

Clychaur Cwm Christmas 2006

£1



Editor's Letter

By now most people in the area will have heard about the Diocese's plans for the future. The Church in Wales is under extreme financial pressure, because of falling numbers and low levels of giving the church simply can not afford to employ so many priests. The number of paid priests has to be cut in this Diocese from 120 to 84, but the Bishop would like to keep 100 so 16 more than the Church in Wales will fund. For this group of parishes it means that their will no longer be a vicar in Brechfa. It is suggested that Abergorlech join with the Llansawel Group while Brechfa and Llanfihangel join Llanegwad. The exact way that the parishes are put together is negotiable but not the presence of a vicar in Brechfa.

This puts my family and myself in a difficult position. I don't see we can really stay here in the long term. We are looking at things we might do and we are considering working abroad. Following this up we have been invited to meet the Dean and council of Hong Kong Cathedral in January for an interview. Even if that doesn't work out I think that we are unlikely to be able stay here more than 2 years.

This state of affairs also has an impact on Clychau'r Cwm so I am not putting in subscription forms for next year, we will all have to wait to see what happens. I am talking to Revd. Philip Johnes and Revd. Roger Hughes about joining our magazine with theirs. One thing we do need is for someone to collect and type the news from Brechfa (this already happens in Abergorlech and Gwernogle).

This all sounds rather gloomy but it doesn't have to be. The future is in your hands. Everyone will still have a vicar but he or she won't live in Brechfa any more. That means the churches have to get used to doing things themselves. In truth it has always been the case that the future of the church is in Gods hands and in your hands.

The Vicar



Diary

Rhagfyr 10 December Adfent 2 Advent

9:45am	Abergorlech	Cymun/Communion
11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun/Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Healing Service

Nos Mecher/Wednesday

Menter course the Rectory at 6:30pm starting with a bring and share supper

Dydd Sadwrn/Saturday

2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Carol Service followed by party.
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Llanfihangel Carols on Saturday December 16th at 2:30pm. Note this is **NOT** on Sunday this year.

Rhangfyr 17 December Adfent 3 Advent

11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun Y Teulu/Family Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Cymun/Communion
7:00pm	Abergorlech	Carol Service

Nos Fawrth/Tuesday

Carol Singing in Brechfa. Meet outside the church hall.

Nos Mercher/Wednesday

6:30pm	Aberglasney Gardens	Deanary Carol Service
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Nos Iau/Thursday

7:00pm	Brechfa Church	Carol Service
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Nos Wener/Friday

Gwernogle Carol Singing

Rhagfyr 24 December
Adfent 4 Advent

11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun/Communion
11:30pm	Llanfihangel	Cymun/Communion

Rhragfyr 25 Demeber
Dydd Nadilog/Christmas

6:00am	Brechfa	Plygain
9:45am	Abergorlech	Cymun/Communion
11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun Y Teulu/Family Communion

Rhagfyr 31 December
Nadolig 1 Christmas

9:45am	Abergorlech	Boreol Weddi/Morning Prayer
11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun/Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Cymun/Communion

Ionawr 7 January
Ystwyll 1 Bedydd Crist
Epiphany 1 The Baptism of Christ

9:30am	Llanfihangel	Cymun/Communion
11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun/Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Myfyrdod/Meditation
6:30pm	Abergorlech	Gosber

Ionawr 14 January
Ystwyll 2 Epiphany

9:45am	Abergorlech	Cymun/Communion
11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun/Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Gosber/Evening Prayer

Tuesday

8:00pm Abergorlech Hall Meeting (Please note the vicar will not be able to chair this meeting).

Ionawr 21 January
Ystwyll 3 Epiphany

11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun Y Teulu/Family Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Cymun/Communion
6:30pm	Abergorlech	Cymun

Tuesday

7:00pm	The Rectory	Prayer Group
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Wednesday

6:30pm	The Rectory	Menter Course
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Ionawr 28 January
Ystwyll 4 Epiphany

9:45am	Abergorlech	Cymun/Communion
11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun/Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Gosber/Evening Prayer

Tuesday

7:00pm	The Rectory	Prayer Group
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Wednesday

6:30pm	The Rectory	Menter Course
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Chwefror 4 February
3 cyn y Garawys / 3 before Lent

10:30pm	Holy Trinity Pontarothi	Christingle
6:30pm	Abergorlech	Gosber

Tuesday

7:00pm	The Rectory	Prayer Group
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Wednesday

6:30pm	The Rectory	Menter Course
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Chwefror 11 February
2 cyn y Garawys / 2 before Lent

9:45am	Abergorlech	Cymun/Communion
11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun/Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Gosber/Evening Prayer
3:30pm	Llanfihangel	PCC
Monday		
10:00am	Clergy Chapter	Llandeilo
Tuesday		
7:00pm	The Rectory	Prayer Group
Wednesday		
6:30pm	The Rectory	Menter Course

Chwefror 18 February
Sul cyn y Garawys / Sunday before Lent

11:00am	Brechfa	Cymun Y Teulu/Family Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Cymun/Communion
6:30pm	Abergorlech	Cymun/Communion
Tuesday		
7:00pm	The Rectory	Prayer Group
Dydd Mercher Y Lludw / Ash Wednesday		
6:30pm	Brechfa	Cymun
8:00pm	Abergorlech	PCC
Friday		
7:30pm	Brechfa Church Hall	PCC

Chwefror 25 February
Garawys 1 Lent

9:45am	Abergorlech	Cymun/Communion
11:00pm	Brechfa	Cymun/Communion
2:30pm	Llanfihangel	Gosber/Evening Prayer

Tuesday

7:00pm The Rectory Prayer Group

Wednesday

6:30pm The Rectory Menter Course

Ystlyswyr/Sidespersons

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|--------|---|
| 10-Dec | Lillian Jones and Rosie Carmichael |
| 17-Dec | Iris Lenny and Ceinwen Johnson |
| 24-Dec | John Price and Clive Hoare |
| 31-Dec | Roger Nock and Dilwyn Davies |
| 07-Jan | Rosie Carmichael, John Price, |
| 14-Jan | Christine Hoare and Mary Jones |
| 21-Jan | Helen Daniels and Audrey Dyer |
| 28-Jan | Ian Phillips and Domenic Carmichael |
| 04-Feb | No Service - Christingle in Pontargothi |
| 11-Feb | Meuris Thomas and Aeres Lewis |
| 18-Feb | Anita Davies and Isabel Philips |
| 25-Feb | Jeannette Nock and Joan Jones |
| 04-Mar | Lillian Jones and Rosie Carmichael |
| 11-Mar | Iris Lenny and Ceinwen Johnson |
| 18-Mar | John Price and Isabel Phillips |

Contacts

Church Officers

Priest in Charge	Gerry Sykes	01267 202389
Deacon	Lynn Chambers	01267 223052
Reader	Clive Hoare	01267 202479

Abergorlech

Church Wardens	Betty Thomas Nadine Shepherd
Secretary	Arwyn Thomas
Treasurer	D. Haydn Davies

Brechfa

Church Wardens	Roger Nock Ceinwen Johnson
Secretary	Ian Phillips
Treasurer	Ceinwen Johnson

Llanfihangel

Church Wardens	John Jones Caroline Evans
Secretary	Sheila Joynson
Treasurer	Iris Adamson

Clychau'r Cwm News

Please contact Yvonne Thomas (01267 202216) with Gwernogle and Llanfihangel News and David Haydn Davies (01558 685649) with Abergorlech News.

Other contacts

If there are other contact details or numbers people would like included in Clychau'r Cwm please let me know.

The Vicar

I have equipment for photocopying and laser printing (10p), colour laser printing (75p), spiral binding (50p) and laminating (A4 50p, A3 £1.00).



Community News

Obituaries

Jean Davies

Jean was born on the 13th of January to Mr and Mrs Edwyn Davies. She had 2 sisters, Glenys and Eileen, and one brother, Haydn. Tragically their mother died when they were all young and Glenys, who was only 16, had to look after the family.

Jean was always treasured when she was little and went to school in Abergorlech but she had to be cared for in her adulthood. There are many matrons, managers, staff and carers here today. Haydn would like to thank all those who took such good care of her.

Despite her problems her life was happy and she was always the centre of activities in the places she stayed. She always enjoyed going to the church wherever she was staying and she loved singing hymns and other songs. Calon Lân was one of her favourites and that is why we are ending with it today.

Jean would come for holidays to stay with Haydn and Nonney and she liked coming but she was always happy to go back 'home'.

When we look at Jean's life we shouldn't think of what she couldn't do but about gifts she was given. We shouldn't think it was a sad life because she was happy. We shouldn't think of her life as wasted because she brought joy to many around her and that is the most important thing anyone of us can do. We should celebrate what she was and thank God for her life.

The Vicar

Haydn would like to thank everyone who sent him cards expressing their sympathy on the passing of his dear sister Jean, and to everyone who sent donations in lieu of flowers to Noah's Ark Appeal, a Charity which Jean

always had in mind because it involves little children, to all who came to the Church to say our 'Goodbyes', the Vicar, the Rev. Dr. Gerry Sykes who conducted the Service, to the Rev. Denzil James for his kind assistance, to Denzil and Brenda Williams and not forgetting the vast number of people who had been so kind to Jean during her life.

To all, your prayers and thoughtfulness has, and still does do lots for me.

With God's blessing. Haydn.

Albert Sivell Lewis (Albert y Gof)

Gyda thristwch mawr y cofnodwn farwolaeth Albert Sivell Lewis yn ei gartref yng Nghaerfyrddin ar Dachwedd 3 yn 81 mlwydd oed.

Ganwyd Albert yn Fronhaul, Brechfa, ác er iddo symud i Gwynfan Manor yn gyntaf ac yna i 12 Rhodfa Dewi Sant, parhaodd Brechfa yn gartref ysbrydol iddo ar hyd ei oes.

Fel Albert y Gof neu Albert Fronhaul ei adnabyddwyd a threuliodd y rhan fwyaf o'i fywyd yn gweithio yn yr Efail yn Brechfa. Yn ogystal a'r pedoli fe gyfunodd y swydd yma gyda ffermio ac yn ddiweddarach fel un o yrrwyr y Gwasanaeth Cymdeithasol yng Nghaerfyrddin. Gwr mwyn ei agwedd oedd a pharod ei gymwynas.

Yr oedd ganddo sawl diddordeb, ond heb os, y ddau ar y brig oedd Cobiau Cymreig, yn enwedig bridfa Gwynfaes a'r Sioe Frenhinol yn Llanelwedd ble gwasanaethodd fel gof a phrif stiward y pedoli am drigain mlynedd namyn un.

Cafodd ei anrhydeddu gan y sioe yn 1997 ble derbyniodd y teitl llywodraethwr am oes, anrhydedd a gyflwynwyd iddo gan y Dywysoges Alexandra.

Yr oedd Albert yn dad ac yn dad yng nghyfraith annwyl i Cerith a'i wraig Eiddwen, ac yn dadcu gofalus a chariadus i Heledd a Siwan. Roedd yn frawd hoffus i Sheila Williams, Aberystwyth, a'r diweddwr Joe - Lewis, Brynllwarch.

Cynhaliwyd Gwasanaeth o Ddiolch am ei fywyd yn Eglwys Sant Teilo, Brechfa, ar ddydd Gwener, Tachwedd 10, ble y gwelwyd dros 4QO o alarwyr wedi dod ynghyd i gofio amdano.

Ar ol y gwasanaeth, fe'i claddwyd gyda'i wraig, y diweddar Mary Lewis, ym mynwent tre Caerfyrddin.

Y prif alarwyr oedd Cerith ac Eiddwen (mab á merch yng nghyfraith); Heledd a Siwan (wyresau); Sheila ac Emrys (chwaer a brawd yng nghyfraith); Betty Lewis (chwaer yng nghyfraith) ac Anne Evans (ffrind annwyl i Albert), ynghyd a lluo o deiüu a ffrindiau eraill.

Yn y capel, gwasanaethwyd gati ei offeiriad y Parchedig GA Sykes, y Parchedig Ganon Patrick Thomas, y Parchedig Towyn Jones, y Parchedig Be'ti Wyn a'r Parchedig Denzil James. Hefyd yn bresennol oedd y Parchedig Wyn Morris.

Yr archgludwyr oedd ei ffrindiau agos, Meirion Evans, Norman Evans, Daniel Thomas, Gerald Brown, Terry Anthony a Clive Davies. Yr organyddes oedd Janet James.

Dymuna'r teulu ac Anne ddatgan eu diolchgarwch cynhesaf i'w cymdogion, cyfeillion a pherthnasau oll am bob cefnogaeth a charedigrwydd a ddangoswyd iddynt, ac i'r rhai a ddanfonodd cardiau, llythyrau a chyfraniadau at Ymchwil Cancr Cymru.

Diolch yn arbennig i Anthony Davies, Meddygfa Nantgaredig, am yr holl ofal ac urddas a ddangosodd i Albert. Hefyd i'r Parchedig Ganon Patrick Thomas am ei gefnogaeth iddo yn y misoedd diwethaf.

Diolch hefyd i Glanmor Evans, Trefnwr angladdau am bob cymorth a pharch a roddodd i'r teulu yn ystod eu profedigaeth.

Albert was born in Fronhaul Brechfa, and his heart was always there even when he moved to Gwynfan Manor and 12 Rhodfa Dewi Sant. He was well know for his work as a blacksmith in Brechfa and for his involvement with the Royal Welsh show and his interest in Welsh Cobs.

The family and Anne wish to thank all neighbours, friends and family for all their kindness and support and to those who sent cards, letters and donations to Cancer Research Wales.

Abergorlech News

When this publication of Clychau'r Cwm arrives at your homes it will be very near Christmas. The Community, we hope (we, being the Church, Chapel and friends) will meet at St. David's Church for our Carol Service on 17th December at 7 o'clock. Let us have a full Church, as every citizen has a lot to be thankful for. How better than to sing our praises to the Baby Jesus who became our Saviour, and who 2,000 years on remains our brother and friend.

Then at 9.45am on Christmas Morning let us join in our celebrations of the arrival of the Baby Jesus.....Of course, that is what Christmas is all about isn't it?

We think of our friends in our communities, who have not been well lately, some having had to have hospital treatment. We hope you are much better now and will be, with God's Blessing, enjoying the festive season with your families and friends in the days to come.

D. Haydn Davies

Wedding Notice

On 25th September last I flew out to Newport, Rhode Island, USA to be present at the Marriage of my only daughter, Zoe Elizabeth Nicolas to Justin Lester, whose family come from Portland in Maine.

It was especially special for me because my son flew in from Australia to give Zoe away and as the 3 of us were last together 4 years ago, it was a very beautiful and emotional occasion. My new son-in-law, who I first met the day before the wedding, is a delightful person and they are obviously very happy together. The weather was perfect and the day went without a hitch. Because of work commitments, the newly-weds postponed their honeymoon until later in the year and stayed on in Newport so that we could all spend time together. It was a very memorable week.

A Blessing service is planned for the spring in Abergorlech church and it is to be hoped that all friends and family will attend including my grandchildren from Australia.

Diane Nicolas Corner House Abergorlech

Brechfa News

Hoffai Betty Noddfa ddiolch yn ddiffuant i bawb a ddanfonodd gardiau ac anrhegion ar achlysur ei phenblwydd arbennig yn ddiweddar.

Betty Noddfa wishes to thank sincerely everybody who sent cards and presents for her recent Special Birthday.

Betty

Retirement

Joyce and Derek Hart have retired recently from Glasfryn, which was a guest house and excellent restaurant in Brechfa. They have moved to a flat in Cardiff to be near their daughter Julie, her husband and young Oliver. Julie is expecting on Christmas Day.

We Wish them well, and hope to see them back in the vicinity. The Brechfa 60+ Clwb Trigain thank them both very much for their warm welcome and lovely meals in the past. We wish them well.



The church stall was a success. Rectory chutney, marrow jam, ca lenders, Ceinwen's Christmas pudding, Aeres' butterfly biscuit bags, Robert's rock cakes and mini apple tarts all sold well. The sum of £174 was raised. Photo of Aeres Lewis at the stall.

Iris Lenny



Brechfa School decorating a tree at the National Botanical Gardens

Middle Eastern Meal

Everyone who came enjoyed the middle Eastern Meal in the Church Hall on the 3rd of November. The talk on Islam and Peace was interesting. In future it might be good to think of getting a public address system for talks in the hall. We raised £163 on the day for the Red Cross and £5 has been donated since.

Brechfa Sports Committee

The Sports committee are arranging a visit to the Lyric Cinema in Carmarthen to see Paddy the Clown on Saturday 10th February at 2:00pm. Children under 11 free, secondary school half price, adults pay in full (£4/£6). Forms from Arthur, 15 Maesygroes.

Gwernogle News

Sympathy

We would like to express our sympathy to Roger, Judy and family, Bryfon, Gwernogle, on the loss of Judy's mother and grandmother to George, Tommy and Oscar.

Llongafarchiadau

Yn ddiweddar yng Nghapel Annibynol Gwernogle priodwyd Catrin Jones, Tirlan, Brechfa ac Adrian George Coedlannau Gwyddgrug. Dymunir iechyd a hapusrwydd yn y dyfodol.





Articles

Christmas Cards throughout the Year

I'm sure we all receive Christmas cards from people we are geographically distant from but of whom we have fond memories. It's always good to read news or just get that feelgood factor from seeing who they're from. However, the Christmas season is a busy and sometimes intense one in terms of emotions, and with so many cards coming through in such a short time we find it difficult to truly appreciate them all. . . .So

Last Christmas all the cards and newsletters went in a box when the decorations were packed away and when Lynn and I say prayers together, we take one or two out of the box. We don't know who the cards were from until we open them to see the handwriting and greeting, maybe with a bit of news. We think about the senders and include them in our prayers. It feels so special. We didn't get through them all until October this year!

Just about the time to start thinking about sending Christmas cards

Mike and Lynn Chambers

Indian Journal

Sunday 17 August

I got up early. First I went to see the Naga students to get all the names and tribes of the students in my book. We almost forgot Panger, which would have been a very gross omission as I knew him well because we both did the Dalit theology Course. Ekie gave me a chain to make sure my luggage was secure. Then we waited for Sathi to collect me. While we were waiting he explained to me how to trap birds using gum and bamboo. This is the second time Ekie has told me about hunting. Before he was describing how they fish in his village. I am not sure that I remember all the details but roughly it goes like this. They grind up two sorts of tree bark

and a vine to make a poison. When this is put in the water it drives the fish down stream into a trap.

Sathi arrived and it was time to go. I felt that I must get back to India to see my friends and brothers and sisters in Christ again. The train left at 12:10 so there wasn't time for lunch. Prema made me some sandwiches. I got the train and locked up my case.

Fortunately there were a lot of people to speak to on the train and that helped to keep my mind off leaving UTC.

Monday 18 August

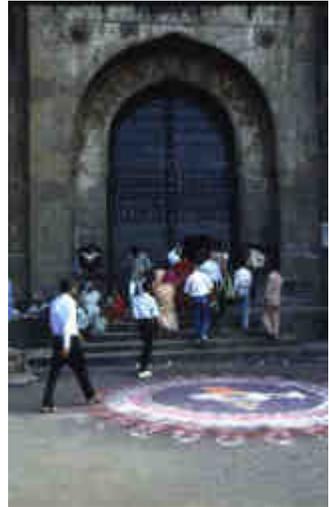
I had a fitful night of sleep so I was rather tired. Lamboi's's brother, Haopu, was there to meet me off the train. It was good to see a friendly face in this new city. It was a fair walk to the entrance and for the first time I had my luggage carried by a peon. At first we missed the ARI jeep, mistaking it for someone else's lift. Haopu accompanied me to ARI so I was able to tell him how his brother was. My room in the guest house was more like an apartment. The bedroom has air conditioning but it is not really warm enough to use it. After staying for a little Haopu went to see his sister, Esther. I met Professor Maitra later and arranged to see the department in the afternoon. In the afternoon I not only saw the microbiology department but was also taken to see Dr. Rajshekar and Dr. Kummar in the Geology department. They were going to arrange for me to see a mineral collection and go to Decan college. In the evening I felt very lonely after UTC but at least I had time for reflection.



Traditional building, Pune

Thursday 19 August

We arranged that I would go to see Mr M. F. Makki's mineral collection tomorrow and visit the department of archaeology at Deccan College. In the afternoon I went on a sight seeing tour. We saw the Shaniwar Wada Palace. This was built in 1738 but burned down in 1828. Now the inside is a garden. The most interesting feature of the palace is its spiked doors which were intended to fend off enemy elephants. Outside the gate there was a map of India in a design made out of coloured sand. Apparently the old Peshwa rulers used to execute people by having elephants trample them to death.



We also went to the Raja Kelkar museum. The Saras Baug Ganesh Temple in Peshwa park was a little disappointing. The Ghandi memorial was interesting. Originally the Aga Khan's palace, Ghandi was imprisoned here. When I got back I was very tired and got a little lost. Fortunately someone gave me a lift home on the back of his motorbike. A couple of students took me to BMCC for dinner, but the timing was rather late for me.

Shaniwar Wada Palace

Wednesday 20 August

I got up at 6:30 by mistake; my watch showed 7:20 but this was the alarm set time. Then I walked to the train reservation office to get my ticket for Bombay. On the way back I stopped off to buy some biscuits and bananas for breakfast.

At 11:30 I met Mr Makki and he took me to see his mineral collection. He is a mine owner and lives in an amazing house. His mineral collection was fabulous. It was some way out of Pune so I got to see the countryside. I had lunch at the ARI canteen. Then a little sleep before giving my seminar. The seminar was to have been at 4 p.m., but the start was delayed because of a special puja in the canteen. It is only now that I am in Pune that I can really see how integrated religion is into the lives of Hindus. Christianity

could learn a lot from them. So often our worship is only on a Sunday and we are completely secular for the rest of the week.

In the evening I phoned home and learned that my parcel had arrived.

Thursday 21 August

A lot of minor events happened today. First I went to Thomas Cooks with Dr Kumar and the driver in the ARI jeep. Unfortunately we parked at the wrong end of MG road so the whole process of changing money took half an hour. Then we went to the post office to send some books back to Britain. The parcel was taken and wrapped in linen with a bit showing because it was papers. The people behind the counter wouldn't accept the parcel at first and there was a lot of arguing at different counters. Finally they agreed to take the parcel provided that it was fully sewn up and had a customs declaration. So we went back outside to have more linen sewn on. I wanted to take a picture of the man sewing the parcel but the security guard wouldn't let me. There was no legal reason for this only airports etc. are restricted. Then we had to go to the counter again, and after that to another counter to get the stamps. These were fixed with the customs declaration onto the parcel. Finally there was a last wait at a counter before I got a receipt.

The next step was college to leave a message for Haopu. His dorm was the furthest from the entrance of course. At last we got to Deccan college. We arranged that I would go back on Saturday to talk further.

Back at ARI I reorganised my slides for Saturday. Then I went for a walk up towards Shivaji Nagar station and saw the Pateshwar temple on the way. This temple is carved out of a cave with a circular mandapam in front. One man was asleep in this. It was interesting to sit and watch the people coming for puja, ringing the bell and entering the shrine. Some people found it quite an effort to reach up to the bell. While I was in the area I attempted to find the CPS ashram (a Christian nunnery run along Indian lines), but had almost given up hope when I saw the gate. They would have a mass 7am on Sunday so I decided to try to go to that. I stayed for a time of prayer and then for dinner. Then it was back to ARI, I even got a lift on the way back.

Friday 22 August

I got up at 7 and had breakfast. On my way out to college I saw Prof. Maitra and he told me that I should arrange to pay for the accommodation and arrange transport to the station for Monday morning before the end of today. Then I got a rickshaw to College. This was quite a long drive. When I arrived, Lalet, Haopu's brother answered the door. That was a bit confusing because he looked quite like Haopu and I hadn't met him before. We talked a little about what the brothers do; Haopu was studying chemistry and Lelet was studying geography but is also doing a computer course at night.

Haopu and I left for Union Biblical Seminary, this was another long journey. When we got there it was just time for chapel so we went there. The services were evangelical with a lot of emphasis on preaching. The prayers were very similar to prayer in evangelical circles in Britain. After chapel I handed the letters I had been given to Ekie's friend Ilun-



Union Biblical Seminary, Pune

gle, but she had to rush to a lecture so I didn't get chance to chat. We went for a cup of tea and found Lamboi's's friend Angam, so I could give a letter to him. After tea Haopu and I went for a walk round the campus and up to a catholic convent on the top of the hill. The chapel here was in an Indian style with a low altar for celebrating communion. We went back to UBS just before lunch because I wanted to say hello to the principal (I had met him at UTC a week or two earlier). Then we had lunch in the mess. I talked to Angam about the political situation in Manipur. He told me that there are a lot of problems because the area is used as a corridor for drugs coming from Myanmar. This means that heroin is very cheap in Manipur and many young people become addicted. He felt that this problem was destroying Manipur. There is clearly a lot of social action needed in the area; not just preaching but active help. Haopu tells me that he thinks that there are two interacting problems. 1) People are uneducated so they don't know the effects of drugs. When others try drugs or tell people that drugs

will make them happy they try heroin. 2) The people are very poor and can make a big profit by buying drugs cheaply in Myanmar and selling them in India.

I thought that it is amazing that I have sent email to someone who was more or less born in the stone age. It also makes we realise how fortunate we are in the west to have education as a right rather than an expensive privilege. It is a pity so many of us undervalue education. Knowledge may not be the answer to all problems but it is an important part of the answer. I hope that I can use my wealth and talents to help people learn in the developing world.

Saturday 23 August

I've been here 2 months today. This morning was very wet. It was still raining very hard when I went to the laundry to see if my clothes were ready. I wore a coat but my trousers got soaked. My washing wasn't ready yet but should be at 6pm. I had to wait around till 10am. before the shop opened and I could buy a new umbrella (I lost my last one in Mysore). On the way back I decided to get a rickshaw because I was so wet by that time. At home I changed and washed the bottoms of my trousers which had become very muddy. Then I got a message that there wouldn't be a car to take me to Deccan college but Dr Rajshekkar would come and we would take a rickshaw together.

On the way we saw the river was very swollen, many of the slums by the river edge must have been swept away by now. The road and rail links to Bombay were cut and planes couldn't land at Bombay. Later I was told that these were the worst floods in 20 years. I can believe it. Even crossing Pune was becoming difficult as several of the bridges were unusable. The roads were swimming in water. I didn't hear if anyone died in the floods but it is hard to imagine that everyone escaped. It is yet another example of how dangerous life in India can be. It is not surprising that religion is more integrated into peoples way of living. When the world is so unpredictable and sometimes lethal we need something to make us feel that something is in control, but is this a true basis for religion or just superstition? It often seems to me that what is considered Celtic Spirituality comes out of this same unpredictability and I think it is something that it is good to be wary of. On the other hand we often think life is so predictable in the

West that we feel is safe to ignore God until unexpected events remind us of our frailty.

The visit to Deccan college was longer than the last one and I got to see their fossil collections.

Sunday 24 August

I overslept and didn't get up till 6:45. There was no time for a wash, I got dressed quickly and went straight out. It was still pouring with rain and the streets were quite flooded in parts. I had to walk some way to get an auto, in fact first I got a lift in someone else's rickshaw to Fergusson road. I was wet and cold when I arrived at CPS. The Communion had already started. The priest was a catholic which demonstrates how much less importance church divisions can have in India. Yet at other times the church parties within the Church of South India seem more divided than denominations in Britain.

We had breakfast with some excellent brown bread. I spent the morning talking about the problems in the North East of India and about meditation. I had some time for meditation and reading before lunch and then I headed back to ARI.

Just after I had changed and washed my old cloths there was a ring at the door and Haopu came with Lalboi, a friend of his who is studying geology. Lalboi told me a lot about how Kukis see the dispute between some of the Nagas groups and themselves. I can see why there are a lot of problems. Yesterday a group Naga guerrillas attacked a Kuki village, killed one and injured 9 others. It is important to say that these problems are only in some areas of Manipur and not the state of Nagaland and so the majority of Nagas and Kukis are not involved.

Increased population pressure probably makes the situation even more tense. Haopu told me that they used to have a 10 year rotation of jhum (slash and burn fields) cultivation but that 8 years is common now. I find this personally very painful as I have friends who are both Naga and Kuki. In some areas of Manipur both are in danger. I can only pray that Christian love will triumph and that God can move the hearts of fighting groups to live in peace. The churches, in particular the Baptist church may be able to

mediate in this situation, however they tell me that the Baptist church has not always been particularly forward in helping the situation.

Later that day, at 6:30, Dr Rajshekarar picked me up on his bike and I went to have dinner at his flat with Dr. Kummar. His daughter, son and his son's friends were very keen to meet me and ask me what I thought of India. The dinner was in traditional fashion, us three men served by the women. It was interesting to be in a Hindu household and see how it operated. To see the picture of their God and to have a meal in the traditional way.

Monday 29 August

I felt alone again; I had left my Kuki as well as my Naga brothers and sisters behind. I was also tired because I didn't sleep well, worrying about oversleeping. Actually I was up in plenty of time and was at the station quite early. I had to wait to see what platform the train arrived at, though the train arrived quite early. I kept a look out for Haopu because he said he would try to come and see me off but either he couldn't or I missed him. He didn't know what carriage I was in and the train was quite long. I learned from Haopu's letter that he did come but was late so he missed the train.

Everything went smoothly in Bombay, I saw the person waiting for me straight away and was soon in TIFR (The Tata Institute for Fundamental Research)). After settling in I got lunch, only one canteen was open because it was a holiday. It was Krishna's birthday, Janmashtami. There was a lot of drumming and noise coming from the slum that was adjacent to TIFR. On this day money was put into pots and suspended high up. The more money the higher the pots. Teams of men formed human pyramids to try to reach the pot and smash it. The team that succeeds share the money. As I went on the TIFR bus I saw several of these teams and one pyramid of people.

After lunch I went to find Dr Lobo but she wasn't in. I investigated the path that runs along the side of the institute by the sea. Later I found myself just killing time.

Tuesday 26 August

Today was the day of my talk. I gave it at 10am and it was very well received. There was a misunderstanding over lunch; I went to the wrong canteen and had just got my food when Dr Lobo found me. I abandoned that food and went to the West canteen.

In the afternoon I went into the centre of Bombay in search of a book on Manipur, but I couldn't find anything. I wish I had got it in Bangalore now. Without it, it is difficult for me to get an accurate history of the conflict between Naga and Kuki in Manipur. This search gave me a fair walk around the city centre. The buildings were colonial British and it almost looked as if India was draped over this foreign skeleton. The overall juxtaposition was odd but very Indian in its contrasts. In some ways the city was quite western. The traffic, though congested was more orderly than Bangalore. This might be partly because there are no auto-rickshaws within the city limits. There are also many more white faces than I am used to.

The next 3 days the biologists are holding a molecular biology conference so I will go to some of the talks. Meeting people is more important than being a tourist and hearing about Indian science is more informative than looking at buildings.

Wednesday 27- Friday 29 August

I don't have anything very important to say about the last 3 days. I have been to some good scientific talks, but much of it was molecular biology which was never my speciality. Going to the talks does make me feel more as if I belong. I also got chance to buy some shirts for home and a tiffin set for Andrew (back in college).

On Friday I took a trip to Elephanta and saw the cave temples. Elephanta is an Island about an hours boat journey from Bombay. The boats set out from the Gateway of India. This was built for the visit of George V in 1911 but not officially opened until 1925. It is an Arch of triumph in a Muslim style. There are moves among some groups in Maharashtra to have it demolished as a sign of British imperialism. The rock cut temples on Elephanta were carved between 450 and 750, some are more complete than others. In there hay day they must have been very impressive but now

they are empty shells. The statues were desecrated by the Portuguese and now any feeling of religion is very diminished.

Saturday 30 August

I was invited to join the biochemists on their annual outing, a trip to the Buddhist cave temple at Kondana. I was up at 6:15 as I thought the bus left at 7, but it was nearer 9 when we left. It was a long journey through Bombay and then into the county. At about 12:30 we had gone as far as the bus could take us and we stopped in a village. We ate our packed lunch and then started on the long uphill walk to the temple. While it was cooler than Bombay because we were in the hills, it was still warm and humid; it even rained a bit. If the forest was thicker I guess it would have been like a rain forest. By the time we reached the end of our trek we were sweaty and wet. The first glimpse of the temples was a bright orange yellow carved cliff seen through the trees. Closer to the temple we saw that there were waterfalls cascading down the front and later we all stood under the water to cool off. The temple itself was never finished because the builders discovered that the rock was no good for carving.



Kondana Temple

While we were at the cave one of the group had a bad asthma attack. This seemed much worse in India because the health infra-structure is much less well developed than in the West. We were all worried about how she was going to make the trek back. On the return somehow the group split up and some of us arrived earlier than the rest. We became quite anxious as time went by and it became dark and still the other group had not appeared. In the darkness the fireflies started to come out in large numbers. First a few flickers of green luminescence, but later it almost looked like Christmas with little flashes of light all over the trees. The countryside was dark and that seemed to amplify the sparks. I saw one close too later on the way back because one got caught in my neighbour's (Sudiptho's) bag. I also had a good talk with Sudiptho about religion, evolution, what I believe and what he believes. He doesn't consider himself religious, which probably means he doesn't practise Hinduism, but he does believe that we are all part of Perusa and need to find our way back. In many ways this is classical Hindu thought, though I have a feeling that he may be more drawn to Buddhism.

We arrived home at 11:30pm and everyone was very tired.

Sunday 31 August

I went to church today but the 9am service at St. John's, just round the corner, was almost finished by the time I got there. I caught a bus and went to the other church that the presbyter looks after, Wesley Church. They had a 10am service. After the service I heard the news that Princess Diana had been killed in a car accident. I didn't feel the grief people claimed when I got back to Britain but it is tragic to leave two children in need of a mother. Her work against land mines and for AIDS charities makes her death even sadder. Back home I learned that UTC were very moved by her death and some stayed up to watch her funeral.

In the afternoon I rested and then in the evening went to the Taj international hotel for dinner. Expensive by Indian standards but part of the experience of India.

Monday 1 September

I had just washed my clothes when I realised that I would be leaving in the early hours of tomorrow and so I need to get it dry today. I put the washing on hangers under the fan. My miscalculation meant that I didn't have time to do my final sight seeing but I went into Bombay to buy a few last things before leaving. I had sent nearly all my books home by post so I needed to get a new novel.

In the evening a couple of us were going to the airport and we had to wait for the transport for a while, but we were there in plenty of time. I had forgotten the details of luggage check in India, so that delayed me a little. Waiting for the plane, Tobias from the states came over and said hello. We met on the plane going out and once in Bangalore. Now we were both returning together. We had met again in Frankfurt and exchanged EMail addresses. Really I was too tired to take in much when I got back to Britain. It was good to be back among my family and friends again, but I will miss my friends from India. I hope we manage to stay in touch.



Bombay at night

St Peter

One of the first disciples called to follow Jesus was Simon, who together with his brother Andrew was a fisherman when he first met Jesus beside the Sea of Galilee. He was called away from his nets to become a Fisher of people for Jesus.

The name 'Peter' is the Greek word for 'Rock' (Petra) which translates into Aramaic as the nickname Cephas. Jesus called Simon 'His rock' and so we know him as Peter. The Bible shows Peter as the Leader of the apostles, chosen by Jesus. We know that his mother-in-law was cured by Jesus, and he was sent with John to prepare for the last Passover before Jesus' death. His name is first on every list of apostles.

Peter wasn't perfect - he walked on the water in faith, but sank in doubt (Mathew chapter 14). He swore at the Last Supper that he would never deny Jesus, but then told a servant girl that he never knew the man (Luke chapter 22), but Jesus said to him "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church."

D. Haydn Davies

Sorry

Sorry there was a slip up in the Harvest/Diolchgarwch edition. I am afraid I put in the first part of one story and the second part of another.

The Vicar

Thank you to Mr Beynon Phillips for checking this issue, to Mr D. Haydn Davies for collecting the Abergorlech News and Mrs Nadine Shepherd for typing and Mrs Yvonne Thomas for collecting news from Gwernogle. Thanks to Brechfa School for their contribution and to everyone who has given me articles.