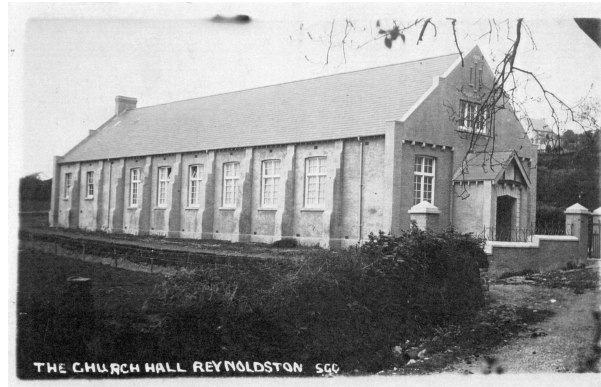


## Activities in The Church Hall in the 1930s and 1940s



The Hall has been rendered and there is a front wall - 1927

The footlights must have been used to good effect when Miss Violet Howell produced scenes from *Macbeth* in the late 1930s. *The production probably centred on Scene One, Act Four as I recall the witches chanting while huddled around a caldron in the middle of the stage. One witch was played by Miss Emily Richards and another by my mother, Nell Jefford. Lyndon Lee and I played Apparitions, appearing from behind a net curtain hung at the rear of the stage.* (Godfrey Jefford -2011)

Godfrey Jefford also remembers that a "Sports Day" was held to celebrate the coronation of King George VI in 1937. Activities took place on the field adjacent to the Hall (now the site of the Fire and Ambulance Stations). There was then tea in the Hall. Godfrey recalls his grandfather (Stanley Jefford) taking the family's radio over to the Hall and connecting it up so that the King's Speech could be relayed to listeners gathered in the field below the hall kitchen window.

Monthly dances were held in the hall and these continued to be popular well into the post-war years.

*"A Dance will be provided in the Church Hall on Thursday Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> at 7.30pm. The Music will be provided by Kenways band, and the M.C will be Mr.T.Lee. Buses will run to Swansea after the dance".* (1938).

The dance bands hired during the late 20s to the late 40s were the Phillip Summers Band, Roy Allen Band, the Marine Dance Orchestra, New Kenways Band, Keith Andrew Band, Ronny Parry's Accordion Band, Orleans Dance Band and the Blue Havanas Orchestra. Ron Parry became a regular after his first engagement because he was local and much cheaper than other bands. He also had a lovely smile to go with a friendly attitude, a very popular man. He sold ice cream as well. (Eric Lee -2011)

Godfrey Jefford recalls village dances... dances were popular in Gower as one of the few forms of local entertainment. These events were held in all village halls, including frequent dances in Reynoldston. One of the bands that often played in Reynoldston was led by a blind saxophonist called Elwyn James. However, the small band most frequently performing was that of Ron Parry (from Moor Corner Farm). Ron played the accordion and he was joined by Donald James from Llandewi Farm. Curtis Grove, of Porteynon (later Headmaster of Olchfa Comprehensive School) would on occasion join the band. The dances were attended by teenagers and twenty-year olds of South and West Gower. The same people would be present at a dance, regardless of the village in which it was held. Popular music was played alongside dances such as the Palais Glide and the Okey Cokey, when everyone joined in. The suspended floor at the hall trembled under the impact of dozens of people doing these dances!

A highlight of the year for local children was ....*The Christmas Tree and Tea* were held in the Church Hall on 29<sup>th</sup> Dec. There was a full attendance of Sunday School scholars who partook of an excellent tea, which was provided as usual by Major T.R.Harris .( Fairy Hill) Afterwards the prizes and gifts were distributed by Father Christmas (Tommy Lee). The prizes were the gift of Miss Benson who for many years has performed this great service for the Sunday School . Major Harris gave three special prizes for scholars who had made a perfect attendance. The Rector, on behalf of the Sunday School thanked Major Harris, Miss Benson, the Hon. Mrs Methuen (who sent the Christmas Tree) and all who helped to make the occasion so enjoyable. The usual games followed with Mr T.Lee as M.C.

Godfrey Jefford recalls that "My sister and I always attended the *Christmas Tree and Tea* with a lot of "chapel" children who miraculously became Church Sunday School members for the event. In the early-mid thirties enough children attended Sunday School to warrant several classes which were held in the kitchen, adjacent room and the main hall".