

## Chapter 38 – (2008/9)

### *Touching My Roots*

On my return from Scotland in December of 2008, I went to visit my urologist as required, fully believing I had been healed of my cancer, so was very surprised when he found three tumours had appeared on the wall of my bladder. As the previous ‘scraping’ had revealed a high-grade cancer, he said, “we must get them out urgently”. Apparently, his ‘urgently’ meant five weeks as, with Christmas approaching and his holidays scheduled, I would not be admitted to the hospital until the new year. The second surgery resulted in the most painful spasm I have ever had but evidently was successful, as I now have no signs of cancer in me. Through the next three months I had a weekly injection into my bladder of bovine TB, apparently the usual treatment for bladder cancer. Following such treatment it is normal to see one’s urologist every three months for two years before it is extended to every six months, so this was the case when I made a special plea. Steve Evans of Cardigan, Wales (see Ch37) had kept in touch with me to see how I was doing with the cancer, and had taken up the comment I had made while with him. He invited me to return to Wales to speak at his church in a ‘revival conference’ and to stay over to minister at his church for an extended time. I would be immersed in a Welsh-speaking culture as was my expressed dream. He added that a car was available to me and I could house-sit Dick’s house while he was on a sabbatical for seven weeks in the USA. So it was that I asked my urologist if it would be possible to stay in Britain until the first week in August when Karys, Anne’s niece would have her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, three weeks beyond my next scheduled visit. He easily agreed saying, “Gareth, your attitude and lifestyle convinces me that the cancer will not return, but even if it does, we will have plenty of time to treat it. Go and enjoy yourselves.

Anne and I arrived in Cardigan the first week of May 2009, not knowing that later, we would both consider these three months as ‘the most wonderful holiday we’ve ever had!’ From the beginning we ‘fell in love’ with the people of Mt Zion Baptist Church, where my sense was that ‘revival is imminent’. I spoke there many times but was most blessed when Steve Evans preached four messages on ‘the valley of dry bones’. (You can listen to these messages on my ‘links’ page.) What anointing was on his preaching! The prayer meetings were very encouraging with over 25 people in attendance each week (from a congregation of ~ 100) while the singing was ... well, Welsh! - hearty, rousing, harmonious, passionate. I was in my element! Dick’s home was a lovely cottage overlooking a ravine through which flowed the silent, deep, River Teifi on its way to the sea past the town of Cardigan. The ravine sides were covered with trees and the only other sign of habitation was the old Kilgerran castle high on the hill. Dick and his Guatamalan wife, Gladys, were a remarkable pair. They had come to give their lives in prayer for a land, neither of them had any roots in, but which the Lord has laid upon their hearts, until revival comes again. At the time of this writing you can follow all they do on their web page, [www.walesawakening.org](http://www.walesawakening.org).

Many are the highlights of that wonderful time – walking the cliffs along the rugged coast, visiting with blind Doreen, a praying saint, exploring the streets of the quaint market town – and speaking Welsh! Yes, I was able to practice all I had learned through the Welsh lessons on BBC Wales, assisted by Steve and Sulwen and through attending a class for ‘intermediate students’. There I even made a presentation before the class, speaking only in Welsh with, apparently, a very good accent according to the teacher. My topic was my current hobby – learning languages.

After Dick & Gladys returned from the USA we were hosted at a beautiful B&B further up the coast, for one week, at a fraction of the normal cost, before house-sitting the local 'mansion' for two weeks – a magnificent house belonging to a church member. We were so blessed by all these precious people!

One day, a couple were standing outside Mt Zion gazing at the notice board when, Arlene, one of the members, came out of the church and, seeing them show such interest, began to speak to them. They were passing through Cardigan on a trip up the coast with their son who lives in the UK. She added that they were from Canada so, when Arlene later met Anne she told her of their conversation and said that they had just gone into the local Christian book shop, across from the church. Anne entered the shop and began to speak to them. They were from Brentwood Bay, just a few miles from our home in Victoria! When they heard my name the woman exclaimed with some excitement, "We've been praying for him for the past four months!" Evidently they had heard of my cancer and had committed to pray for me though they did not know me personally. How blessed it is to belong to the family of God, knowing that there are no strangers in this family, only brethren we have never met.

Before returning to Loughor in time for Karys' birthday, we decided to take a trip across the UK to visit my cousin Christopher and his wife (Dame) Elsbeth Thomas. Elsbeth had been knighted by the queen for her services to the British Red Cross of which she had been President. She also knew Princess Diana quite well before her untimely death. Christopher and Elsbeth had invited Anne and me to stay over with them in Cambridgeshire for a few days, an invitation we were keen to accept. En route we visited Ivor and May Sherwood, retired Scripture Readers whom we had first met while in Germany in 1964, Marion (and John) Palmer, Anne's friend from schooldays and my other cousin Cynthia (and Bill Brown), together with Anne's cousin Gwilym (and Sue) Edwards. What a wonderful trip, full of memories and a fitting end to our Welsh holiday. There was only one thing left – to enjoy Karys' 50<sup>th</sup> which we celebrated with her many friends at a wonderful dinner.

We returned home to the good news that the cancer showed no signs of returning.