Villagers remember a gentle giant

By PETER ROBERTS

THE frightened villagers of Llanddewi Brefi affectionately remember the tragic victim of last weekend's vicious shooting as "John Brynam- bor, the gentle giant."

Well-built sheep farmer Mr John Hughes Williams, a very keen angler, was the most kind and placid of men you could wish to meet and friends from all parts of Wales were phoning up local public houses, where he was known, to express their sympathies.

He was an active member of Tregaron Angling Club, a dry fly-fishing expert and rod-maker, always ready to pass on his craft and experience to locals and visitors alike.

During last winter's blizzard he was snowed-in at his farm for some 10 days with a badly in-jured finger caused when a sheep-feeding block fell on his hand. The damaged finger was later partially ampu-tated and afterwards he was not able to tie his flies so well.

Even his doctor, also a keen angler, held him in such high regard that if he had known of the injury at the time he would have organised a helicopter to drop medical supplies to the farm.

Mr Williams was born on a farm near the village of Llanddewi Brefi and moved to Brynam- bor, seven miles up into the bleak mountains, several years ago.

Bachelor Mr Williams had lived alone for the past 20 years, since his parents died.

He was a highly-respected member of the locality and sat on the community council and the predecessor parish council for several years. He was photographed among the members of the community council recently and a framed print hangs in the village hall, which is now acting as the police incident room.

He was a well-read man and devout churchman. As treasurer of Wales's most isolated place of religious worship, Soar-y-Mynydd chapel, he often rode over the mountains to pray there and check the building.

Mr Williams often drank a pint of cider and played a game of draughts at the New Inn in the village.

He also used the village's other public house, The Foelalit, from where the landlord, Mr Bill Rodway, yesterday described him as a "gentle giant."