

Notes from Local Interest Group 29th January 2026

Present in Hall: John Price, Cherry & Victor Williams, Mo Lloyd (ML), Avryl & Roy Lloyd, Sharon Ferguson, Audrey Price, Allison Joyce, Iris Lloyd, Jenny Francis, Joan Lloyd, Lorraine Wibberley, Vicky Gore, Julia Price, Elsa Harflett, Bronwen Jenkins, Janet Russell, Maggie Warne, Joan Hughes, Celia Jones, Sue Lawler, Malc Gonnella, Lyndsay Revell, Sue Buckingham, Lee Miles, Stephen Lloyd, Jane Lloyd, Val Price, Jim & Chris Lowe, Rob Davies

Present on Zoom: Wendy Ozols, Llewelyn Breese, Marilyn Price, Heather Pink, Grace Davies, Christine & Phil Lewis, Jennifer Lewis, Bethan Lloyd, Wayne Maddy, Evelyn Bally, Edwina Griffiths, Margaret Price, Sue Ievers, Gareth Jones, Carbon IT?, Richard Thomas.

Apologies: Den Ozols, Joan Clinkskel, Tim Francis

ML welcomed everyone to the meeting. She announced that there would be a coffee morning on 27th February in Painscastle Village Hall and that all are invited to attend.

She then asked Cherry Williams to introduce the topic for the evening. Before Cherry began her talk, she asked everyone to join in congratulating Mo Lloyd on the presentation of a Powys Silver Kite award at a recent ceremony in Llandrindod Wells. The award was given for service to the community and was extremely well deserved. A round of applause for Mo followed.

The Morris Family of Painscastle Shop and Post Office, in particular Betty Lloyd.

Cherry began by explaining that the main part of the evening would be a recording, made by Grace Davies, of Betty Lloyd reminiscing at a WI meeting in 2002. Cherry would begin by giving us some background information about Betty and her family.

Elizabeth (Betty) Lloyd was born in Aberedw in 1922, to Roland (Roly) Milwyn and Olive Mabel Morris. Her father, Roly, was born in 1900 in Llansaintffraed in Elvel and is recorded on the 1901 census. The family lived at Forest Cottage and Roly's father was listed as a carpenter. By the 1911 census the family had moved to The Mill, Aberedw and father was recorded as a carpenter and miller. Roly's father was one of 14 children born to Hugh and Elizabeth Morris. Roly's wife, Olive, was born in Checkley, Mordiford, Herefordshire and Cherry said that she was always very proud of being English. (Their retirement bungalow in Painscastle was called Checkley after the place where she was born.) On the 1901 census, her father was recorded as a grocer and provisions dealer, but by the 1911 census he was listed as a widower. Olive had a sister called Edith.



The celebration in 1962 when 'Pop' received his B.E.M.

Pop on his postal rounds with Mrs Evans, Penlan receiving a letter.



By 1921, Roly and Olive (who were both still single) were servants working for Danzy and Annie Watkins of Lane Farm, Rhosgoch. They married in 1922 and between then and 1937 they had seven children, of whom Betty was the eldest. The other children were William (1923), Aubrey (1926), Stanley (1928), Enid (1931), Joan (1935) and John (1937).

The Morris family moved to Painscastle in 1932 when they took over the post office and shop. Cherry's grandparents, Septimus and Edith Lloyd, moved across the road to New House in 1930 and Cherry has been told that the two families would shout over to each other from their bedroom windows when there was something of interest to share! In 1939, on the England and Wales



Register, Roly was recorded as being sub postmaster, grocer and smallholder, whilst Olive is shown as having been unpaid and doing domestic duties. Cherry said that this was an unfair description because Olive ran the post office. Possibly this arrangement was because male postmasters were paid more than female ones. All of the children in the area knew Roly and Olive as Nana and Pop Morris. Olive died in 1979, aged 84, and Roly in 1985; they are both buried at St Peter's, Llanbedr.

Cherry said that she had brought lots of photos and bits of information for the audience in the hall to look at once the film of Betty's talk had finished. Again, she thanked Grace for having made the original recording, and John Price for his work in improving the sound quality.

Betty Lloyd's Reminiscences

Betty began by saying a little about the history of Painscastle, including the battle in 1198 and its importance as a place on one of the main drovers' routes, both subjects covered by previous LIG talks and therefore recorded elsewhere. Another story that she told was that of Rose Williams, the "Martyr of the Storm", which is also recorded in previous LIG notes. She went on to say that the school had been built by the de Winton family in the 1900s. The de Wintons owned much of the land in and around the village and had grouse shooting on Ireland Moor. There was a keeper who lived at Ireland and looked after the grouse shooting, Ben Price was the last of these.

Betty continued by telling us a bit more about her father, Roly, the post master. He used to deliver the mail on horseback and the BBC once came to film him doing his round. It is reputed that he was the last mounted postman in Wales. The post was brought up to the village from Erwood and then sorted in the post office for three different rounds. Roly's round was the one that went up to Penbedw. By 1941, the post was being brought to the village by van from Brecon and Erwood, and then later from the main sorting office in Builth Wells.

Betty went on to talk about some of the characters who lived in the village, including Granny Roberts, who was originally from Lancashire and who never lost her northern accent. She lived in one part of a house called Whitehall, which actually belonged to Goodwin Price. She was, by all accounts, quite a character and had a goose which actually seemed to live in the house with her. People would give her things, including unusual clothes. She had a feather boa and astrakhan coat

and visitors would often be shown her wardrobe. She died in around 1940 and after her death there was a sale of her things which raised enough money to pay for her burial and headstone.

Goodwin, who actually owned Whitehall and lived in the other half of the house, originally came from Newchurch. Betty said that he was “not quite the full shilling”. He kept his money in an Oxo tin lined with cloth so that it would not rattle. The village boys used to tease him and play tricks on him, but none of this was malicious and Goodwin appeared to take it in good humour. He lived very frugally, was never very well dressed and he would go to Betty’s family’s shop to buy bread, cheese and a candle, and this was all he ever appeared to purchase. He never bought coal for the fire; instead, he would collect sticks to burn to keep himself warm. Eventually, Goodwin could no longer look after himself and he was accommodated in the workhouse in Knighton, where he died. Despite living in quite reduced circumstances, he had actually owned his house and he had some money in the bank.

Betty mentioned some of the more transient characters who came to the village looking for work. There was Thomson who came every year to do odd jobs for the farmers, such as picking stones. Another, who they all called “The Navvie”, would help Granny to clean the school and to light the fires so that the children did not have to sit in cold classrooms.

In 1934, a new Baptist minister from South Wales was appointed, a Mr Browning. He lived in The Cottage, next to the pub. His wife was from Wrexham and she had been a cinema pianist. Another of the Baptist ministers was Mr Roberts, whose daughter was an actress called Rachel Roberts. When WW2 broke out, he joined the army as a padre – this was a much better paid job than that of a Baptist minister. There were two chapels in the village, the other being the Congregational Chapel. None of the ministers were very well paid; they barely had sufficient to live on. In fact, no-one in the village was that well off at the time and no-one had any money to spare. Many of the young boys used to work on the farms to earn a bit of a living. Betty also said that groups of the boys would play cards for halfpennies in one of the blacksmith’s shops until someone put on a uniform and pretended to be a policeman in order to frighten them. The boys would stay on the farms during the week but would go home on a Sunday to get their washing done by their mothers.

During the war, there were evacuees brought to the village school, along with a teacher. She would get a lady in the village to do her laundry and this lady could not understand why the teacher had so many handkerchiefs.

Betty told us that her father-in-law bought The Castle in 1918. In 1922, his wife died, leaving him with three small children and so he employed a housekeeper to help him. One of these married Mr Lloyd, Pendre.

When Betty was young, there were very few cars in the village. Some of the farmers had tractors and these had cost around £200, which was a great deal of money when Betty was young. The post office actually had a petrol pump so fuel could be bought locally.

These notes do not really do justice to Betty’s talk and really only offer a snapshot of what she said. There were just too many anecdotes to record, all of which were delivered with incredible warmth and humour. The audience were obviously thoroughly enjoying their evening. The note taker

apologises for not being able to record everything she said. It had been a truly fascinating insight into life in Painscastle and its many characters.

Towards the end of the evening, discussion moved on to the Garage and Kitchen Bands, both of which featured on the television programme 'That's Life'. It all started when Bryngwyn W.I. members started practising for a local competition by using spanners and other tools as instruments. Some locals were quite scornful, suggesting that they were wasting their time, so Val Price wrote in to 'That's Life'. When she received a letter suggesting that the programme should come to film them, she thought someone was having a joke! Val and other members of the cast recalled their visits to London, the first time to be in the audience and the second when they took the Kitchen Band for a live performance on the show.

At the end, ML thanked Grace Davies for making the recording in the first place and also John Price for enhancing the sound. Thanks must also go to Cherry Williams for her research into Betty's life, ably assisted by members of the Lloyd family. Both the audience in the Hall and the one on Zoom thoroughly enjoyed their evening.

The evening ended with refreshments kindly made by Avryl Lloyd and Iris Lloyd. There was also an opportunity for people in the Hall to see the many photos and other items that Cherry had brought along.