**Some Memories of 1976**

They vary, depending on where you were! In China some mourned whilst others felt relieved by the news of Mao Tse Tung’s death. Democrats in America celebrated the election victory of Jimmy Carter,, the first President from the Southern States since their Civil War back in the 19th century. Yet over in South Africa the brutal repressive white regime killed 176 black protesters in Soweto. Back in Britain readers mourned the passing of crime writer Agatha Christie, and Harold Wilson’s suddenly handing over the Premiership to Jim Callahan, drew comment . Despite all that the main talking point around here that summer was the weather. Day after day of hot sunny skies had by August produced a brown carpeted countryside. No rain brought a drought resulting in water shortages and the inevitable hosepipe bans. The source of the Thames apparently dried up in Gloucestershire and London recorded its lowest river level ever. Lorry after lorry arrived at local farms with vital animal feed for those parched cattle and sheep.

Visitors to the National Eisteddfod at Cardigan found conditions underfoot totally different to their muddy wet memories of Carmarthen in 1974. Clouds of Sahara-like dust blew around everywhere, even getting into the ice creams, as competitors and spectators alike sweltered in the oppressive heat. It’s still referred to as Eisteddfod Y Llwch (The Dusty Eisteddfod). Temperatures soared as we prepared to stage our evening performance of Wil Angladde. It was a black comedy farce, (a bit risqué in those days), set in a graveyard with an open hole, coffin and actor corpse for good measure. Some five minutes before curtain up a lady in the audience collapsed in a heap. Pandemonium! Our ashen faced producer arrived backstage to announce, “*If that lady’s died, there’s no way this play can go* *on!”.* Fortunately she’d only fainted in the oppressive heat and after two glasses of water resumed her seat to enjoy all the ribaldry of that performance. Yet four days days later, the real life graveyard at Bwlchycorn Chapel, Rhydargaeau, bore witness to a tragic funeral . Hundreds congregated to mourn the loss of a highly popular local lad. Emyr, from nearby Gors farm, had died as a result of tractor accident on those parched fields. He’d been a hard worker. His cheery smile and garrulous nature had made him universally popular in the thriving Llanpumsaint Young Farmers Club, and a star turn amongst that lively congregation of youngsters at the then highly popular Stag & Pheasant. It was a huge funeral on another blazing hot day! *Arwyn 2018*