone, where they farmed till my husband Glyn left school. The farm being too small, he took over the tenancy of Whitney farm on the Merthyr Mawr estate. When he died in 1952, we came back to Sigginstone with our two young children.

I'm pleased to say my son Jonathan is still farming here at Ty Newydd farm, having acquired 60 acres, part of Moorshead Farm. He has a son of 18 who also works on the farm, so we have another generation of Bennett Edwards to carry on in the Vale. My daughter married Alan John who was farming Marlborough Grange, and they are now farming in Wiltshire..."

(Doris Edwards, Sigginstone)

LANES of Westgate and Aberthin

A letter from Mr AH Lane of Yeovil stated that he was the grandson of Sidney Lane who lived in 6 Westgate in 1912. Sidney was one of six children of Robert and Mary Ann who, I found, lived in Aberthin, probably at Aberthin House, where they are recorded in the 1861, '71 and '81 censuses. The family tradition is that they farmed in St Hilary, and certainly in the deeds of 6 & 8 Westgate Robert is described as 'of St Hilary' - so a little more research in St Hilary censuses is needed. However, Mr Lane adds: "Sidney was married to Mary John - I remember a big formal picture of a bearded man in mayoral robes and chain of office hanging in my parents' room in Bridgend; my mother told me he was Edward John, my great-grandfather. Sidney and Mary had eight children - Frank Percival (my father), Anne, Robert Edward, Sydney, Alice, Ernest, Doris and William Eaton who was killed in France in 1916. I was in Cowbridge recently and saw his name on the Cenotaph - he was down as a private, when in fact he was a sergeant. My father Frank worked for Edward John in Eagle Agricultural shop; when the Great War came in 1914, he joined up and lied about his age, being only 15 - a lot of young men did that, I gather."

ANOTHER LETTER

Cowbridge, November 1, 1830

My Lord,

A son of mine, lately deceased, has written for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge a History of Greece which has been received with much approbation.... introduced into several of the public schools... both universities as a text book

Benjamin H Malkin

This letter, written to Lord Bute (NLW Bute L73/104) is sad enough, but Benjamin Heath Malkin had already published *A Father's Memoirs of his Child* in 1806, in which he told of the brief life of another son, Thomas Williams Malkin (1795-1802). Thomas was a bright little boy who learned to read and write early, and who amused himself by writing stories. He wrote about Allestone, an imaginary land, and created for it a calendar and dating system, a history and culture, and a geography - some achievement for a six-year old. Sadly, he died "of inflamed bowels", according to Dr Lister, in 1802.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President: Brian James
Chairman: Richard Press
Secretary: Jose Rawlins
Treasurer: Keith Jones
Editor: Jeff Alden
Committee: Betty Alden (Minutes Secretary),
Andy Banks, Debbie Fisher (Publicity
Officer), Bruce McGovern, Hilary Thomas.

MEMBERS (as of 1.6.2002)

Mr and Mrs J Alden, Cowbridge
Mr and Mrs G Cox, Cowbridge
Mrs B Davies, Welsh St Donats
Mrs B Easterbrook, Llanblethian
Mr J Edmondess, Ewenny
Mr K Edwards, Aberthin
Mrs R Farmer, Cowbridge
Mrs D Fisher, Colwinston
Mr and Mrs D Francis, Llanharry
Mrs M Hawkins, Cowbridge
Mr R Hayward, Llanblethian
Mr B James, Cardiff
Mrs H Jones, Cowbridge
Mr K Jones, Cowbridge
Mr S Lane, Cowbridge
Mrs B Lewis, St Georges super Ely
Mr B McGovern, Cowbridge
Mr J Miles, Cowbridge
Mr and Mrs L Millar, Cowbridge
Mrs K Newham, Cowbridge
Mr R Press, Cross Inn
Mr and Mrs A Provis, Bonvilston
Mrs J Rawlins, Cowbridge
Mrs R Ryland, Nash
Ms H Thomas, Llandough
Mrs M Wallis, Trerhyngyll
Mr N Williams, Llantwit Major
Mrs C Young, Llantwit Major

Correspondence to Jeff Alden, 1 Mill Park, Cowbridge CF71 7BG; phone 01446 - 773373