

The Story of Saint Carannog



The Celtic Saint Carannog gives the village Llangrannog its name. The prefix "Llan" means the church of and Llangrannog is The Church of Carannog.

Saint Carannog was the son of Corun and grandson of the great Ceredig from whom we have the name for this county of Ceredigion. Carannog refused to succeed his father to the throne and rule over South Wales.

It is known that Carannog flourished in these parts between 480 A.D and 540 A.D and he founded a church here near the present site. Legend has it that a dove always guided the saint and brought him messages from God.

One legend relates how Carannog, after leaving his father, found himself living as a hermit in a cave on a hillside. Here he devoted himself to prayer and to the study of the scriptures. One day, he was whittling a stick outside the cave, when a dove began flying off with the wood shavings. Carannog followed the dove and found that the shavings had been laid at a spot in the valley below the cave. He took this to be a sign from God and built his first church of wattle-and-daub on the place where our present Church now stands, and above which still exists a cave.

Many miraculous deeds are attributed to Saint Carannog. It is said that pilgrims came from far and wide to drink the holy waters of St. Mary's fountain which is situated opposite a house at the top end of the churchyard which is known as "Ffynnon Fair" (St. Mary's Well).

After a time, Carannog decided to become a missionary. He travelled to Brittany (where he founded Carantec), to Cornwall (Crantock) and to Somerset (Carhampton). He also went to Ireland where he established churches and also healed the sick. Eventually he returned to Wales with a few disciples to occupy the same cave for a short period. He returned alone to Ireland where he died on May 16th and was buried in the monastery he had founded there.