

# Postcard from Pen-y-fai

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Friends of All Saints Church © David Southwood

June 2021 / July 2021

In this age of social media we have become used to receiving and sharing our news and photographs electronically within moments by the press of a few buttons. But whilst we were able to send digital messages across the world in seconds, it seemed we had become more isolated from our neighbours and our local community. The art of communicating face to face with neighbours has become less common, as has the tradition of sending postcards to our friends and family with a picture of our holiday resort on one side and our holiday news and information about the resort on the other.

Honouring that tradition, “Postcard from Pen-y-fai” is usually published as a hard copy to remind the community of Pen-y-fai of some of the events that have shaped our village, and to highlight some of the things going on, and some of the organisations that exist, in our community today. But, due to Covid-19, this issue is prepared for distribution in digital form, with a limited number of printed copies.



Our photograph in this issue is a photograph dating from 1910, taken outside The New inn Tavern in Pen-y-fai. The photograph shows a merchant from Aberkenfig delivering supplies to Mrs. Mary Thomas, the Landlady of “The Tavern” (as it was known locally). As can be seen from the lettering on the merchant’s cart, this photograph was printed “back to front” from the negative.

The Tavern was Pen-y-fai’s village pub from at least 1841 until its closure in 1967, when it was replaced by The Pheasant Public House. As the village pub, The Tavern was the centre of many village activities, including “Penny Readings” of newspapers, and was the focus for many organised

fundraising events to support village life and, especially, the older or less fortunate members of the community.

The Tavern is now a private residence known as The Old Tavern.

### **FROM THE ARCHIVES ..... "FATHERS AND SONS IN PENYFAI RUGBY DUEL"**

Regular readers will recall that the front page of the February / March 2021 issue of "the Postcard" featured a photograph from 1920 showing the players, trainers and Committee Members of Pen-y-fai Rugby Football Club. This village side was very successful in the 1919/1920 Season, but further details of the history of Pen-y-fai RFC have so far eluded me.

However, in the course of my search I came across the following newspaper cutting from 27 May 1932, regarding an annual rugby game in Pen-y-fai that shows that the tradition of rugby had continued in the village for some time after 1920, for at least one match a year, and was still going strong in 1932.

"The annual [rugby] football match at Penyfaai between Married and Single was held at Tongwyn Field. The referee was Mr. J. Hopkin, Aberkenfig, and the teams lined up as follows:

Married: A. Roberts; S. Smith, W. J. Morgan, D. R. Paget, G. Mordecai; R. Rattery, R. Hopkin; I. Thomas (captain), Ivor Thomas, W. Jones, J. Went, L. Paget, W. Leyshon, Bob Thomas and Billie Thomas.

Single: J. Leyshon; S. Thomas, W. Lewis, A. Fabian, Illtyd Thomas; J. Barrows and F. Jones; T. Guilford (captain), T. Peregrine, S. Bryant, E. Yeoman, E. Thomas, David Watkins, R. Harris and E. Hindins.

Play was of a high order, all players doing their best to play the game. In the first few minutes the Married men showed their superiority as strategists, enabling R. Hopkins to cross in the corner with a pretty try. A. Roberts made a great effort to convert from a very difficult angle and only just failed to add the extra points. The second try came in the beginning of the second half following a brilliant dribble through by Ivor Thomas.

The six points win [as a try was worth only three points in those days - Ed] for the Married men gave a fair reflection of the merits of the teams. For the Singles Tom Guilford was undoubtedly the best, being a great leader in the scrum and in the open. For the Married men the honours went to Idris Thomas, Tom Jones and W. J. Morgan. Idris Thomas as a hooker gave a masterly display and was a big factor in the Married team's success by allowing his backs to have the ball three times out of four. The younger men succeeded in covering him in the line-out but only at the expense of two or three men. Tom Jones played a wonderful game up to the last ten minutes when the extra two stone of weight he was carrying began to take effect. W. J. Morgan gave an exhibition of swerving when in possession and tackling and kicking when on the defence that made every young man on the fields determined to have a little more practice.

All Penyfaai turned out to witness this annual event. Men, women and children were there to cheer father husband or brother."

It seems that the references to "Idris" Thomas and "Tom" Jones are in fact references to Ivor Thomas and W. Jones in the team sheets. This newspaper cutting is a reminder of those days when it

seemed that rugby was an important part of the life of most villages in South Wales. The game may not have been of the standard of rugby we will be expecting from players during the British and Irish Lions Tour to South Africa this summer, but we can be sure that there was a tremendous amount of pride at stake for all the men in both teams and, with their families and friends watching, not one would have given anything less than his best. And, no doubt, there would have been a good few drinks consumed by the players and friends in The New Inn Tavern after the game! © David Southwood 2021

### **ALL SAINTS CHURCH TO BECOME PART OF THE BRIDGEND MINISTRY AREA IN 2022**

All Saints Church in Pen-y-fai, like Anglican churches throughout the Diocese of Llandaff, will see a significant change in the way it is administered, and its building and finances are managed, starting on 1 January 2022, as it becomes part of the “Ministry Area of Penybont ar Ogwr”.

Since All Saints Church in Pen-y-fai was built in 1903, the Congregations of the church have seen many changes to the administration and maintenance of the church. In 1903 All Saints was a “chapel of ease” as part of the Parish of Newcastle, and it was not until 1923 that the separate Parish of Pen-y-fai was established with All Saints as its Parish Church. Since then, as part of a separate parish, the Congregation of All Saints have been required each year to elect Church Wardens and a Parochial Church Council (“PCC”) whose members are charged with the responsibility for maintaining the church building and Parish finances as part of the administration of the Anglican Church in Pen-y-fai.

In the face of declining (and ageing) congregations, the Diocese of Llandaff has taken the decision to adopt the concept of “Ministry Areas” (which are essentially large parishes) led by a team of Clergy and lay people, who will draw on each other’s strengths to increase the impact of the Christian Message. The aim of Ministry Areas is to overcome the present difficulties with the present Parish System which relies on a single priest serving a small community, at a time when there are fewer clergy coming into Ordained Ministry and also a high number of Clergy retiring in the next few years.

The Congregation of All Saints has had a long history of being part of a church community that has cared for more than one church. From 1925 to 2005 the mission church of St. Colman in Cefn Cribwr was part of the Parish of Pen-y-fai and, of course, in the last decade the Parish of Pen-y-fai has been part of the Benefice of Laleston and Merthyr Mawr with Pen-y-fai, with sister churches in Laleston and Merthyr Mawr, with the Rev. Anthony Beer as the Priest in Charge for all three churches.

So, what will the Ministry Area mean for the Congregation of All Saints (and indeed the Congregations of St. David’s in Laleston and St. Teilo’s in Merthyr Mawr)? Essentially, All Saints and the neighbouring churches will become part of a “super parish” to be known as the “Ministry Area of Penybont ar Ogwr”. The Rev. Maggie Thorne has been appointed to lead the Ministry Area with a team of Clergy drawn from the existing parishes forming part of the Ministry Area. However, this should not lead to any major changes in who officiates at services at All Saints or the nature of those services.

Where there will be noticeable change is in the lay involvement in the administration of All Saints, for the PCC in Pen-y-fai will be disbanded by the end of 2021 and all the functions the PCC currently controls will be handed to the Ministry Area. This means that the legally accountable control over All

Saints Church, its administration, maintenance and finances, which has historically been exercised locally by the PCC, will no longer rest with the people of Pen-y-fai.

Work towards a smooth transition is already underway with a Ministry Area Transitional Team and a separate group of Treasurers (each including representatives from each participating church) already meeting to identify and address the various matters needed to make the new “Super Parish” a success.

[Ed: In the next few issues “the Postcard” will provide a series of articles regarding the Ministry Area, its lay officers, clergy and churches as well as providing updates on the progress of the Ministry Area Transition Team and any particular matters that affect the residents of Pen-y-fai and, particularly, the congregation of All Saints Church.]

### **COMMUNITY WORSHIP IN PEN-Y-FAI**

At the time of preparing this issue of “the Postcard”, both All Saint’s Church and Smyrna Chapel were taking the first steps to re-opening for collective worship. In both cases, in the interests of public safety, these initial measures involve restrictions on the number of services and the numbers of worshippers attending each service. **More information regarding services and the contact details for both the church and the chapel are set on the last page of this issue.**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO .....** **LOCAL COUNCILLORS MERYL WILKINS AND HEIDI BENNETT** on being elected as Leader and Deputy Leader respectively of our local Newcastle Higher Community Council for the coming year.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO .....** **LOCAL COUNCILLOR ALTAF HUSSAIN** on being elected to the Senedd as one of the regional members for South Wales West in the recent elections for the Senedd.

### **PEN-Y-FAI SCOUT GROUP ..... LOOKING FOR LEADERS AND RECRUITS**

Like most organisations in Pen-y-fai, the 1<sup>st</sup> Pen-y-fai Scout Group has not been able to hold face to face meetings for any of its three Sections during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the Group is now making plans for when meetings can resume and is looking for both Leaders (whether acting on a regular or occasional basis) and children to join the Group. For more details, please contact Zoe Plumley by email at [zoeplumley@outlook.com](mailto:zoeplumley@outlook.com)

**DO YOU HAVE OLD PHOTOS OR POSTCARDS OF PEN-Y-FAI?** This issue of “the Postcard” (the twenty fourth) marks the completion of the fourth year of its publication. Over the last four years, the photographs on the front page of the Postcard have been from my own collection, much of which I inherited from my late mother-in-law, Mrs. Joyce Caudy. I am sure that many of our readers must have a lot of local knowledge regarding the history of Pen-y-fai and if you have any old photos or postcards of, or stories about the history of, Pen-y-fai (which I would be happy to write about if you think they could feature in the Postcard), please contact me, David Southwood, by email on [penyfaipostcard2017@gmail.com](mailto:penyfaipostcard2017@gmail.com)

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

At the time of preparing this issue of "the Postcard" it was not known exactly when the restrictions on meetings will be lifted, and most of the organisations which participate in the Postcard are uncertain when, and under what conditions, they will be able to start to meet again. Although there are no "Forthcoming Events" in this issue, the contact details of the groups that normally appear in the Postcard are listed below so we can contact them once they start their activities and meetings again.

### COUNCILS, COUNCILLORS, COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

**NEWCASTLE HIGHER COMMUNITY COUNCIL ("NHCC")** The village of Pen-y-fai is served at a local level by the NHCC. For details of the meetings or matters relating to the NHCC please contact the Council Clerk at [clerknewcastlehighercc@gmail.com](mailto:clerknewcastlehighercc@gmail.com). Or view the website [www.newcastlehighercc.wales](http://www.newcastlehighercc.wales)

**COUNCILLOR ALTAF HUSSAIN** is the Bridgend County Borough Councillor for the Pen-y-fai Ward and holds regular Ward Surgeries at the Community Room in All Saints Church, Pen-y. For details, please contact Councillor Hussain by email at [Cllr.Altaf.Hussain@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Altaf.Hussain@bridgend.gov.uk)

**PEN-Y-FAI VILLAGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ("PVCA")** was set up by a small group of local volunteers with the aim of protecting and improving the amenities in the Community of Pen-y-fai. For details please contact its Chairperson, Mags Griffiths, by email at [m.griffiths261@btinternet.com](mailto:m.griffiths261@btinternet.com)

**BELLRINGING AT ALL SAINTS CHURCH** The church has a peal of six bells and an enthusiastic team of bell ringers. For further details contact the Tower Captain, Mr. David Oates, on 01656 650556.

**ALL SAINTS CHURCH CHOIR** Together with the Hon. Organist, Mrs. Wynne Griffiths, this enthusiastic group plays an important part in leading the congregation in church services. Interested parties should contact the Choir Mistress, Miss Delyth Parry on 01656 724994.

**KNIT AND NATTER GROUP** This group meets **every Thursday morning from 11.00 am to 12.30 pm at the Pheasant Public House** in Pen-y-fai and is open to all those who wish to enjoy time with friends and fellow knitters. For more details contact Mrs. Jocelyn Southwood on 01656 653879.

**1<sup>st</sup> PEN-Y-FAI SCOUT GROUP** Scouting is open to boys and girls under the auspices of The Scout Movement, and, in Pen-y-fai, there are three sections - Beavers (ages 6 to 8), Cubs (ages 8 to 10) and Scouts (ages 10 to 14). For more details contact Zoe Plumley by email at [zoepalumley@outlook.com](mailto:zoepalumley@outlook.com)

**PEN-Y-FAI GUIDE GROUP** Guiding is open to girls under the auspices of the Guide Movement, and, in Pen-y-fai, there are two sections - Rainbows (ages 5 to 7) and Brownies (ages 7 to 10). For more details contact Pippa O'Neill on 07480 825532.

**OPEN THE BOOK ("OTB")** is a group of volunteers visiting schools every two weeks during Assembly time and enacting a Bible story in a modern and entertaining manner. To join this enthusiastic group, or for more details contact Valerie Trimlett by email at [henry.trimlett@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:henry.trimlett@tiscali.co.uk)

**THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE ("WI")** was formed in 1915 and now plays a unique role in providing women with educational opportunities and the chance to acquire new skills, whilst taking part in a range of activities in their local communities. For further details on the meetings and membership of the Pen-y-fai branch of the WI contact Adele Hancock on 01656 646372.

**LALESTON MOTHERS' UNION** The Laleston Branch of the Mothers' Union meets on the second Tuesday of most months in Laleston Church Hall at 2.15 pm. For further information please contact the Branch Leader, Mrs. Frances McConville, either by telephone on 01656 655879 or by email at [fmm7@btinternet.com](mailto:fmm7@btinternet.com)

**BRIDGEND TREFOIL GUILD** The Trefoil Guild is open to all adults (18+) and not just those who have been involved in the Guiding Movement. Bridgend Trefoil Guild offers its members wonderful opportunities to get involved in a variety of activities, find friendship, to get active and give support. Bridgend Trefoil Guild has an evening and an afternoon group, and members can attend either or both. For more information contact Wendy Hinton on 01656 648783 or at [wendyhinton.ggcg@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wendyhinton.ggcg@hotmail.co.uk) or Jane Smart on 01656 655027 or at [rjsmart555@btinternet.com](mailto:rjsmart555@btinternet.com)

#### **SMYRNA WELSH BAPTIST CHAPEL**

The Deacons at Smyrna have advised that the Chapel will be opening for collective worship soon. In the first instance, due to the safety measures being put in at place, there will be a limit on the numbers of worshippers for each service. Therefore, initially, attendance at each service will be by invitation, and the Deacons will be contacting members of Smyrna's Congregation in turn to make bookings for specific services. In this respect the Deacons would like to thank the members of Smyrna's Congregation in advance for their patience and understanding in this matter.

The Deacons are hopeful that this will be shorter term measure and that, in due course, the Chapel be able to accommodate larger numbers of worshippers, including the many friends of Smyrna who are not regular members of the Congregation, all of whom will be assured of a warm welcome.

**For more information about Smyrna Chapel please contact Mr. Peter David on 01656 659856**

#### **ALL SAINTS CHURCH, PEN-Y-FAI**

**All Saint's Church is the Parish Church for the Parish of Pen-y-fai**

**(The Parish of Pen-y-fai is part of the Benefice of Laleston and Merthyr Mawr with Pen-y-fai)**

The Parochial Church Council in Pen-y-fai has taken the decision to re-open All Saints Church for collective worship, and a similar decision has been taken by their counterparts in Laleston and Merthyr Mawr to re-open St. David's Church and St. Teilo's Church. Sunday services will therefore resume in all three churches in the Benefice in June, albeit on the basis that only one church will be open (on a rota basis) each Sunday. In addition, there will continue to be services and acts of worship online.

These plans are subject to change should there be changes in the regulations and guidance regarding Covid-19, but the longer term intention, if all goes well, is to have collective worship in two churches each week starting in August, and to have all three churches open each Sunday from September.

**The current rota schedule for Sunday Services, starting from 13 June, 2021, is as follows:**

SUNDAY, 13 JUNE	10.00 am and 11.00 am	Communion at St. Teilo's Church, Merthyr Mawr
SUNDAY, 20 JUNE	10.00 am and 11.00 am	Communion at All Saints Church, Pen-y-fai
SUNDAY, 27 JUNE	10.00 am and 11.00 am	Communion at St. David's Church, Laleston
SUNDAY, 4 JULY	10.00 am	Outdoor Communion (Location to be advised)
SUNDAY, 11 JULY	10.00 am and 11.00 am	Communion at All Saints Church, Pen-y-fai
SUNDAY, 18 JULY	10.00 am and 11.00 am	Communion at St. Teilo's Church, Merthyr Mawr
SUNDAY, 25 JULY	10.00 am and 11.00 am	Communion at St. David's Church, Laleston

**In addition, there will continue to be Online Worship at 6.30 pm on each of the above Sundays.**

**For more information about All Saints Church please contact the Priest in Charge: The Rev. Anthony Beer, The Vicarage, Rogers Lane, Laleston. Tel: 01656 859487 E-mail [blammp2013@gmail.com](mailto:blammp2013@gmail.com)**

**(Please note Father Anthony will be on vacation over the weekend of Sunday, 6 June 2021)**