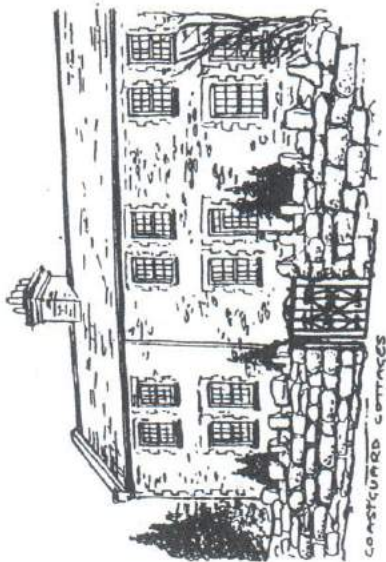


(4) Continue on the pavement round the corner towards the junction of Marine Parade and Alberta Road. Here you will find a Victorian seat, post box and fire hydrant. Over the wall you will see the yellow facing bricks of Portland Close, a development that won a Welsh Housing Design Award in 1983. It stands on what was the orchard of a school run by a Miss Bate and a Miss Sumner in their house "St. Maeburne" — an anagram of their two surnames. Some time later paving stones were laid across the lawn so that children living in the house could lean over the wall to post letters in the Victorian post box we see today.

(5) Continue up Alberta Road and cross Plymouth Road into Alberta Place directly ahead. Plymouth Road is named after the family that owns much of the land in Penarth. In about a hundred yards you reach a continuous grassed area which from 1887 until 1968 was the extension of the Cardiff-Penarth railway to Barry via Lavernock, Swanbridge, Sully and Cadoxton. There was a halt platform here at Alberta Place. Walk towards the old railway bridge, turning right just before it to go down Sully Place.



(6) Cross Plymouth Road and walk down Tower Hill — between 54 and 56 Plymouth Road. You soon pass on your left, Tower House, the former Coastguard Station. The terraced cottages below were built for the coastguards. Turn left into Marine Parade at the bottom of Tower Hill, turn left again into Holmsdale Place and return to Plymouth Road.

(7) Turn right and walk up Plymouth Road. The three-storeyed semi-detached houses are not quite on the scale of Marine Parade but they represent the spacious stone-built residences of the well-to-do in the eighteen-eighties. Beyond number 12 Plymouth Road is Roxburgh Garden Court built on the site of James Pyke Thompson's house "Roxburgh." In 1888, Thompson built an art gallery on land previously occupied by the thatch-roofed farmhouse of Taylor's farm. He named it after the painter J. M. Turner and



used it to house part of his private collection which was open to public view. Turner House Gallery is now part of the National Museum of Wales and is open every day except Monday.

Opposite the Gallery is the former Penarth railway station's down platform, erected in 1878 but now a garden centre and petrol station. Between Turner House and the Glendale Hotel is a path (known locally as 'the Dingle') which leads down to the seafront. The adjacent Landsdowne House, formerly an hotel, is on the site of a farmhouse owned in 1847 by a William Randal. The Lansdowne block was built in 1886 by Frederick Speed of Shepton Mallet who also built the 1904 terrace on the Esplanade.

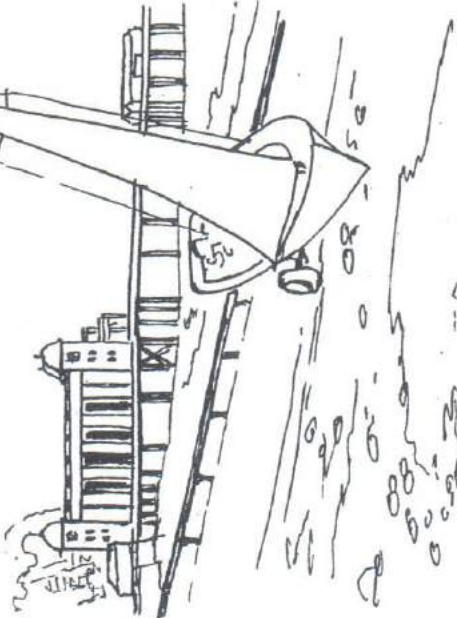
Continue walking up Plymouth Road. The lane running down the side of the Nat West Bank once led to the town pound where in 1635 the vicar of Penarth is said to have had a violent confrontation with his parishioners.

(8) The next turning right is Rectory Road. On the corner is Penarth Library, opened in 1905 with a £4,000 gift from the Carnegie Trust. On the opposite side of the main road (Stanwell Road) is Washington Buildings where once stood Steps Cottage, said to be the only nineteenth-century cottage in Penarth to have steps leading to its front door. In 1922, Capt. W. H. Bevan converted the then Penarth Tutorial College into an hotel which he named the Washington in the hope of attracting American visitors. In 1936, its tennis courts became a cinema and the present shops were built around the cinema's car park.

(9) Walk to the end of Rectory Road past Penarth Lawn Tennis Club, founded in 1884. For the Town Centre roundabout (which is the starting point of the Inner Town Trail) turn left into Windsor Terrace. To return to Penarth Pier, turn right into Alexandra Park, named in 1902 after the wife of King Edward VII. Bear right on the higher path and walk down through the park on any of several paths, all leading eventually to the Esplanade where you began your walk.

THE PENARTH SOCIETY

Town Trails No. 1



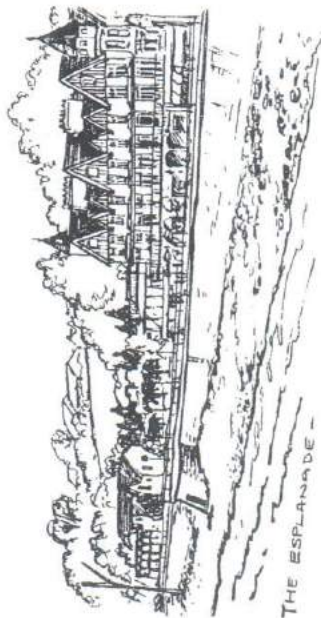
PENARTH TOWN COUNCIL

Duration of walk: approx. 1 hour.

The text of this walk is based on routes and background material supplied by M. E. Brennan, Councillor A. M. Ernest, Miss C. M. Neill, Class 6 of Evenlode Primary School (1984/5) and Penarth District Local History Society in response to a competition organised by Penarth Town Council. Edited by Mavis Linstrum and illustrated by Diana Mead of The Penarth Society.

Illustrations copyright Diana Mead.

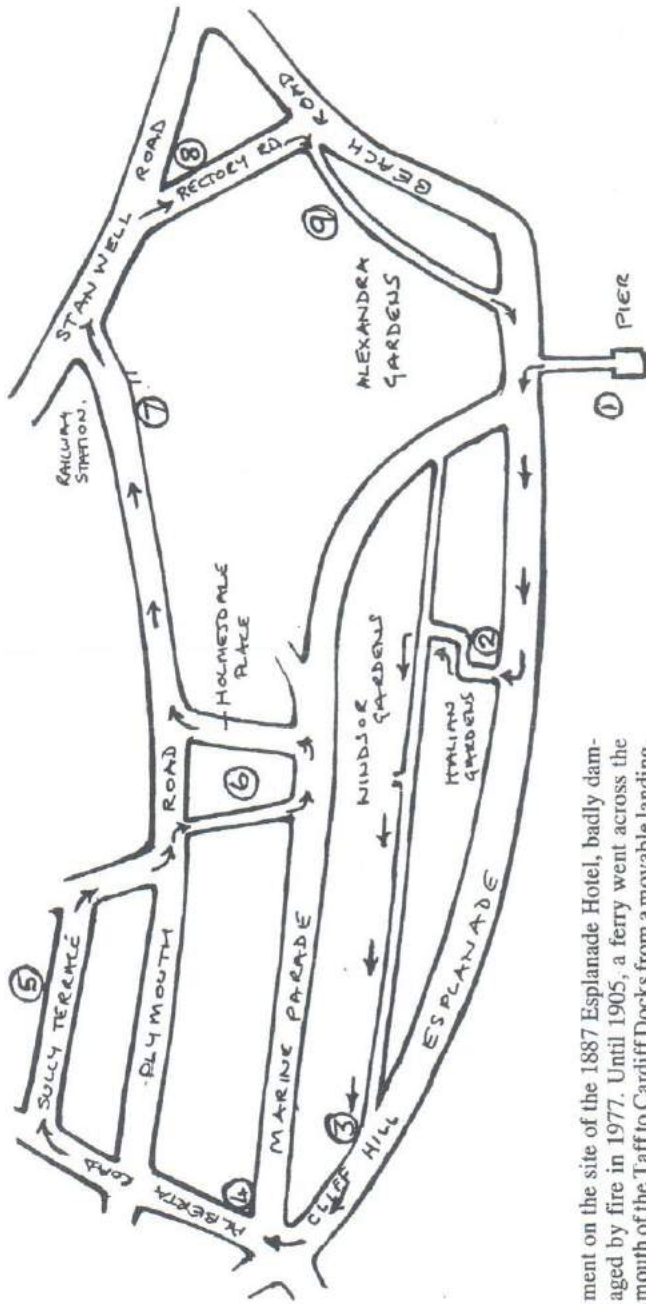
(1) Walk to the end of the pier — built in 1894. A wooden pavilion where concert parties played was built here in 1907 but it was destroyed by fire on August Bank Holiday, 1931. The tide often goes out beyond the pier as the range between high and low tides in the Bristol Channel is one of the largest in the world. During a fierce gale in May 1947, the 7,000-ton "Port Royal Park" went broadside into the pier causing damage that took two years to repair.



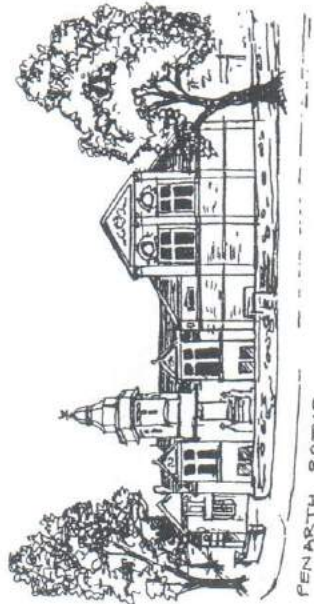
Turn to face the seafront. On your extreme left is Lavernock Point, the southern limit of Penarth bay. Rising to about 200 feet on your right is Penarth Head, the 'garth' that allegedly gave Penarth its name. Around Penarth Head, protected from westerly winds, lie the mouth of the River Ely and Penarth Dock, now developed as a Marina. The expansion of the coal trade led to the rapid development of both town and dock in the second half of the last century.

To your left, near the slipway at the bottom of Cliff Hill, is a Victorian building with spiralled pillars and a cast-iron verandah balustrade. Now a listed building, it has been the Yacht Club since 1883. The inshore lifeboat is housed in the flat-roofed pavilion nearer to you on the left. Next comes the Edwardian terrace (1904) with decorative iron balustrades and a tower at both ends. The three high roofs have a window in the gable and are separated with pairs of lower pointed roofs. The lower floors of these terraced buildings are now restaurants with living accommodation above.

Almost ahead of you is a block of flats known as Windsor Court, built in 1963 on the site of Balcony Villa and Rock Villa. It is deliberately free from the ornamentation the Victorians loved but the recessed balconies give a pattern of light and shade. To the right is another Victorian building which for a century housed the swimming baths. It is built of local blue lias stone with carved bathstone window surrounds and pilasters. Next to it is the modern develop-



ment on the site of the 1887 Esplanade Hotel, badly damaged by fire in 1977. Until 1905, a ferry went across the mouth of the Taff to Cardiff Docks from a movable landing-stage in front of these buildings.



Further to the right is Seabank Flats and, in the trees above the multi-storey car park, The Kymyn, an eighteen-seventies house owned by the Council with grounds recently landscaped for public use.

As you return to the Esplanade, notice the fan designs and border patterns on the pier's cast-iron railings and the Esplanade's original lamp standards between the pier and the Yacht Club. There was no continuous sea wall in the nineteenth century; the promenade was built in 1883 and widened by twenty feet in 1927.

(2) Leave the pier, cross the Esplanade and turn left in front of Windsor Court, the restaurants and the RNLi station. You can now see the Italian Gardens laid out in 1926 on the site

of a building once used for storing bathing machines. Walk up the steps, turn right, climb the metal steps to the flat roof and continue into Windsor Gardens up the flight of concrete steps donated by the Civic Society. Turn left, pass the bandstand and cross the path into the continuation of the Gardens, laid out in 1884. On your right are the modern houses of Marine Parade built in the gardens of the Victorian residences of coal-owners and ship-owners and others whose prosperity was linked with Penarth Dock. As you leave Windsor Gardens you pass the lodge where visitors had to pay an admission charge until 1932 when the Earl of Plymouth gave the grounds to the public.

(3) Pause on the pavement of the main road. From the opposite side of Cliff Hill, a coastal path continues along the eroding cliffs to Lavernock Point. The two islands in the Channel, Flat Holm and Sleep Holm, both have Viking associations. The nearer Flat Holm is a nature reserve and gull colony. Part of South Glamorgan, it has been farmed for at least seven centuries. The lighthouse was established in 1737. There is a ruined nineteenth century cholera hospital and a barracks used during the last war. In May 1897, Marconi achieved his first radio transmission over water when his morse message, "Are you ready?" was transmitted from Flat Holm and received by a 110 foot mast in the farm at Lavernock Point. A commemorative plaque can be seen there in the front wall of St. Lawrence's Church.