



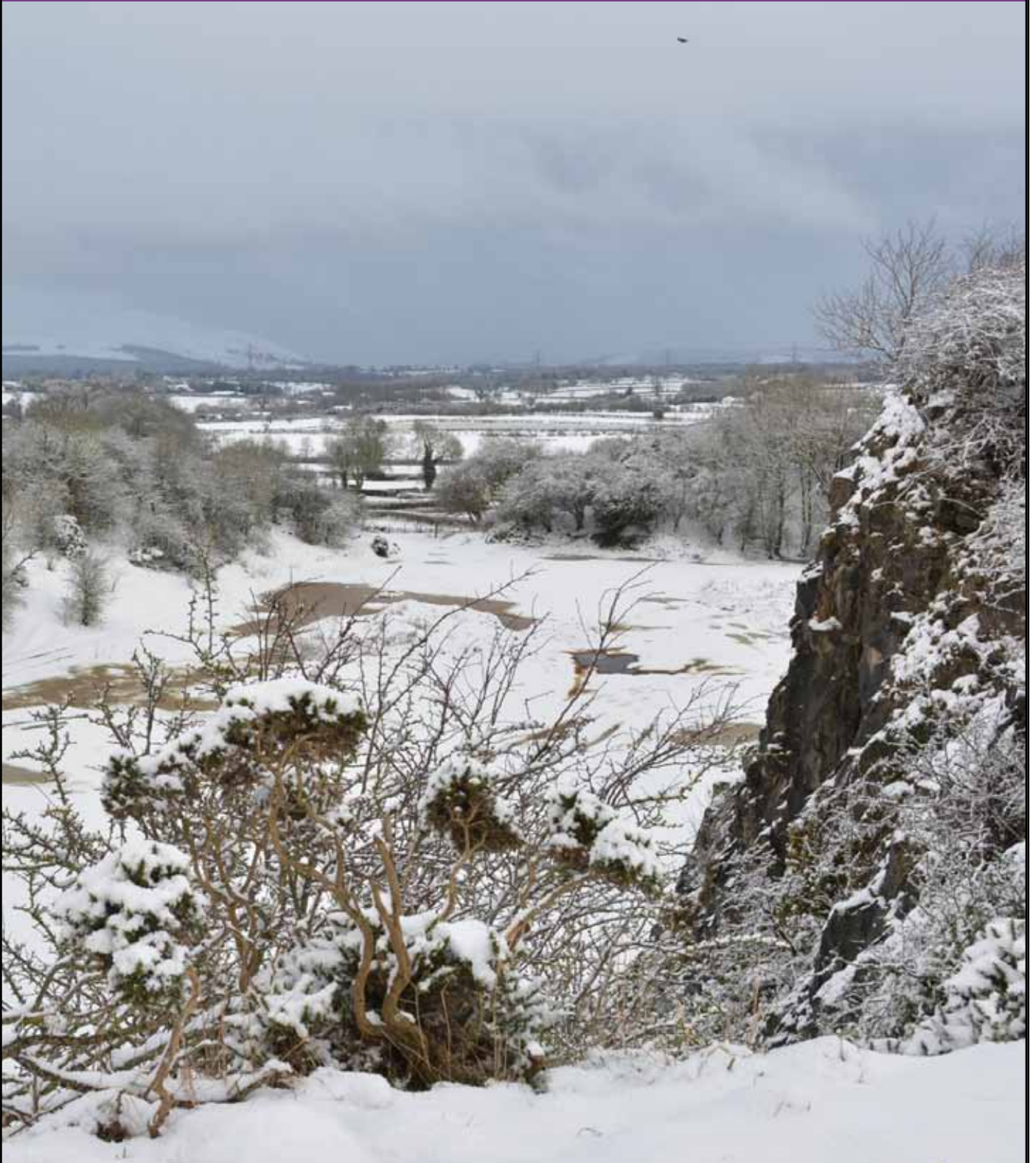
THE FIVE VILLAGES CHRONICLE

CRONICL Y PUM PENTREF

ISSUE 140
RHIFYN 140

WINTER (DECEMBER) 2021
GAEAF (RHAGFYR) 2021

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THE SIGN OF A GREAT PINT



EDITORIAL (Terry Ireland)

The last two years have been a very testing time for everyone, but more especially for our young people at school. Confined for long periods in their homes the normal structure of children's lives was radically altered, changing their social lives, family life, school attendance and education and for many, the disruption of the everyday pattern of their lives. Parents were entrusted with online lesson supervision and most found the experience very challenging and often beyond their capabilities through no fault of their own. For many, everyday routine went out of the door as parents worked at home and children were trying to cope with home study and separation from friends. No doubt for many, this confinement meant that pyjamas and dressing gowns became the standard attire for the day. Normality had vanished and the very thing children need, routine, disappeared. Anxiety, stress, and arguments must have resulted in some homes and they became environments unsuited to children's mental health and happiness. Thankfully the liberation of families from home confinement has at last occurred.

One of the consequences of this enforced life style was the loss of physical fitness for many, including children, caused by lack of physical activity and in some cases fewer regular meals and more snacking. Small wonder it is that these conditions have caused many school children of all ages to become anxious, stressed and in confined conditions unable to exercise and let off steam.

Our youth is a time when we set the pattern of our lives physically, mentally, and spiritually, building self-confidence and developing our lungs and hearts with robust play or running, walking, jumping, climbing, swimming, and cycling. Children learn to assess danger, build their self-confidence in taking decisions. Socially, at school, they learn the skills of interaction and play, learning to select and make friends. This cannot be replaced easily in life if they miss out on stages in these activities and lose their confidence. Modern sedentary life has started to create a significant and noticeable number of children who are unfit and overweight, spending much time bent over computers. In many ways they could be described as middle-aged even before they are mature. Talk is now of sitting being the new smoking. The medical profession is now facing examples of serious mental problems among young children.

COVER PICTURE

This photo was taken in the White Quarries in Pantasaph, by Steven Jones.

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It is so unfortunate that the Glasgow World Climate conference COP 26 has added to children's anxieties in a big way. Children have seen the terrible floods in Germany, Britain, France and of course, the fires and droughts in Australia and the USA. Islands in the Pacific have started to disappear as sea levels rise.

Somehow, we need to give our school children their normal secure lives back and help them with their angst and anxieties. How we do this is another matter. All children need play and artistic activities. The school curriculum pays scant attention to music, art, drama, dance, and physical fitness. These are the very areas in which children find self-confidence and joy in life. We all need to help the children we know and meet. Kind words and a smile can work wonders.

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Tesco, Bank Place, Holywell, CH8 7TJ
Ysgol Gwenfrwdd, Whitford Street, Holywell, CH8 7NJ

Please advise editor@5villages.org.uk if there are any we have missed!

COUNCILLOR CHRIS DOLPHIN

Hello everyone, Sut mae pethau

Well, let's start at the beginning – babies – a new service - Absorbent Hygiene Product (AHP) – a disposable nappy collection commencing on November 1st. Council member seminars were held in the summer and recommendations of an AHP collection service, which is for disposable nappies and/or incontinence pads, being approved. For background - the Council were awarded £282k of funding by Welsh Government. Residents need to apply for the AHP service, which will complement the current medical waste collections. A huge benefit of course is the removal of this type of waste from black bin waste, the long-term goal is to find a recycling solution.

To register for AHP, complete an online e-form which is on the council website or, alternatively, telephone the Streetscene contact centre 01352 701234. When applications are approved new containers will be delivered, a 75-litre orange box. Collections will be weekly for a two-year period or until not required. There is an expectation that up to 20% of residents will require the service.

UPDATES:

An Active Travel – Connecting Communities action plan is being worked on by the Community Council and myself. It's important to the Five Villages locally, this has been the opportunity for residents to let us know what YOU wanted. I have

a list, more footways, safer cycling and safer roads for horse riders, safer roads for all. - Babel Road, Dyserth Road, Gorsedd village, needing new footways, it's a big bid, we may get all, some, or of course none. Villages do not usually qualify for funding, Lixwm for example was unsuccessful, Caerwys and Holywell have been. However, the County Council urged our area of Five Villages to press ahead. The Whitford Council Chair, Richard Dolphin and Clerk Phillip Parry have put in a tremendous amount of work on this project, a funding success of some sort will be hard earned by us.

Local lobbying has brought about the Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) in Carmel and Gorsedd and now soon, two more on Monastery Road, Pantasaph. At our final site visit during the Autumn, it was apparent that due to tree cover, these new VAS will not be solar.

Longer periods of darkness highlight any streetlight problems. Most lights are managed by the County Council; however, the Community Council also have responsibility for many of our streetlights. Recently I have reported a "box" of four streetlights managed by the County Council, two in Llys y Mor on Ocean View and two immediately adjacent on the main A5026. These are local to me; however, it still took the Chair of the Community Council (Richard) to point them out. If they are not reported, they will not be fixed. Occasionally the problem lies with

Scottish Power, this then always leads to delays, sometimes long frustrating delays of months.

Do you have pride in our local area? In your street? In yourselves? Let's keep the Five Villages tidy, let's do our bit. What is the harm in keeping our immediate property area tidy. We have dog and litterbins; do you want more and where? It has been apparent that litterbins in Carmel have been abused, and by residents! It can take a long time to catch those type of people out. You may think it another oddity that your local councillor seems to be "going through the bins"; there is always a reason. Clues/proof, (good enough for me), recently two residents from a local address near The Village Green (Bryn) in Carmel have been spoken to, firmly, politely, and socially distanced. Of course, even after admittance, the councillor is the one to be reported!! Very annoying, but of no consequence. Pride, not all have it.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21:

An exceptional year, threats, and challenges of a global pandemic. An Annual Report is mandatory on councils, and accounts for council performance against its own priorities. Here is a compilation of performance: 2,173 energy efficiency measures delivered to reduce fuel poverty (target was 600); 1,865 children participated in the summer playschemes including 30 disabled children supported by volunteer buddies; 500plus residents supported

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per week during the 18-week shielding period providing over 46,000 meals; 1,500 home workers supported per day (800 in previous year); £50.9m grants were paid out to businesses during the pandemic, in addition to the 1,265 businesses being awarded £16.3m of enhanced retail, leisure and hospitality rate relief. The Contact Centre answering rates increased to 93.64%; 7 new foster carers recruited; 4 children were prevented from entering the care system through the award of Special Guardianship Orders to family members; 133 children were offered advocacy; 1,136 people over the age of 65 were being supported to live at home with a further 501 older people being supported in care homes; 55 extra care units opened in Holywell (Plas yr Wern on Halkyn Road); Test, Trace Protect Service contact traced 8,904 Flintshire residents who tested Covid positive and asked 19,660 contacts to self-isolate.

Improvements are also required in certain areas. The average time to determine planning applications did not meet the set target for the year. Average number of calendar days to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (Large Adaptions) did not meet expected targets. There was a downturn in Recycling performance due to an increase in black bag waste being collected from residential properties. Reported littering, dog fouling and fly tipping increased during the pandemic.

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT:

This is a grant available for adapting or providing facilities for a disabled person at home. To apply you need an Occupational Therapist from the Council to refer the case. This grant is available to owner occupiers, private tenants, local authority tenants in social housing with registered social landlords, so just about all. The maximum grant is £36,000 per application within a 5-year period. Cases can be reviewed by an Occupational Therapist upon application. If the application is for a child or the applicant receives certain benefits, there is no means test and the cost up to the maximum is normally awarded. Where the application is for under £10,000 these medium sized cases no longer require a means test.

Where a means test is required, a financial contribution may be required. If you need, want, or know of a need, where a person living with a disability, could stay at home with the grant of an adaption costs, contact the council. Independence, and being at home can be achieved.

OCEAN VIEW BANKS:

The wildflower planting will have taken place in November. A little later than planned as the original plan was to take up the turf and plant seed, however the appropriate machinery was unable to work on the bank. New wildflower pre-seeded turf is to be laid, this will be the third and largest area in the county to have this treatment. I am assured the daffodils will come through as normal next Spring.

CONTACT:

If you need to contact your Five Villages Whitford Ward County Councillor Chris Dolphin call 01352 713415 or e-mail chris_dolphin@hotmail.co.uk or write to me at 11 Ffordd Aelwyd, Carmel, CH8 8SH.

CYNGOR CYNGHORYDD:

Er gwybodaeth rhif cyswllt cynghorydd sir ardal Chwittfordd a'r pum pentref yw Chris Dolphin, 01352 713415, ebost chris_dolphin@hotmail.co.uk neu pe dymunwch ysgrifennu llythyr fy nghyfeiriad yw, 11 Ffordd Aelwyd, Carmel, CH8 8SH

Paidiwrch byth rhoir ffidil yn to a digalonnii!!!

Never, never, ever ever give up!!!

HOLYWELL COMMUNITY MUSEUM NEWS (Andrea Dakin)

The museum is going from strength to strength with different groups meeting three days a week:

On Tuesdays from 11 a.m onwards we have the Every Memory Matters reminiscence group - when at least eight (and sometimes a lot more) meet in the cafe, sharing memories and bringing in photos to be copied and artefacts to donate to the museum.

If you have memories to share or are new to the area and want to learn from 'the experts' please come along. The memories are not going to be lost as I am preparing a

newsletter of all that we remember which will be ready to purchase in the museum by December - approx 12 pages for purchase - all proceeds to the museum. This will be the first quarterly edition as I am hoping to produce the next one in the spring.

On Wednesdays, 10.30 onwards we now hold a craft/knit and natter group. At the same time there will be a jig-saw puzzle club - we have jig rolls and some beautiful nostalgia themed puzzles. So why not take a few mindful hours out of your busy schedule and choose what you want to do on the day while you chat with new found friends.

On Thursdays, 10.30 - 12.30ish (usually later!!) there is a 'write your own story for your loved ones' course. Taught by a professional and experienced tutor, in this six week course you will be guided to write your life's memories so that your great grandchildren won't be asking, "What did my grandparents do in the twentieth century and how and where did they do it?".

The course costs just £25 - pens and notebooks provided and the course is limited to just six people - enough for a group dynamic but not too many - so that everyone can have input.

The first course is almost over and the one after Christmas is full, but I am taking names for another one running up to Easter. If you want to know more about this course or any of the other groups please phone me or email me direct 01352 711240 andreadakin112@btinternet.com.

All of this and so much more to see.

Not forgetting the POACH room where our two retired miners are on hand to share their memories of Point of Ayr. If you have any artefacts to donate we would welcome them - or photos - we will copy them and give them straight back to you.

As we are now getting so busy we welcome new volunteers. No set time commitment - just come and join our happy band - there is still so much more to be done at your museum !!

The museum phone number is 01352 217170 or just pop in and have a chat with one of us.

We are open 10 - 3 Monday - Saturday See you there.



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Cynhelir yr holl wasanaethau y Sul yn nghapel Penbryn, Treffynnon, pob pythefnos, a daw'r aelodau o'r tri capel i gyd-addoli. Byddwn fel Swyddogion yn adolygu'r sefyllfa cyn y flwyddyn newydd.

Ni chynhelir Gwasanaeth y Plygain traddodiadol yng Nghapel Sion, Lloc am 6 o'r gloch fore Nadolig eleni, oherwydd y cyfyngiadau'r Cofid.

Mae rhai o'n haelodau wedi bod yn yr ysbyty'n ddiweddar a dymunwn adferiad iechyd iddynt. Mae ein cofion hefyd yn mynd at yr aelodau sydd mewn cartrefi gofal.

Gwelir isod restr o'r gwasanaethau. Os bydd unrhyw newid neu ychwanegiadau fe roddir gwybod i'r holl aelodau.

All Sunday services are now held at Penbryn Chapel, Holywell, every fortnight and are attended by members of the three chapels. The officers will review the situation before the new year.

The traditional Plygain Service will not be held at Sion Chapel, Lloc at 6a.m. on Christmas morning because of Covid restrictions.

A few of our members have been in hospital recently and we wish them all a speedy recovery. We also send our greetings to those members who are in Care Homes.

See, below, the list of services. If there are any changes or additions we will notify all members.

Rhagfyr / December:

12 - Huw Powell-Davies
 26 - Marc Morgan

Ionawr / January 2022:

9 - Marc Morgan
 16 - Huw Powell-Davies
 30 - Huw Powell-Davies

Chwefror / February:

6 - Marc Morgan
 20 - Huw Powell-Davies

Mawrth / March:

6 - Marc Morgan
 20 - Nan Powell-Davies

Dymunwn Nadolig Llawn i bawb gan ddymuno hefyd Flwyddyn Newydd Dda.
 We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



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ESCOBAR, EVITA AND... CARMEL? **(Timothy Abraham)**

Carmel's outgoing secretary explains how the seeds for a cricket book he has co-authored were sown by his time at Carmel & District CC.

It may surprise you, but the ground at Carmel & District CC has staged international cricket.

Honestly, it's true. Some of the older readers of the Five Villages may well remember that on the back of a cricket tour in 2007 we twice organised and hosted a T20 tournament featuring national teams from around Europe.

Many of the teams who came to play had fascinating back stories as they experienced playing on turf pitches for the first time in North Wales.

Slovakia's players all came from a small village called Hajske and were founded due to the inspirational efforts of a chap called Vladimir Chudacik.

He knocked on the door of every single person in the village and managed to convince enough people to get three teams playing regularly.

A sizeable number of Croatia's players were descendants of those who had fled the Balkan conflict during the break up of Yugoslavia in search of a new life in Australia.

Would you believe we even had a Croatian - Nikola Davidovic - as our overseas player playing at Carmel one summer.

An invitation to myself from Lawrence Booth, editor of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack, to take over responsibility of the Almanack's 'Cricket Round the World' section followed the tournaments.

This truly piqued an interest in cricket in offbeat locations - and allowed me to squeeze Carmel into Wisden (the famous yellow 'bible' of cricket) more than a couple of times.

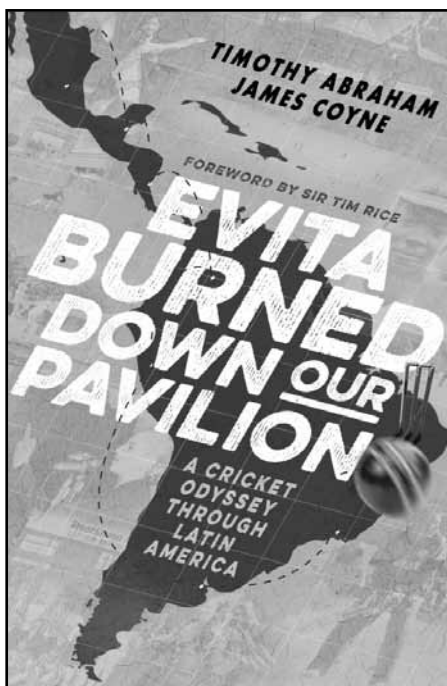
From editing and writing entries about unusual places it emerged books had been written on cricket in every continent apart from one: South America. (Well, there's Antarctica too, if we're being pedantic).

This was strange given that cricket was the first sport played in almost every country of the Americas - earlier than football, rugby or baseball.

In 1877, when England and Australia played the inaugural Test match at the MCG, Uruguay and Argentina were already ten years into their cricket derby played across the River Plate.

The visionary cricket historian Rowland Bowen said that, during the high point of cricket in South America between the two World Wars, the continent could have provided the next Test nation.

So six years ago, with a journalist colleague, I set off to trying to uncover that forgotten history. We battled scorpion attacks, were stumped by Pablo Escobar's



son and heard how Eva Perón took a particular disliking to the sound of leather on willow.

We even discovered Welsh settlers in Patagonia had found time to play cricket which, of course, immediately transported me right back to where this journey began. Back to Carmel.

• *Evita Burned Down Our Pavilion: A Cricket Odyssey Through Latin America* (published by Little Brown) has been short-listed for the 2021 William Hill Sports Book of the Year and the Cricket Writers' Club Book of the Year. It is available in major book shops, via Amazon or you can contact the author directly by e-mailing tpabraham@hotmail.co.uk

NEWS FROM GORSEDD AND WHITFORD CHURCHES



Kathryn Evans

The year continues to fly by, and the countryside is full of the beautiful colours of Autumn, I do love Autumn and all its colours and vibrancy. For me, Spring and Autumn are the most obvious transitional seasons – Spring for the new life, and Autumn for the retreat into winter, and a sort of hibernation. Of course, even if we are a creature who is able to hibernate, life does not stop. In my spare bedroom there is a butterfly overwintering, and I was reminded

of the chrysalis stage of the caterpillar/ butterfly metamorphosis.

Many of you will have spotted that we have sold the Church Hall in Gorsedd, and we wish our new neighbours every blessing in their new home. We did this because, if we are going to be able to provide a church for the future, we needed to think about a transformation of our spaces. Like many people, finances are extremely tight and we couldn't support two buildings, let alone develop them. So, the heart-rending decision was made to sell the church hall in order to re-order the church and provide a more flexible space for the community. Over the winter, the pews will be removed, a new floor laid, new heating installed and a toilet and small kitchenette fitted (with the required services also being laid). Our prayer is this re-ordering gives us a building which can serve the community for many years to come, and also continue as a worshipping church so families will be able to worship with us, attend carol services, and various special services as well as the normal baptisms, weddings and funerals. In addition, we want the space to be a lively hub where groups can meet, people can chat over tea and coffee and hopefully parents, grandparents and children can enjoy play sessions. If you have ideas to help us, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Of course, all these renovations come at a cost financially. Yes, we are very blessed to have been able to sell the church hall to help finance this project, but like anything these days and especially in a church setting – we have needed to step out in faith as there is a gap between the money we have and the money we need to complete this. As my previous Director of Finance used to say - "God never gives

you a dream that matches your budget. He is not checking your bank account, he is checking your faith"! Please pray for us, and if you can help at all, please contact me, our warden Ian Austerberry, or any member of our church committee. In the Spring issue of the *Five Villages Chronicle*, I hope to be able to update you with the new opening date, and invite you to a 'Back to Church' party to see the new interior. In the meantime, our lovely friends at the Druid Inn are hosting a number of services for us, and everyone is welcome to Whitford church, which continues its fortnightly services on the odd Sundays of the month, or any of the surrounding churches during the coming months. As Advent and Christmas approach, we are undergoing our own transformation, as we look forward to welcoming the Christ-child into our lives anew. With prayers and blessing for Christmas and a peace-filled New Year.

Kathryn Evans, Vicar of Bagillt, Gorsedd, Mostyn and Whitford, 01745 799200.

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(Phillip Parry, Clerk)

**TRIBUTE TO COUNCILLOR ROBERT
J. HUGHES (BOB):**

Councillor Richard Dolphin, as Chair of Whitford Community Council, expressed his personal and Community Council's condolences to the family of Councillor Bob Hughes, who sadly passed away in July. Whilst a number of Councillors together with the Clerk had attended the funeral, Councillor Emma Warbrick was invited to represent the Council, as a family friend.

Councillor William Glynn provided the following tribute: Bob was elected as a Councillor during the mid 1980's; he was Chair of this Council on eight occasions; he represented Council at County Planning meetings, County Forum and was a former Council Representative School Governor at Ysgol Yr Llan – Whitford Primary School. Bob spoke passionately on behalf of the Council and took a great interest in representing the area of Whitford in particular, together with the Community Council area in general. Bob was a good Councillor who will be sadly missed and also difficult to replace. Councillors held a Minutes Silence in memory of Bob.

POLICE REPORT TO COUNCIL:

The following crimes have been reported to the North Wales Police over the past three months, that have occurred within the Community Council area:

Carmel - 3 x Anti-social behaviour / 1 x Assault / 1 x Burglary / 1 x Criminal damage / 2 x Violence

Gorsedd - No crimes reported.

Lloc – 1 x Drugs / 1 x Public order / 1 x Possession of weapon / 2 x Shoplifting / 1 x other crime.

Pantasaph - No crimes reported.

Whitford - 1 x Anti-social behaviour.

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA UPGRADE:

The Community Council are pleased to announce, that a bid for funding to upgrade the Carmel Village children's play area has been successful. The upgrade will cost in the region of £25,000.00, with the Community Council providing £10,000.00 towards the project; for new play equipment and groundworks which will alleviate the current water retention following rainfall.

SPEEDING TRAFFIC:

The last edition of the Five Villages

Chronicle reported in relation to speed monitoring tubes installed on Monastery Road in Pantasaph. Following this exercise, the statistics revealed a high volume of speeding traffic. Whilst the North Wales Go-Safe vehicle has been deployed in this area of Pantasaph on a number of occasions, the Community Council have agreed to provide two speed activated flashing signage in the area, at a cost of £6,000.00.



These signs will be similar to the signage installed in the Villages of Carmel and Gorsedd several months ago.

NEW COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR:

Following the display of Public Notices the Community Council were advised by the Returning Officer for the County, that there had been no call for an election and were authorised to co-opt a Councillor. Public Notices advertising the vacancy were displayed on notice boards, Council web site and local Facebook pages, whereafter Paul Urquhart from The Sarn area was subsequently co-opted.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS BROUGHT
THE FOLLOWING CONCERNS,
AND OTHER MATTERS TO THE
ATTENTION OF FLINTSHIRE
STREET SCENE:**

(1) Number of pot holes that have been repaired in a number of areas, which are having to be re-repaired within a short timescale. One particular area was Carmel Hill; the Community Council have requested a site meeting with County Highways (2) Dead owl on A5026 road – in area near the turning for Gorsedd / Carmel Road (close to lime kiln) (3) Following the cutting of the hedge along the A5026 road; request for an additional 2ft to 4ft and / or a 45% angle cut at top from the righthand side - West bound area (Halfway House) to the right hand turn into Whitford Road (4) Overgrown footpath in area of Ffordd Pentre and Ffordd Aelwyd

(photographs provided) (5) Overgrown footpath running from Monastery Road, Pantasaph to Gorsedd Village (6) Lon Y Waen Road in Gorsedd to the A5026. On the left hand side the hedge is dangerously overhanging which results in vehicles having to manoeuvre towards the incorrect side of the road (7) Large pothole on Carmel Hill, located near the Pantasaph side near Monastery Road. (photograph provided) (8) Bushes overhanging the pavement on Monastery Road, Pantasaph (photograph provided) (9) Two requests received in relation to hedge / tree branches overhanging onto pavement in area of Park Crescent, Carmel.

**ACTIVE TRAVEL / CONNECTED
COMMUNITIES (STATEMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR RICHARD DOLPHIN –
CHAIR OF WHITFORD COMMUNITY
COUNCIL)**



Cllr Richard Dolphin

You may have seen on social media, the council website, or heard by word of mouth, that Whitford Community Council held two consultation events during October 2021. The aim of the events were to discuss 'Active Travel', explore the current barriers, and to gain the views and wishes of residents to encourage more journeys to be undertaken by walking or cycling.

The Coffee Morning at Carmel Village Hall was a huge success with 60+ residents in attendance. I thank the Hall Trustees and

Coffee Morning at Carmel Village Hall



volunteers for their support and distribution of refreshments on the day. I'd also like to thank Community Councillor Emma Warbrick, County Councillor Chris Dolphin, and our Clerk Phil Parry, for their assistance on the day. A real success.

The virtual consultation displayed a presentation to outline a visual understanding of the council's objectives. The main purpose was to signpost to the online questionnaire.

Whitford Community Council were grateful to receive 64 responses. Some quick figures include: 50% of respondents using motorised transport on a daily basis with the main purposes being shopping (80%) and socialising (63%); the theme of barriers to undertake active travel journeys identified; distance, safety concerns associated to speeding and the lack of footways, and age-related mobility difficulties. The top two ways to improve the area included reduction in speed limits (85%) and the need for new footways (78%). Other general comments about Active Travel identified positives surrounding the new Fflecsi Bus service, the need for more benches and seating to encourage those with mobility difficulties to walk more, and suggested areas for new pavements.

The above information has been presented to council members at the last meeting on 4th November 2021. Next



steps include the Sub-Group creating and developing a draft business plan with consultation via Flintshire County Council. The final step will be to formally submit the 'Connected Communities' Active Travel Plan to the local authority for funding considerations.

Thank you again for your participation.

Richard Dolphin

Chairman, Whitford Community Council

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

The Community Council Members provide their observations to Flintshire Planning Authority on all planning applications within their Community. Full details of the observations made can be viewed in the Minutes of each Council meeting, which are displayed on the Council website, or from the Clerk – as per details below:

(1) Application number: 063157 – in relation to a retrospective application for a dormer window to front elevation, at 6 Llys Y Mor, Carmel (2) Application number: 063197 - for loft conversion to form bedroom and single-storey rear extension to form kitchen and sun lounge, at 23 Mertyn Lane, Carmel (3) Application number: 063200 – for the construction of a 60m x 20m manege with sand and fibre surface for private use only, at Plas Yn Gerddi Farm, Lloc (4) Application number: 063268 – for the following: T.1 Pine - Fell to near ground level T.2 Pine - Reduce long branch in upper crown by 2m and crown lift



over road T.3 Pine - Reduce two branches in upper crown by 2m and low branch over parking area by 2m. T4 Crown lift over road, at Bwthyn Y Derwydd, Gorsedd. (5) Application number: 063308 - for demolition of garage, rear bedroom, conservatory and front bay. Proposed replacement roof (same ridge height) with rear dormer, rear extension, front extension and porch, at Trem Y Don, Celyn Lane, Carmel. (6) Application number: 063225 – for partial change of sloping roof to flat roof to creating outdoor sitting area, at Woodburn, Carmel Road, Carmel (7) Application by Savills of Chester, in relation to a pre-application consultation process, on behalf of Pennant Park Golf Club, Mertyn Downing Lane, Mostyn, for proposed siting of 49 static holiday caravans and lodges on former golf practice area together with supplemental landscaping (8) Application number: 063316 – for proposed first floor extension, at Haulfryn, 13, Mertyn Lane, Carmel (9) Application number: 063344 – for the erection of a raised platform to the rear of the property, at 12, Park Avenue, Carmel (10) Application number: 063361 – for retention of Le Mirage. Conversion of existing property (The Croft) into 2 no. holiday cottages. Siting of 5 no. Lodges, at Le Mirage, Whitford Road, Whitford (11) Application number: 063436 – for new standalone building to provide early years and wraparound childcare facility



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with additional site improvement works, at Ysgol Bro Carmel.

PLANNING DECISIONS:

The following planning decisions have been received from Flintshire County Council: (1) Application number: 062635 – demolition of existing conservatory to facilitate a single storey rear extension to form kitchen / living area, at South View Cottage, Gorsedd. Approved (2) Application number: 062735 – for approval of details reserved by condition 3 (materials) attached to planning permission ref: 058860, at Halfway House, Allt Y Goch, Carmel. Approved (3) Application number: 062455 – for change of use, at 'The Barn' as separate dwelling independent of Fachallt Farm, Whitford. Refused (4) 062348 – for removal of variation of a condition following grant of planning permission number: 059681, at Bryn Mair, Gorsedd. Approved (5) Application number: 063088 – for removal or variation of condition following grant of planning permission, at Land East of McDonalds, Lloc. Approved (6) 063157 – for retrospective application for a dormer window to front elevation, at 6 Llys Y Mor, Carmel. Approved.

APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND DONATIONS:

The Community Council have granted the following financial assistance since the last edition of the Five Villages Chronicle: £250.00 Hope House / Ty Gobaith (Children's Hospice)

R. Phillip Parry
Clerk & Financial Officer to Whitford
Community Council
Tel: 01352 720547
E-mail: clerk@whitford-council.wales
Web site: www.whitford-council.wales

MORNING STROLL WITH A DIFFERENCE



This is Richard Griffiths. His bullock had got loose and he was casually walking it back to the field. Sent in by Emma. (photo by Tracey Davies)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Applications for Financial Assistance

The Whitford Community Council each year provide financial assistance to local Groups and Committees, who are registered within the Council area. This funding is awarded towards the cost of room hire, general running costs, together with capital purchases.

During the pandemic and in particular, the lockdown aspect when meetings and activities were not allowed, applications for financial assistance ceased from the majority of Groups and Committees. The Councillors are pleased that many have now recommenced.

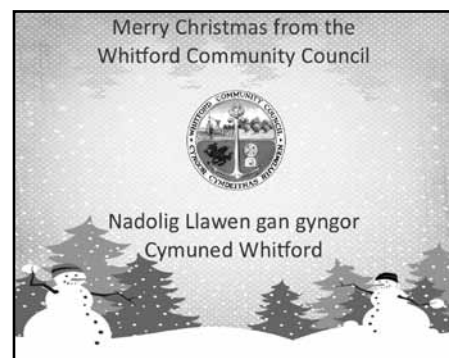
The Councillors look forward to receiving financial assistance applications for consideration; whereby further information can be obtained from the Clerk to the Council – as below contact details.

R. Phillip Parry,
Clerk & Financial Officer to
Whitford Community Council
Tel: 01352 720547
E-mail: clerk@whitford-council.wales
Web Site: www.whitford-council.wales

THE FIVE VILLAGES GARDENING CLUB OUTLINE PROGRAMME FOR SPRING 2022

January
No meeting
February 3rd
2pm – Gardeners' question time where members bring along their gardening questions. Followed by refreshments.
Chair: Carole Madden
March 3rd
2pm Malc Mollart
An illustrated talk on Design for Atmosphere
April 7th
2pm Jan Miller-Klein
An illustrated talk on Gardening for Wildlife.
She will bring plants for sale.

May 5th
2pm Plant Sale.
Please bring plants/cuttings for the sales table.
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Christine Hamer on 01352 716272.



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KEY COMMITTEE CHANGES AT CARMEL (by Cameron Ackroyd)

It's all change at Carmel & District Cricket Club with key personnel stepping down from their positions at the Annual General Meeting held in November.

Andrew Abraham has vacated his position as chairperson while brother Timothy relinquished his roles as secretary and head groundsperson. The departure of both men, following five years in key roles on the Carmel committee, comes after they oversaw an unprecedented era of improvements at the club.

A new net training facility, fully licensed bar and improving the club's financial situation were key among priorities delivered.

The club's biggest fundraiser on bonfire night was also established as an annual community event, and a women's cricket team founded this year. Outgoing chair Andrew said: "Those members of the club who were willing to buy into a modernised approach towards doing things have seen the rewards. While naturally there is a degree of pride at the improvements to facilities during my time as chair, I'm actually prouder of the way we have revolutionised the administration side of things."

"The club is now more accountable to its members, with greater transparency, and the committee functions more efficiently and effectively. In many ways this is a much more important legacy."

A strategic partnership with Holywell FC Ladies & Girls to use their Pen-y-Gelli ground for matches was also put in place during their tenure. The footballers were finally able to play their first senior fixtures against Llangefti and Northop Hall in October after pandemic restrictions eased.

Andrew added: "There is now an opportunity for other members at Carmel with strong views on the direction of the club to step up and play a part."

"It will be beneficial to have fresh faces and a renewed impetus at committee level going forward, further strengthening our relationship with the football club. I am sure

those who take over will be brimming with ideas, and have a willingness to get their hands dirty, to keep the club on an upward trajectory."

The role of pavilion manager is also now vacant at Carmel after Lisa Isgar tendered her resignation.

On the pitch the club's cricketers endured a season of mixed fortunes with one highlight a first-ever victory by the women's team - beating Northop Hall - in their inaugural season.

The men's 1st XI finished eighth in North Wales Cricket League Division Two while the 2nd XI and 3rd XI ended the season bottom of Division Four and the Sunday West Division respectively.

CLUB REPORT

Even though cricket is a summer sport, Carmel and District Cricket club remains active throughout the autumn and winter months. Most of this activity is centred around training and practice sessions for junior and senior cricketers at Holywell Leisure Centre.

Junior coaching and practice sessions have already commenced and are held every Sunday afternoon between 2pm and 4pm at Holywell Leisure Centre. New players are always welcome and full details of these sessions are available from Alun Davies on adifa@hotmail.co.uk. This summer the club ran the hugely

successful 'All Stars' and 'Dynamos' cricket programme for junior cricketers at Pen-y-Gelli and is hoping to host these sessions again next season. Information about the courses will be available early next year.

Carmel's newly established ladies team has also started indoor training sessions at Holywell Leisure Centre. The team enjoyed its first ever season this year and made huge progress both on and off the field under the leadership of captain Andrea Jones. The team is seeking to make further progress next season and extends a warm welcome to new players of all abilities. Details of the training sessions are available from Andrea on david_andreajones@yahoo.co.uk. Training sessions for the men's senior teams will commence early next year and will also be held at Holywell Leisure Centre.

The club was due to hold its Annual General Meeting via Zoom on Friday 26th November. Full details of the outcome of the meeting will be included in the next edition of the *Five Villages Chronicle*.

Finally, the club would like to thank everyone involved in the publication of the Five Villages Chronicle for their continued hard work, and for their support for the cricket club over the years.

Best wishes to everyone in the Five Villages area for Christmas and the New Year. Dymuniadau gorau i bawb ar gyfer y Nadolig a'r Flwyddyn Newydd.

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HOLYWELL FRIDAY GROUP 2022

Programme of talks for spring term 2022. Fridays, 1.30pm-3.30pm at St Peter's Church, Rose Hill, Holywell CH8 7TL (near Lidl). Attending a talk costs just £1.

Pay £10 in advance to attend the full programme of fourteen sessions!

Contact Sue Andrews, convenor.

Mobile: 07792 159555 email: sue52andrews@yahoo.co.uk

Date	Title & content	Speaker
26 Nov	Get together. Come along for tea, coffee, biscuits, cake and a chat. Bring a friend. Sign up for the new series of talks. Don't forget your wallets/cheque books!	
7 January	'Fine or Applied?' Discover what is fine art and what is so-called 'craft' or applied art. Examples of Andrew's non-commissioned work.	Andrew Coomber, silversmith and artist
14 Jan	'Adventures in the 'words trade'-from space to history and back again'.	Nick Booth, writer, journalist, NASA space cadet
21 Jan	'How to make your mark in a pandemic-opening a gallery in 2020'.	Sarah McKee and an artist
28 Jan	'The delights of weather'.	Robert Moore
4 February	'One home, two families, lots of Georges and Harrys' The lives, scandals, and changing fortunes of the families who have lived at Dunham Massey hall over 400 years.	Dr Howard Whitby
11 Feb	'The History of Ness Gardens'.	Nick Lightfoot, Garden Collections Manager, Ness Botanic Gardens
18 Feb	'The story of Plas Cadnant; the restoration of the hidden gardens near Menai Bridge, Anglesey'.	Anthony Tavernor, owner of Plas Cadnant
25 Feb	'Learning to listen to my heart'-from science and the navy, to dogs and shamanism; how I found self-esteem among the chaos.	Hayley Hilton
4 March	'Bleeding control from the battlefield to the streets'. This talk will cover the important developments that have been made to save lives as a result of battlefield medicine and what the public can do to save lives and make a difference.	Toni Murch
11 Mar	'Plas Mawr-past and present.' A history of Plas Mawr and how it has been used from 1576 to present day. Plas Mawr is a Tudor Merchant's house in Conwy.	National Trust volunteers
18 Mar	'A history journey along the North Wales coastline from river Dee to the Conwy Estuary'.	Michael Blackburn
25 Mar	'What happened to my lunch?' A tour through the workings of the digestive tract!	Paul Andrews, Emeritus Professor of Physiology
1 April	'The sounds of the harp'. Theatr Clwyd - tbc	
8 April	'Robert Dudley and his Denbigh connection'. Robert Dudley was Earl of Leicester, Earl of Denbigh and Queen Elizabeth's favourite courtier.	Wendy Grey- Lloyd, historian

THE HOLYWELL & DISTRICT SOCIETY (Sally Brighton, Press Secretary)

Although our society is still struggling to find officers, our loyal ex-Chairman, Gwladys Harrison, and Treasurer Pam Thomas, have both nobly agreed to 'keep on going' in the hope that as the Christmas season passes into springtime, replacements will be forthcoming. Although applications for vice-chairman, and secretary are also needed, we are not done yet, and our committee meetings remain well attended and our membership intact! If you have an ounce of energy to spare for such things, please get in touch forthwith, by ringing Gwladys on 01352 712748 and you will be made most welcome.

After regular Zoom Committee meetings during Lockdown, our first face-to-face meeting was held in September, in the Old School Room in the Greenfield Valley where we disposed of various 'business items' whilst revelling in the novelty of working together and sharing coffee and biscuits. This was the first time for nearly a year.

It was particularly warming, on this cold September day to hear from Ray Bailey, our Research Officer, that the research group of the Holywell and District Society, has joined forces with the Railway Museums' research group, to work upon a new book, initiated by the Society, containing new research inspired by the late John Thomas's book, 'The Tramways and Railways to Holywell'. Now long out of print, it is hoped that a new reprint might be possible, and the new book will contain new and additional research, as John had wished his book would inspire. Ray further went on to give us an up to date account of what further could be seen in the parklands surrounding our meeting place,



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and, indeed, what sights could become the subject of more summery visits with our families and friends:-

"Down in amongst the Greenfield Valley Heritage Parks' Seven National Monuments, lies the famous Lower Cotton Mill, at the side of which is the restored, 250-year-old Warehouse. Many may remember it contains the steam powered pop bottling factory. In addition, it now houses a new Railway Museum, telling the story of our local Tramways and Railways, including some surprises. Although it hasn't got a giant steam locomotive, it does have a very rare small battery-operated locomotive, and wagons, that operated inside the Milwr Tunnel that ran from Bagillt to Loggerheads, 400 feet underground and serving the Halkyn Mines, nearly ninety years ago! Other exhibits include rusty rails, some 170 years old, found by John Thomas, relics from the old tramway, which operated from the quarries up at Pantasaph and Crecas, running all the way down to Greenfield Dock. Long before steam, it was operated with horses. The Museum, along with other artefacts and information, also has a superb scale model of the old Holywell Town station, complete with working locomotive.

At their open days in the summer, in combination with the pop bottling factory, now operating once again, it is a rare showcase of our Industrial Heritage. It is now closed for the winter, but sometimes tours can be arranged for interested parties. The Museum is run by volunteers and welcomes both visitors and donations!"

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MARK ISHERWOOD MS



We should all be able to stay warm at home, but sadly each winter many people cannot afford to do so. Rising energy costs, low incomes and energy-inefficient homes are restricting people's options, leaving them in impossible situations like having to choose to heat their home, feed their children or pay their rent.

The impacts of living in a cold, damp home cause unnecessary suffering for millions and continues to kill as many people as smoking and alcohol abuse. As Chair of the Cross-Party Group on Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency in previous terms, I have been working with National Energy Action, NEA, Cymru and the Fuel Poverty Coalition Cymru to re-establish the Cross-Party Group in the sixth Senedd, and I am pleased to report that our first meeting took place on November 8th.

The purpose of the group is to raise awareness of the problems of fuel poverty and enable Members of the Senedd to openly discuss the policy issues which can impact on the ability of households in Wales to afford their energy bills.

We have long been calling on the Welsh Government to make fuel poverty a priority and to ensure that fuel-poor households receive the financial support they need. I most recently raised this in the Welsh Parliament with the Minister for Social Justice on 20th October, when I emphasised the strong connection between fuel poverty and health.

I stated, "We recognise that tackling fuel poverty is a social justice issue, but we recognise that improving the energy efficiency of the homes of fuel-poor households in Wales will also contribute to climate change objectives in Wales." Speaking here in November 2018, I noted that the annual cost to the Welsh NHS of treating people made ill by living in a cold, damp home was approximately £67 million, with health impacts caused by cold homes predominantly relating to cardiovascular and respiratory problems. Low temperatures also diminish resistance to infection and encourage damp and mould growth in the home. And cold indoor

conditions have also been linked to poor mental health, resulting from anxiety and stress, and cold homes also exacerbate social isolation and reduce educational attainment, therefore crossing into social justice issues.

Speaking at National Energy Action Cymru's fuel poverty conference in February 2019, I stated that your predecessor had told the Cross-Party Group that the Welsh Government would be developing a Cold Weather Plan in conjunction with Public Health Wales, and that a crisis fund and adoption in Wales of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guideline and quality standard on cold-related ill health and excess winter deaths would also be key to this. However, yesterday's statement by the Minister for Health and Social Services on the Welsh Government's health and social care winter plan made no reference to fuel poverty.

On October 1st, the energy price cap set by energy regulator Ofgem increased, driven by a rise in energy costs, with gas prices hitting a record high as the world emerged from lockdown. Although the price cap ensures that suppliers only pass on legitimate costs to customers, NEA Cymru warned that this rise would plunge 22,500 more households in Wales into fuel poverty this winter, and called for deeper protection and more direct financial support for low-income households this winter. They stated that the Welsh Government "has a vital role to play to support fuel-poor households across tenure to retrofit and upgrade the energy efficiency of their homes", and

are calling on the Welsh Government "to expand the financial support available to assist those struggling to meet growing energy bills, as well as longer term investment in home energy efficiency, prioritising the poorest households in the least efficient homes".

I called on the Social Justice Minister to respond to their call.

Given that winter is almost upon us again, it is vital that the Welsh Government acts now – there is no time to waste on this.



Wales needs a Cold Weather Plan, which NEA Cymru's annual Fuel Poverty Monitor has called for over a long time,

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and which the Minister in the last Welsh Government accepted in 2019 and said the Welsh Government would be developing. It is disappointing that we are still having to push for this. As temperatures plummet, people, particularly the elderly and those on low incomes, should not have to worry about putting their heating on.

Fuel poverty can affect not only household finances, but also lead to physical ill-health and stress, so it is vital that all steps should be taken to tackle it and improve the wellbeing – physical, mental, and financial – of people in Wales.

Anyone struggling to meet their heating costs can contact NEA Cymru's Warm and Safe Homes advice helpline on 0800 304 7159. Alternatively information can be found on their website <http://neacymru.org.uk/>



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FESTIVE RECIPES **(Isabel Burnage)**

The following recipe can be prepared in advance and frozen if required. It includes all the festive ingredients and can be eaten hot or cold.

TURKEY AND STUFFING LOAF

Ingredients

12 oz (450g) minced raw turkey
 4 1/2 oz (125g) sage and onion mix
 1 medium onion peeled and chopped finely
 1 egg
 Salt and pepper

Method

In a large bowl mix the minced turkey with the egg and 2 - 3 tablespoons of water.
 Season with salt and pepper
 Boil the onion a little water until just soft, cool slightly.
 Add stuffing mix onions make a firm consistency.
 Place half the turkey mince in a lined tin or greased baking dish. Press in firmly.
 Spread stuffing over the layer of turkey
 Spread remainder of turkey over the stuffing. Press in firmly.
 Cover with lid and bake on centre shelf at Gas 4 / 350F / 180C for about 1 hour.

Serve with roast potatoes and vegetables and gravy to taste, or cold with salads and bread rolls.

FESTIVE FLAPJACKS

Ingredients

4oz (110g) butter
 3oz (75g) sugar
 3 tablespoons syrup
 4 tablespoons mincemeat
 10oz (275g) rolled oats
 2oz (50g) S.R. flour + 1 teaspoon mixed spice
 3oz (75g) mixed dried fruit
 1 tablespoon chopped nuts (optional)

Method

In a large pan, gently melt the butter, sugar and syrup. Remove from heat.
 Add all other ingredients. Mix well.
 Spread in a greased Swiss roll tin.
 Bake on centre shelf at Gas 4 / 350F / 180C for about 25 - 30 minutes until lightly brown.
 Allow to cool before cutting into fingers.

HOLYWELL LADIES FOOTBALL TEAM



Holywell Ladies football team before their first game at their new home at Pen-y-Gelli which they share with Carmel and District Cricket Club. The club hosted Llangefni Ladies in a North Wales Women's Football League fixture on 10th October 2021, and despite losing 5-2, the team gave a very good account of themselves and both teams played well and enjoyed the occasion.

AUTUMN IN THE FIVE VILLAGES (Robert Moore)

Weather in the Five Villages Autumn 2021 (2020 in brackets)				
	Temperatures °C			Total rainfall mm
	Average	Maximum	Minimum	
September	16.2 (14.5)	28.5 (20.0)	5.1 (4.6)	116.6 (47.5)
October	11.5 (9.4)	19.6 (15.5)	3.5 (5.3)	87.7 (116.0)
November	10.7 (9.5)	16.0 (15.5)	2.0 (6.0)	30.0 (37.5)
November data until 14 November only (2020 to 14th also)				

The Summer summary is published by the Met Office in October. This year it shows that Summer in our part of North Wales was warmer, a lot drier and had average sunshine compared with the 20-year national average. But we now have our own 20-year averages, the weather station having been running for 20 years. Summer 2021 was 1.4 degrees above the 20 years average, with the maximum temperature 0.8 degrees above average maximum and the minimum 0.6 degrees below the average minimum. So, overall a little warmer than the Carmel 20-year average. I cannot give comparable figures for Autumn yet because Five Villages appears before the end of the season. The weather reports from 2015 to 2020, with additional information, are now in Holywell library and the county archives, so there is a full 20 year record available at both places.

Autumn 2021 has been warmer than 2020. It was also a little wetter, by 33 mm. Most of September's rain fell in the last five days of the month. After a burst of rainfall at the beginning of October most rain fell in the second half of the month. November was relatively dry with most of the rain falling on the 1st. We have had no ground frost, last year the first ground frost was on November 3rd. The ground warmed by half a degree in the second week of November. So it has been an amazingly warm first half of November, regularly described in TV weather forecasts as 'unseasonal'.

The garden flowers obviously enjoyed the warm weather and warm ground. Many five villagers seem to have enjoyed summer and autumn displays in their gardens. The dahlias at the weather station did extremely well with the last bloom being picked on 14th November.

The end of October and the beginning of November saw a spectacular storm pass over the UK. Those of you who watch your barometers will have seen the pressure plunge to 976 mb on the afternoon of the 31st as the centre of the storm and its associated front passed over us. This storm brought swollen rivers and floods to part of Wales, with four lives lost at Haverfordwest. Water is dangerous and water in floods or big waves is extremely dangerous. Keep well away from deep or fast-moving water – please do not go to watch the waves breaking over the promenade or the river overflowing its banks other than from a very safe distance, television provides a safe distance for this old mariner!

This report's satellite image (see opposite page) shows the storm crossing the UK. Notice firstly how big the weather system is, from the Atlantic over north Spain and wrapping around the UK with parts touching Iceland. Secondly note how difficult it is to see the UK. I have deliberately not added the country outline to this image in order to show how the poor quality of the light at this time of the year makes it hard to see visible

imagery. Our eyes adjust to changing light levels and light quality. Instruments on satellites do not. To help you I have put a black cross on the Five Villages. As winter deepens, we rely more on infrared satellite images. The satellites, of course, are not up there to look at the scenery, but to analyse cloud height and moisture, the wind at various heights, temperatures and much more; getting a glimpse of physical features is just a bonus for us. The clouds that later brought us showers are clearly to be seen to the west in the image – they are typical 'shower clouds'.

Another change at the weather station: the grass and earth thermometers are down a steep slope. I really enjoyed getting kitted up and going out in the dark to read the instruments with a torch in wind and rain, ice and snow. But advancing years now make this an unnecessary hazard. Electronic sensors have been installed; they were run alongside the thermometers to check calibration – the average difference was 0.6 of a degree. All ground and grass temperatures are now measured at my PC using these remote sensors. I shall miss the trips down the garden in the dark (as will the cat, who always came with me) but better safe than sorry.

The Met Office published a commentary on this summer's extraordinary weather, it has rather a long URL, but to read the report go to: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/press-office/news/weather-and-climate/2021/2021-european-summer-temperature-impossible-without-climate-change>

The weather station may be viewed at <http://www.robertsmoore.co.uk/>, it updates every 15 minutes. If you would like weather information for any particular day or a longer period, please contact me at rsmoore@liv.ac.uk (email only). Students or teachers who would like weather data or satellite images for projects or teaching please contact me in the same way – note that unless requested otherwise I only keep satellite imagery for one week. So, don't delay if there's something you need. Satellite images are available strictly for educational purposes only.

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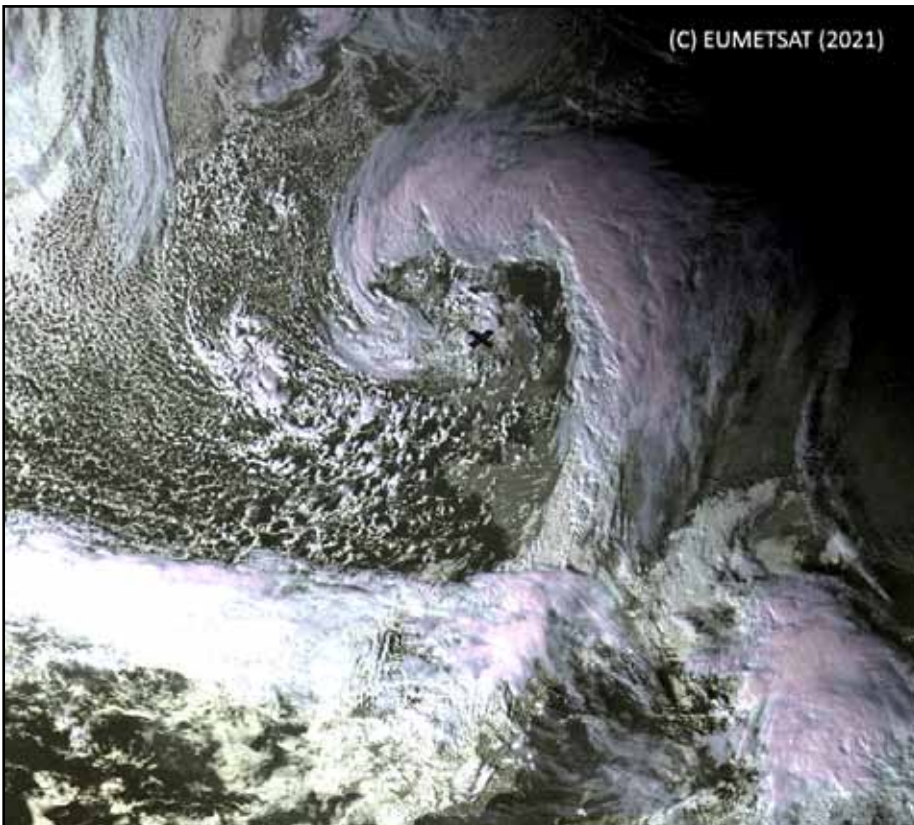


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B V-F AND THE FRENCHMAN (Norman Closs-Parry)

Do you remember the Ladybirds' reading books? Of course you do! There were umpteen of different titles, some to introduce children to read – some to introduce an interest in and as a part of country life!

It was not just children that enjoyed these – adults did too – I loved the ones about Birds, Flowers, Trees and Garden, and Wild Flowers! I was fascinated by the quality colour and accuracy of the paintings – and the script was succinct and natural history/scientifically correct!

The script was variably by well-known naturalist and countryman Brian Vesey-Fitzgerald – one-time editor of *The Field*, Chair of the Gamekeeper Association, friend of Gypsies (and poachers) and accepted as one of our finest naturalist!

I had forgotten all this till the other day! Of late I have taken to read some of the "old" books which inspired me long ago. Since the 1940's (late) I and my family have been collecting *The New Naturalist* (Collins) books. Probably the world's longest producer of thematic books. The then Editors, sound, respectable and knowledgeable – people like James Fisher, Dudley Stamp, Sir Julian Huxley and Robert Gillmor – stated their aim as to produce interesting titles by known experts in natural history fields of knowledge and of interest to the general reader and expert alike.

To return to my story, I had gone to volume 2 in this still running publication marathon – "British Game" by – yes you are there before me – Brian Vesey-Fitzgerald!! In passing, I will provide you with an update! The latest volume. "Upland Birds" is number 143 in the series. If there are people out there with the whole set with the dust cover in good condition they are sitting on a very tidy sum of money! – well into four figures!!



But let's go back to Vesey-Fitzgerald. The reason I had pulled "British Game" from the shelf was to check an answer I was preparing about a "Frenchman!" Frenchman?? Oh – that is only ornithological slang for a Red Legged Partridge!

Someone had said they had seen one on the road during the lockdown and "they" thought that "Partridges" (*Pardix pardix*) [petris] mere hedge/grassland/ edge of crop/ rape field birds? I suddenly remembered that I had not answered the question and I believed that to my mind B V-F was the best naturalist/countryman who talked my language, who would give me an uncomplicated answer! I was right on both counts of course, but Heulwen (my eldest daughter) came in and said "All articles for the Pum Pentre [Five Villages] must be in by Nov 5th!"

Like a bolt out of the blue – 2 plus 2 made 5 in my head! As I flicked through the chapters on the "Partridge" – very informative (scientifically/ornithological) – and "Frenchman" – all I could hear in my head "On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me – A Partridge in a Pear Tree!" Yes, the words (and music) of this old 18th Century Carol or Christmas song.

For the next few days it monopolised my thoughts...I remember school Christmases long gone in school when certain classes used to enact the carol with walk-on parts for French Hens, Calling Birds, 5 Gold Rings, Drummers piping – well 12 in all – and always the Partridge in a Pear Tree!

The parents loved it. their little darlings all dressed up and on

stage as drummers, pipers or whatever, and the finale!! – tableaux of them all from the mass of 12 drummers, 11 pipers, 10 lords, 9 ladies, 8 maids, 7 swans/geese, 5 gold rings, 4 calling birds, 3 French hens, 2 turtle doves and THE PARTRIDGE ON TOP - yes that was the trick! – and I'm not telling! But I can still hear the cackle - even if one of the geese had long stopped laying absolutely fed up with the whole thing!! And the frustrated class teacher, red-faced, sweating, false smiling – but seething inside – "You wait till you come off stage!!?" I admit – I had a little bit of fear that "let me down" too! Christmas past...

The carol comes up every Christmas, and every Christmas – other than "Five Gold Rings" I got trouble in sequencing the gifts. Once I hear it, its cumulative nature and mystic connotations really touch me, and it is one of my great Christmas Songs/Carols.

As a naturalist I know the whirr about of a covey or two of Partridges – and see some Frenchman often on the grass verges in the vicinity of Dyserth to the West and Rhosesmor to the East! Why? Probably they are escapees from the Game Farms thereabout?!

I have no proof whatsoever as to the meaning but I adhere to the interpretation that the partridge in a pear tree is symbolic of Christ upon the cross. Pear tree, symbol of divine sustenance, abundant and longevity. As we make our way through the lyric it does not take a lot to associate two turtle doves – meaning the Old Testament and New Testament, Three French Hens – Father, Son and Holy Ghost... and so it goes on!

As well as the scriptural connotations there are the Natural Historical...turtle doves- French Hens, Calling Birds, Geese a laying - I will not spoil a little bit of puzzle I have left, but I'm so glad that Heulwen burst in and reminded me about the 5 Villages – the coincidence of reading about Partridge in Brian Vesey-Fitzgerald – British Game No 2 in the Record Breaking New Naturalist series... and it does not end there?

My friend Eifion Griffiths from Dyserth has supplied the photo of the Frenchman on the pavement in Dyserth and can you believe it, I saw one pecking on the side of the road between Rhydymwyn and Rhosesmor – 17:15 hrs 21:10:21...let us now sing!!

"Nadolig Llawen i chi gyd."

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Please contact me with any issues you would like to raise

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YSGOL BRO CARMEL



The chocolatier, Mr Carl Turner, visited the children in key stage 2 to teach them all about chocolate. The children took part in a workshop, tasted different types of chocolate and made their own chocolate delights



Our children selling poppies during our recent Poppy Appeal

GETHIN OWENS YSGOL BRO CARMEL - PATHWAY CRICKETER FOR CRICKET WALES NORTH

My wife and I would like to congratulate our son Gethin aged 9, on successfully qualifying for Cricket Wales North, pathway for young cricketers. The pathway is England and Wales Cricket board (ECB), coaching and guidance for talented young



cricketers, whose skills and abilities have already been recognised by their Club coaches.

Gethin's coaches at Carmel Cricket Club asked if they could nominate Gethin for trials at Brymbo Cricket Club on August bank holiday weekend. We were absolutely delighted Gethin has been nominated and he had a day to remember, alongside other nominees from across North Wales. Firstly, he was tasked with fielding drills which he completed competently. Later that day the group played a match between themselves,

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Gethin effecting a run out in the field, scoring 10 not out with the bat and bowled beautifully taking 4 for 1, all cleaned bowled off his 2 overs with his rapid left arm. Gethin left the field that day with a beaming smile saying "I was just too quick for them". He had a brilliant day!

His second trial was at Colwyn Bay Cricket Club the following week, with a new group of coaches, no matches just drills to showcase ability. Gethin received confirmation that he had been accepted onto the Pathway course the following week, he was delighted. The programme will run throughout the winter and during the summer months, will include matches in both England and Wales. Gethin has said he is going to work as hard as he can with his coaches and his aim is to one day play for Glamorgan as a professional cricketer.

Well done Gethin we are all very proud of you love Mum, Dad and all your family X.

YSGOL BRO CARMEL DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

The Perfect Picture

Everyone seemed to be doing the same thing, closing their eyes, crossing their fingers, and feeling an endless amount of butterflies. Polly was in the middle of the crowd. In the cold, musty smelling room, everyone kept shuffling and fiddling. After minutes of waiting, she started to feel anxious and even regret, as more people came into the room.

A few weeks back, Polly had found a poster advertising for a 'nature's love for animals' competition. Contestants were to take professional pictures of animals in the wild to win one thousand pounds! She had taken the poster home with her one afternoon to find her mum not thrilled with the idea. Her mother was not much of a sociable person and always told Polly, "You never know what people will do in the future. Trust is only something from fairy tales."

Although she was always a determined girl, that night Polly went to bed with tears in her eyes. Although she wanted to enter the competition, she didn't want to break her Mum's trust. But she had to do it. She knew she must go behind her mother's back and somehow enter the competition. Right away, she started taking pictures of hedgehogs, birds and even foxes in her local woods to practise.

On the day of the competition, her mother had gone on a business trip to London. As she left, she told Polly she would close, but not lock, that old, unreliable door that had trapped them in many times. Polly, who was pretending to do her past-due homework, suddenly felt a cold rush passing through the house. She could not concentrate. The howling wind coming from outside was deafening her. Her ears ringing, Polly realised her mum had left the front door open! Quickly, she got to the door and took a firm grip of the handle. She pushed it closed and heard the lock click, followed by the sickening silence of the house. She was locked in, all alone.

Polly's wild brain started to take over. What was she going to do? If she were locked in the house forever, if she ran out of food, if she never saw her mother again, then she would never survive. Luckily, at that moment, she remembered her mother had always left a spare, emergency key underneath the kitchen kettle. She hurried over and lifted the rusty, cold kettle and grabbed the ancient, filthy key from the marble counter. She placed the kettle back and went back to the door. With what seemed to be a little bit more effort than usual, Polly pushed the cold, metal stick into the bronze lock, to hear it click. She turned the key, over and over, until the door pushed itself forward, and a fresh, cold breeze brushed across her relieved face.

Knowing she was no longer locked in, Polly took the opportunity of the breezy, autumn day to get a perfect picture of nature. She went back into the warm house, feeling safe inside, grabbed her camera and left again. As she entered the cold, silent forest, which was flooded in golden brown and red, autumnal leaves, she found the perfect bush to hide behind. A fresh cloud of white fog was lay thickly over the turned-up soil.

She tip-toed over to the bush and fiddled with her camera. Hearing light footsteps, she quickly put her camera up to her face to find what was making the light tapping sounds from up ahead. The wind stopped. She zoomed her camera in fully to see a tiny, hedgehog's nose pop out from the cold, icy mist. Everything froze in time. The creature soon caught eye of

Polly and stared. Polly stared back, clicking the camera button numerous times to get the perfect picture. The wind came back, making the leaves on the ground float up and dance around the hedgehog. It was perfect.

The presenter called for everyone's attention. He was given a golden envelope with the winner's name inside. A huge projector screen was hung above the stage, ready to present the pictures the winner had taken. "Polly Lovebottles, please come to the stage." She froze. Everybody froze. She quickly pulled herself together and made her way through the crowd to the front. She saw her picture of the hedgehog with leaves magically dancing around it on the screen above her. Polly, whose body was trembling, climbed the steep steps, leading to the stage. If frightened, stunned and proudness was one whole emotion, that would describe Polly at that moment perfectly. She was awarded a heavy, gold cup, with 'Best picture' written on it. She looked inside the terribly large trophy to find a mountain of ten-pound notes staring back at her.

Carrying it home had been harder than the whole competition itself. That night, inside her warm, cosy bed, she stared at the trophy, which she had left on her desk. Then, she heard footsteps coming from downstairs. Hearing this, she jumped out of her bed, went for her trophy and hid it in her wardrobe. What was her Mum going to say?

By Isabel B
Year 6

Autumn Description

Outside it is as cold as ice. The birds sing wonderful and calming songs.

Some of the leaves are bright yellow, some of the leaves are dark green.

Some trees are bare, some are covered with leaves and some only have ten or twelve leaves on them.

The sticks are damp. Sticks come in all shapes and sizes. Some look like swords, some look like boomerangs.

The ground is slippery and mossy and it is as solid as metal.

On the trees are long branches with leaves on them and they are very tall. The bark is sticking out, it is sharp.

Some animals hibernate such as badgers, rabbits, hedgehogs and robins.

The wind is strong and cold when it blows. The grass is lovely and green but it is also sticky because the leaves are stuck.

On the bushes they are spiky, big and wide.

Danny Robinson, age 8. Ysgol Bro Carmel.

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THE FORBIDDEN BEACH (Geraint Roberts)

I would like to share with you a quiet, yellow and turquoise world which I was able to access only with my kayak a few summers ago.

Anglesey has an excellent coastal path which circumnavigates the whole island, diligently hugging the entire shoreline with two notable exceptions. One, naturally enough includes a mile or so where Wylfa Nuclear power station (now decommissioned) dominates the shoreline where it once drew water for its reactors. The other is the Bodorgan estate, an area the size of Rhyl which has a balanced mixture of grazing meadows and streams, sand dunes and marsh, and a magnificent rocky coastline which even has an ancient fort but is totally devoid of public access. It has some of the cleanest, loveliest, and of course the loneliest beaches on the island. It was here within its guarded confines that the royal couple were housed when Prince William did his helicopter rescue training at RAF Valley, influenced no doubt by his Aunt Sarah's 'Budgie the helicopter' books. How would one even begin to measure the investment value of this indulgence for the British taxpayer?

The Bodorgan estate owned by the same family since the Norman conquest when it was gifted for services rendered is one of the few large Anglesey estates to survive the modern world. It has been linked with the Meyrick family for many generations.

There are six of these beaches on this very private stretch of coast, five are named on the OS map. Porth can mean a port, entrance, but in this context is used to mean a cove or a bay. They are: - Porth y Gro (Bay of Gravel), Porth Twyn-Mawr (Large Dune Bay), Porth y Cwch (Boat Bay), Porth Cae Ceffylau (Bay of the Field of Horses), and Porth Cadwaladr (Cadwaladr's Bay). On the map they look extremely alluring and forbidden access from landward did

not sit comfortably with me.

Anyway, that was the setting, and I was determined to visit these 'forbidden' beaches for myself!

My understanding was that land below the high-water mark belongs to the crown and unless there are specific decrees issued because of nuclear instalments, (see above), military usage or the anthrax infested island of Gruinard off the coast of Scotland (up to 1990 anyway) the public have a right to be there. So, clinging to this doctrine as a talisman which would have hopefully prevented my incarceration in the 'Tower' as tightly as I clung to my paddle, I set off from a crowded Newborough beach in my trusty kayak.

Someone once said of a journey that it's not the arrival but the getting there which holds the joy; on this near perfect day eight years ago, I can honestly say it was both.

The first few strokes to clear the foot high surf were untidy as I pushed through the shallow frothy soup; and then it felt good as the paddles bit in deeper water, and I surged forward. Soon the cries of shrieking children were left behind as I warmed to my task aiming for a distant buoy beckoning some four hundred yards ahead. Passing it told me the strength and direction of the flow as I picked my next target which could have been another buoy, a plastic bottle, or a patch of seaweed as long as it was in line with the distant tip of Ynys Llanddwyn.

Before long I spotted several jellyfish of varying sizes, a sad indictment of the global pollution we were responsible for. As the least tactile and approachable of our sea denizens it is also unfortunately, the most adaptable and is positively thriving in this pollution. A cormorant somewhere to my left decided I was getting too close and dived to emerge in a few seconds behind me whilst on the rocks on the distant Llanddwyn headland its cousins stood drying their wings like a 'downside up' row of bats.

I had settled into a comfortable rhythm by the time I reached this popular high tide



Ynys Llanddwyn

island with its two distinct but redundant lighthouses standing like white sentinels at each end of its outer shore. I passed a couple of rocky islets surrounded in white surf to my left and drew level with the two mini beaches on the main island. Here can be found cowrie shells with some patient searching in the sand around the foot of the ancient Cambrian bedrock itself interspersed with streaks and bubbles of red jasper. It is a magical place and even in winter storms, invariably, there will be someone there. From here I could espy the next headland two miles away, where, beyond lay the goal of my day's voyage.

At this point I should issue a note of caution, paddling this open two-mile crossing of Malltraeth bay is a commitment best tackled in company.

I exchanged a friendly wave with someone walking the rocks above as I paused for a drink. The twenty-five-minute paddle here was just a warm up, the next section would be more serious but was to be relished. I set off aiming for the distant hazy head of Pen Dinas three quarters of an hour away passing a couple of lobster buoys as I left the last of Llanddwyn's



The beach where I landed



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satellite islets and resigned myself to look for floating seaweed, fishing cormorants, or the odd piece of driftwood as my targets and companions for the next forty-five minutes. My mind soon kicked into neutral, chasing whichever thoughts presented themselves as my shoulders pulled and pushed, left, right, left, right over a moving world of green, blue, and white as I slowly made my way across the bay.



With sails on!

The swell was slight and the breeze almost in my face, I hoped it would remain, so that I could use my folding sail to come back. The occasional hissing white topped wave which splashed my face had the inevitable salty taste and left a white crusty residue as it dried on my cheeks. The restless moving stage on which I was enacting my own personal drama reflected the azure cloudless sky. The Malltraeth sand dunes a mile to my right looked warm and inviting and the rocky cliffs of Pen-y-Parc were definitely coming closer; life was good!

Just then a diving tern ahead caught my eye, and then another, there must be whiting. And where there's whiting there may be mackerel! Could my luck be in? I quickly paddled over and unwound the weighted line which I always keep in the kayak letting the four hooks festooned with shiny foil and feather sink about three fathoms.

Ten minutes investment as puppet master of this dancing glitter might provide me with a mackerel lunch. And it did too! Within seconds I could feel the unmistakable quivering of a hooked fish and soon had the writhing, glinting forms safely in my cockpit larder! Anyone who has ever fished for mackerel and stumbled upon a kamikaze shoal will know how impossible it is not to catch them; but they will also know the first few minutes of pulse racing excitement when this happens. It only took three dances and I kept only the four largest, as, enough is as good as a feast and in less than my self-allocated ten minutes was under way again to the accompaniment of screaming seagulls who had become, for a while at least my new best friends.

A small rocky island seen only at low water appeared on my right, Caseg Malltraeth (The Malltraeth Mare) no doubt a reference to the white horses formed when the waves broke over the rocks. Its arrival was a sure sign that I had almost completed the crossing. Landlubbers would have said I was now approaching the headland, sailors

would say I was raising it, much as I had been sinking Llanddwyn Island for the best part of an hour. Lobster buoys once again presented themselves as I found myself paddling beneath the ruined ramparts of Trwyn y Parc iron age fort which, perversely still seemed to be guarding this beautiful corner of Ynys Mon against the public. It was interesting to reflect that the Romans had also made use of these old battlements for their own mysterious purpose.

The crags of Pen-y-Parc now reared above me in stark contrast to my recent open crossing. Buttresses and gullies rose from a swaying base of yellow-brown seaweed to reach for the old fort somewhere on top. An old football jammed into a crack and the mangled remains of a lobster pot which had been hurled on to a tiny ledge a storm or two ago caught my eye. Its green polypropylene rope lay draped like a giant strand of a spider's web and led across the wave roughened rocks to a miniature fjord cutting deep into the cliffs. I paddled on. A few more strokes and there it was, two hundred metres away, the first of the forbidden beaches! I turned the kayak's nose and paddled in.

The transparent water in this lonely cove was as clear as it gets, the sand on the shelving bottom looked clean and pristine as I stopped paddling and let my kayak glide the last few feet and gently grate itself to a halt on to the khaki sand. I sat there a few seconds gently rocked by wavelets, soaking the sun on my back and simply relishing my arrival, and the serenity which pervaded this 'world' I would borrow for an hour or so.

The tiny bay was cosily embraced on both sides by rocks rising perhaps thirty feet, the back of the beach morphed into sand dunes which in turn gave way to pasture with the odd outcrop of rock. One corner contained an array of flotsam ranging from colourful plastic containers, ropes and nets to a useful choice of driftwood. Three thin collars of seaweed running parallel along the sand told its own tale of receding tides and the sea glimmered where it met the sun as thousands of dancing sparks melted and existed for mere nanoseconds.

A nearby rock in the other corner would be my 'bistro'. Clearing a patch of dried seaweed, black and crackly

with little jumping flies I soon had a fire going and using what appeared to be an old rudder as a table had the mackerel gutted and prepared. The resulting feast was an accidental mixture of fresh and smoked – perfect! Apart from a few of my erstwhile best friends who had returned it was impressively tranquil, with only the rhythmic lapping of sea and sand meeting and greeting hypnotically emphasizing the silence. A passing yacht hugging the far-off horizon was barely moving, accentuating my remoteness, I felt so privileged. I idly imagined a future king and his princess paddling in these turquoise shallows, barefeet and holding hands in their own private down time a world away from shaking hands, curtsies and clicking cameras. I stayed there an hour exploring the rocks and sand dunes, beachcombing and taking photographs knowing even as I took them that they could never capture the special magic I had enjoyed so far that day. And then, I knew it was time to break the spell, clear up and go, but knowing too that one day I would come back.



One of the beaches

These beaches are enchanting, each within its own cove, each as beautiful as its neighbour and each one empty. I didn't visit them all, just 'looked in' as I paddled past. And then quietly mouthing an 'adieu' I trimmed my sail and pointed my little craft east at the distant headland of Ynys Llanddwyn, my paddle now used only as a rudder, because the breeze had stayed! An incident free, almost anti-climatic return journey where I barely used a dozen strokes in 'raising' Llanddwyn completed a perfect day.

I had reached 'my forbidden beaches', enjoyed the beautiful solitude they offered, and feasted like a king on crown land! And to cap the irony the second in line to the throne lived just a sand dune or three away, I wonder if he could smell the mackerel?

BRIAN E JONES

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CARMEL VILLAGE HALL (Richard Dolphin)



The Hall continues to be as busy as ever, with groups and children's parties creating a hectic schedule.

Since the last edition the Hall held their AGM in October. It was agreed all held nominated positions will continue.

Sunday 5 th Dec	Carmel Community Christmas Fare with Father Christmas
Thursday 9 th Dec	Christmas Tea & Coffee Morning 11am – 1pm includes festive themed refreshments
Thurs. 13 th Jan 2022	Tea and Coffee Morning 10am

On Thursday, 14th October, the Hall hosted Whitford Community Council's 'Connected Communities' engagement event. This was a well-attended tea and coffee morning. Our two local Police Officers PC Kelly-French Jones and PCSO Mathew Griffiths attended and offered their ongoing support. The visibility on the day was gratefully received, particularly as the focus of the discussions centred on local issues.

The following events have taken place:

Sunday, 31st October – a Spooktacular Halloween Bingo with an afternoon of skele-fun. A record-breaking bingo event with 70+ attendees of all ages. It was a fun afternoon with the added bonus of having Halloween-themed home-baked cakes by our own chef-wizard, Kath.



Some of the adults and children in their fancy dress at the spook-tacular Halloween Bingo

Thursday, 11th November – our monthly Coffee Morning. Two Christmas Fairs have been held in the Hall – we were so pleased to welcome the Friends of Ysgol Y Llan, Whitford, and also the Carmel community hosting a fair with Father Christmas himself in attendance.

Thursday, 9th December will be the Hall's Festive Coffee Morning – note the different time, 11am – 1pm for this one-off event. £2.50 entry to include food and drinks. New bric-a-brac will be available, alongside our raffle. These events are vital for fundraising, but more importantly offer the opportunity to bring the community together.

The Hall is available for hire on Saturdays and Sundays. Children's birthday parties have been really popular. Children's party rates, for the whole hall, are £60 for 3 hours. We have a wonderful large space, modern toilets, and a super well fitted kitchen.

For regular updates check out the Carmel Village Hall Facebook Page - www.facebook.com/carmelvillagehall

WHITFORD OLD SCHOOL FIRE



(Chris Dolphin)

I bought this picture off EBay for a "snip". Whitford Old School, after the fire in 1926.

In "A History of Six Villages" by the late Rowland Tennant the same picture appears but with a bad crease in it. The 1926 fire was one of mystery, the limestone-built school is destroyed. To the south of the school was a track leading to Pistyll Farm. The school was up the road towards Lloc. It is certain a school was on this site from 1711 - 1926. A new school was to be built on land donated by Lord Mostyn and opened in 1928. Meanwhile, pupils were taught in The Mostyn Arms (the old Huntsman pub) and over the road in Bryn Hyfryd.

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YSGOL GWENFFRWD (Alys Williams, teacher)

Ysgol Gwenffrwd has been full of hustle and bustle during our first half term as we again took a whole school topic as our approach to developing the new, creative, Curriculum. Nursery right through to Year 6 have been exploring various aspects of 'Our World'. Nursery and reception have been learning about people in your community that help us while Year 1 and 2 have been exploring Holywell and drawing comparisons with our twinned town Gregoire in Brittany. They enjoyed a walk about the town followed by an informative visit to St Winifred's Well and St James' Church. They have also been enjoying sessions on our school field sitting around a campfire, making toast and wooden necklaces and enjoying a warming cup of hot chocolate. Needless to say, they've enjoyed every minute! Thank you, Sam Green from Little Dragons Forest School, for holding these wonderful sessions. In Year 3 and 4, the children have been learning about our Welsh history through legends such as Cantre'r Gwaelod, re-enacting protests about the drowning of the Welsh village of Capel Celyn in the 60's. In Year 5 and 6, we have been exploring a particularly timely topic 'Where is home' looking at the issues affecting displaced people and refugees around the world. We were delighted to welcome Mrs Hannah Blythyn, our Welsh Member of the Senedd for Delyn to answer questions from Year 5&6 pupils about a range of issues from public transport, supporting local businesses to our role in helping refugees. Thank you to Mrs Blythyn for her time.

We're now busy planning for our Health and Wellbeing week with each class planning delicious recipes to cook and activities to promote both our mental and physical wellbeing as well as looking after ourselves and others both in person and online.

To conclude our report, as Year 5 and 6 pupils have been closely monitoring the current situation in Afghanistan, we wrote (see right) persuasive letters on the topic of re-settling refugees. We are delighted to be updated recently that four families are now soon to be welcomed to our county. We hope to be working with Flintshire's City of Sanctuary and offering our support.

Ysgol Gwenffrwd
Whitford Street
Holywell
Flintshire
CH8 7NJ

38 Church Street
Flint
CH6 5AE

F.A.O Mrs Hannah Blythyn

I am writing to you to urge you as a member of the Senedd to do everything that's in your power to help re-settle Afghan refugees and give them a home.

As you are well aware, tens of thousands of people have fled Afghanistan since the Taliban took over this time and 80% of those are women and children. Since the Taliban took over girls are prohibited from going to Secondary school and women are prevented from playing sports. It's appalling that basic freedoms are being taken away.

According to our research about the rights of a child under the UNCRC, I must draw your attention to 2 particular articles that we realise are being breached in Afghanistan:

Article 28: The right to learn and go to school.

Article 37: The right to be treated equally.

Don't we have a duty to help protect these children and their rights?

Councils like Wrexham have agreed to take in up to 10 families but Flintshire, according to the data in September, had not agreed to take in any at that moment. However, Flintshire's Chief Officer had said 'I am working with a number of agencies and private landlords' so there is still hope that Flintshire will do the right thing.

As you are well aware, life under the Taliban's rules is unfair but if Flintshire take in Afghan refugees, we can do something to help thousands of people. As Mark Drakeford announced 'We want Wales to be a Nation of Sanctuary and we'll do everything we can to support evacuations from Afghanistan' but I ask, are we a County of Sanctuary?

I hope you take my points in to consideration and do something to help.

Yours Faithfully
Seren Edwards
Year 6



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GARDENING CLUB AGM 2021 (Isabel Burnage)

At the A.G.M. in November, 16 members were present. It was a lively meeting and decisions and changes were made. Mrs J Polden resigned as treasurer, other positions and committee members remained the same. Chairman - Mr David Bentley, Secretary - Mrs Christine Hamer, Treasurer - Mrs Ann Brown.

Programme secretaries - Mrs Pauline Bentley and Mrs Isabel Burnage. Auditor - Mr B Brown

Committee - Mrs W Erasmus, Mrs T Jones, Mrs J Tattum, Mrs P Bentley, Mr D Hughes. The annual club fee of £10 remains the same. Points gained and awarded were as follows:

Mrs C Hamer - 3rd, Mrs J Tattum and Mrs T Jones - joint 2nd, Mrs W Erasmus -1st, awarded the Menden Plate.

Each member was asked to take a small gift to exchange at the Christmas party meal. There will also be a raffle to help with Club funds.

Next year's programme has been fixed and members are looking forward to meeting and getting out and about.

Club meetings are usually held on the first Thursday of the month in Carmel Village Hall at 2.00pm or 7.30pm. Contact the Secretary on 01352 716273 for further information. New members will be most welcome.

1ST CARMEL SCOUT GROUP (Russell Williams)

BEAVERS (6-8 YRS)

CUBS (8-11 YRS)

SCOUTS (11-14 YRS)

With covid restrictions gradually easing, it's been nice getting back to some sort of normality.

The cubs have had a busy half term, working towards the 'Skills challenge badge' doing various activities such as problem solving, making scones, circuit training. They will have hopefully completed this badge by mid-November.

The Scouts spent a couple of evenings brushing up on their navigational skills, before moving on to finish the 'Team Challenge' badge that they had started in the summer.

Activities planned for the period leading up to Christmas include Archery, a wide game evening and a camp fire evening.

The Beaver section is running well under the new leadership team, and they have been busy working on a number of badges.

If anyone wants to gain some experience working with young people, why not come & join us. You can learn some skills & have some fun at the same time.

If anyone is doing their Duke of Edinburgh award, why not join us to do the volunteering part, with one of our sections.

If anyone would like to get involved, or wants more information, please get in touch.

Russell Williams, Group leader, 01352 713205.

GOOD COMPANIONS (John Saunders)

Unfortunately, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Covid-19 rules still prevent us from reopening the tea bar and carrying out our usual fundraising activities in the hospital nor will we be able to arrange any Christmas entertainment for the patients. We will still be donating a tin of sweets for each patient at Christmas, but they will be handed out by the staff (even Santa is not allowed to visit).



Garry Blythin, John Saunders, Lucy Blythin

We are very grateful to Mr Garry Blythin who completed the Flintshire 10K run and donated his £378.50 sponsorship money to the Good Companions for the hospital - thank you Garry.

On behalf of the Good Companions, patients and staff we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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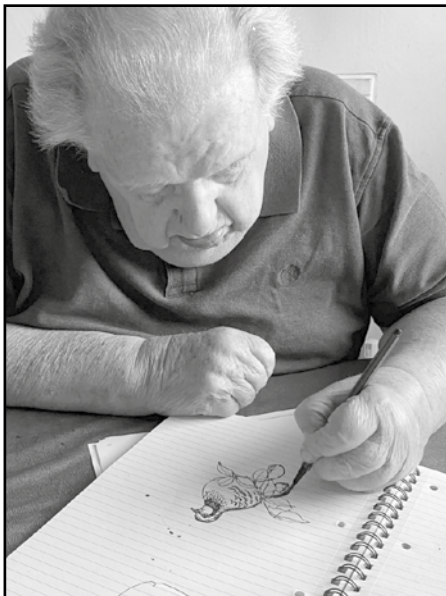
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A CHRISTMAS/NADOLIG REPORT: CYMDEITHAS THOMAS PENNANT (Paul Brighton, Secretary, Cymdeithas Thomas Pennant)

As the season of goodwill approaches, we think of those of our fellow residents who have been, and are not so well, and those that very sadly, we have lost. Regrettably, the Covid Pandemic, as one writes, is not over yet and infection levels remain high. For many of us, we have been very fortunate to have been vaccinated and to have had the 'booster' shot, as well as the flu vaccine. The miracle of science and the unflagging efforts of our medical professionals, let alone those who have risked their lives to keep our essential services running, has been a very moving experience and we are eternally grateful to them all.

For ourselves, as officers of Cymdeithas Thomas Pennant, over these months and indeed 18 months, we have tried to keep Cymdeithas Thomas Pennant functioning and in contact with our members. But, as restrictions in Wales have eased, so we have become more active. Thus, on 25th September, we had a live talk in Penbryn Chapel, Holywell, given by one of our members, Jan Miller. Jan is an active naturalist and she talked about Thomas Pennant as a Natural Scientist and his work with the world of Nature. Before that, on 3rd September, we had a successful early evening social in Carmel Cricket Club and it was so rewarding to meet up again with colleagues in the flesh. For both these activities, we are so grateful to the authorities at Penbryn Chapel and Carmel Cricket Club, for allowing us to hold these functions.



Norman Closs-Parry: Chair of Cymdeithas Thomas Pennant: Working on his draft of the Christmas greeting, December 2021 (see p17)

On Wednesday, 20th October, we had our Annual Pennant Lecture, hosted on 'Zoom', courtesy of the Advanced Centre for Welsh & Celtic Studies at the University

of Wales, Aberystwyth. The online gathering was introduced by our Chair Norman Closs Parry and the introduction to the speaker by Professor Mary-Ann Constantine, a good friend of the Cymdeithas Thomas Pennant. The speaker was Dr. Liz Edwards and she gave the lecture on the theme of, 'According to Pennant: Reading Thomas Pennant Through The Ages'. Dr. Edwards gave a fascinating account of the literary links that Pennant had with his contemporaries in the late 18th Century, in the world of science, tourism and history and his links with writers in the 19th Century and beyond. The relevance of Thomas Pennant today became very clear as a result of Dr. Edwards' lecture and we are so grateful that a key activity in the calendar of the Cymdeithas has been revived after the Pandemic. We are already, planning for the Pennant lecture 2022!

For the rest of 2021, we hope to have held a live AGM on 20th November in Penbryn Chapel and a lunch on 18th December in the same venue. But, now our thoughts are turning to 2022 and we are planning for a series of activities, talks and social events and so forth. Via the 'Five Villages' we shall try to keep in touch with our residents. We also continue to develop links with local groups within Flintshire and beyond. Further, our thoughts are turning to the site of Thomas Pennant's home at the remains of Downing Hall and what might be done to commemorate the site of his birth. We are also supporting

the Advanced Centre for Welsh & Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth, in their attempts to obtain additional funding, to develop the highly successful 'Curious Travellers' Project and from which the Cymdeithas has benefited so much.

Finally, we thank all our members for their loyal support in these difficult times, as well as residents in the 'Five Villages'. We aim to continue to promote interest in Thomas Pennant who we believe, to be eminently relevant in our world of climate change and continuing scientific discovery.

We wish ALL residents of the 'Five Villages' a very Happy Christmas and a Happier New Year for 2022: Nadolig Llawen, Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.



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YSGOL Y LLAN, WHITFORD

The Prestigious Arian Award by Bryan Griffiths (Headteacher)

CELEBRATING WELSH SUCCESS ONCE AGAIN!

The children have had another busy term with one very special achievement in particular ... we are thrilled to announce that we were the FIRST SCHOOL IN NORTH WALES to achieve the Arian Award for our commitment to bilingualism and the Welsh culture via the Welsh initiative, Cymraeg Campus. This is a huge achievement in itself as the prestigious Arian Award is very difficult to gain due to the many targets which must be met and embedded in the schools' ethos. To get this during a national pandemic when many things have been put on hold is an even bigger achievement as we have had to adapt, adopt and improve the way we have delivered Welsh across the school. Miss Randall is core lead and driving force for our Cymraeg Campus and has put an enormous amount of time into this initiative. However, it has been a real team effort as ALL staff and pupils (especially the Criw Cymraeg) have had to be 100% on-board in order to gain this award.

We actually gained the award at the end of the summer term but due to restrictions at the time, we held off with celebrations. This term, the children all enjoyed celebrating in their own classes. Children designed Welsh t-shirts using fabric pens, had party games and dancing, and took part in a Welsh-themed cat walk to showcase their t-shirts and hats. We invited Magi Ann into school to judge the 'Cymraeg Het' competition during the cat walk. After the celebrations, we also had a very special message to share with the children from the manager of the national Welsh football team. We are also expecting a signed football shirt from the team as a congratulations gift to display next to our Arian Award:

<https://twitter.com/YsgolyLlan/status/1451220820710264832?s=20>

Everyone had an enjoyable day and we are extremely proud with our school's achievement.

Bendigedig pawb!

An extract from the final Arian report can be found below and the full report can be viewed by following the link:

http://www.ysgolyllan.co.uk/uploads/6/0/9/8/60987703/ysgol_y_llan_arian.pdf

Ysgol y Llan began the Cymraeg Campus language charter in March 2017 and received the Bronze award in July 2018 (first school in Flintshire and Wrexham). Although the final Efydd data showed high results, the Arian data saw improvement in each area with all pupils stating they enjoyed Welsh and heard Welsh during assemblies. Over the challenging last twelve months, the school has successfully maintained, adapted and even improved the outcome of some of the targets whilst managing blended learning and are praised for this. The school has a positive Welsh ethos throughout, which goes beyond the visual ethos expected of the award. The woodland area in school is known to both pupils and staff as 'Y Goedwig' and the school has chosen Welsh creatures to represent the four purposes of the new curriculum. The coordinator shared a prayer written in Welsh by a group of Year 3/4 girls for the Head that shows how embedded the Welsh ethos is in the school. Welsh is prominently displayed in classes and all other areas and the whole school worked on the large Croeso mural/mosaic outside. The Criw Cymraeg report on the school's progress with the Language Charter through updates on the school's newsletter and during the Welsh assemblies. Parents can see progress regularly on Seesaw and Twitter.

THE FORMULA ONE CHALLENGE by Nathan Williams (Deputy Headteacher)

You may remember reading about our school's involvement in the F1 Challenge in a previous edition of The Five Villages. The challenge involved our two teams, Blue Dart and Red Lightning, designing and making their own F1 car. As part of the competition, both teams had to submit a verbal presentation, a car to race, design portfolio and a team logo. They also had to submit a reaction time as the team member with the fastest reaction time

starts the car when the light turns green! The teams wrote letters to sponsors and were fortunate to be sponsored by different companies who had their company logos displayed on the cars.

The challenge is just one example of how we, as a school, ensure our learners have the opportunities to be: ambitious capable learners, healthy confident individuals, ethically-informed citizens and enterprising, creative contributors.

The cars raced against teams from other parts of Wales. We were delighted to discover that both of our teams were recognised for many awards. The teams won awards including: the judges' choice, lightning reaction time, research development and verbal presentation awards.

We were also thrilled to see that our teams won the portfolio award and the award for best engineered car. There was further amazing news! Our Blue Dart team were 1st in the Primary Class in Wales and Red Lightning placed in second position in Wales. We are sure that you will agree this is a phenomenal achievement. All of the trophies now sit very proudly in our trophy cabinet.

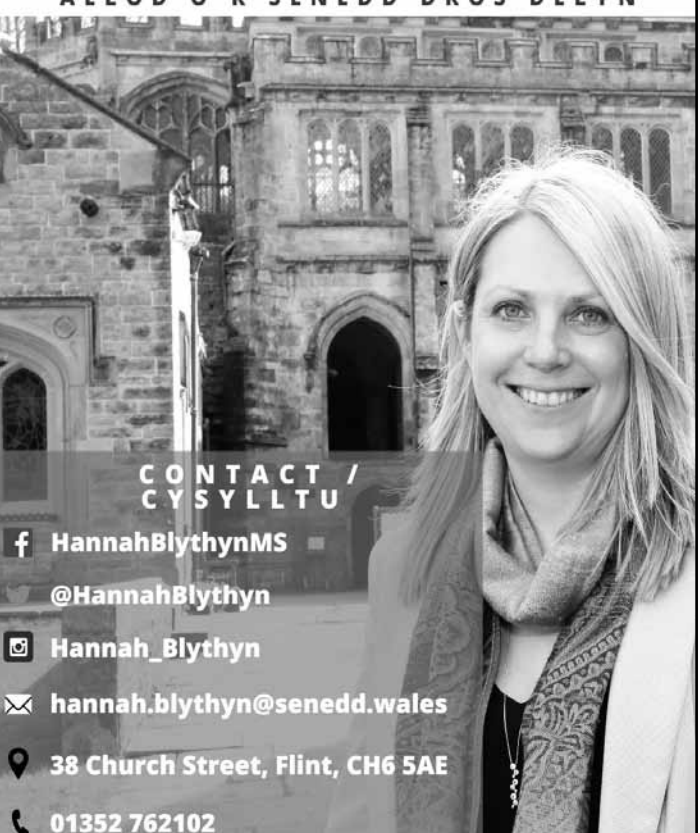
Please see a picture of three members of our Red Lightning team with the trophies. It was also brilliant to see a familiar face as one of our ex pupils, a member of team Blue Dart, came back to school to see the trophies. Well done all, we are all so proud of your achievements.



STANDING FOR THE COMMUNITY THAT SHAPED ME
YN SEFYLL DROS Y GYMUNED A'M FFURFIODD

HANNAH BLYTHYN MS | AS

MEMBER OF THE SENEDD FOR DELYN |
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CONTACT /
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CELEBRATING OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS by Rhian Roberts (Senior Teacher)

Ysgol y Llan pupils are now all Guinness World Record Holders!

We always knew we were a talented school, and have always been proud of our pupils and the work they do. We now have even more reason to celebrate the achievements of our pupils as they are all Guinness World Record holders! We took part in a Royal Mail postage stamp competition last term - the largest postage stamp design competition ever!

Da iawn pawb!

We would like to thank Flint and Holywell Rotary club for their very generous gift of fresh fruit for all pupils to celebrate the 4th birthday of our Rotakids. Our Rotakids are members of our School Parliament and they help to organise events to raise money for charities, and even choose the charities they wish to support. Diolch!

EXCITING TIMES AHEAD! ONWARDS AND UPWARDS!

As a school, we have always tried to be pro-active, moving with the times and striving for improvement in all areas of school development. We always invest in our school to ensure that we have the best possible provision for our children. We invest heavily in staff training, in resources, in hardware and software, buildings and maintenance.

Over recent years, we have installed new fire exits throughout the school, replaced the flooring in classrooms, had an external classroom built, remodelled our library to offer both an additional support area and nurture area, replaced the flooring in some pupil toilets and had a new accessible changing room built.

We have replaced almost all classroom computers, improved digital provision immensely (shared devices and those specific for each class) and installed new Smartboards into every classroom.

So what next? We have plans in place to develop our outdoor provision by providing an outdoor area for Class 2 (who currently share an area with Class 1) and we want to thank one of our parents who has already started by building an amazing outdoor hut for the children. We also want to develop the Goedwig (Forest Area) so that Key Stage Two classes can make more effective use of the outdoor space.

We have also been successful in applying for a £500,000 Welsh Government Grant to improve our childcare provision. This will hopefully allow us to offer wraparound childcare 5 days a week and possibly open up to holiday clubs and other community groups in the future. We are hopeful that this work will begin early in the new year and be completed by the end of summer.

If you run a community group and are looking for somewhere to hold your sessions in the future, please get in touch.



Celebrating our Rotakids Anniversary



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NATURE COLUMN

(Jan Miller)

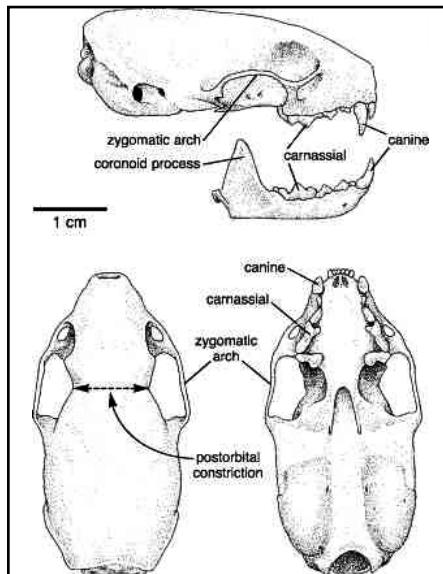
I was sitting upstairs reading by an open window a few weeks ago when I heard the most terrible screaming right below – looking out I saw a stoat with its jaws tightly clamped around the throat of a young rabbit, more than twice its size. You don't usually think of rabbits making a noise, but when they are in extremis they sure can! Another stoat was in attendance, and it didn't take long before the rabbit was dead and they had dragged it under my car, an older rabbit scooting off in alarm.

When I was clearing the flowerbed by this wall recently, I had discovered a large burrow was being dug there, but not knowing what had dug it, and indeed if they were still down there, I hadn't filled it in yet. It now seemed that the stoats that have been more numerous near the house recently (they like to nest in old broken-down walls in the garden) had known about rabbits down there and dragged one out of the burrow. By the time I got the camera and went out to see they shot off leaving the rabbit under the car, but a while later it had been retrieved, no doubt to take back to feed their kits.

My Dad used to delight in telling me 'a weasel is weasily distinguished from a stoat, which is stoatally different!' but actually I still have a bit of difficulty. My friend Tony Pope lent me these beautiful photos of stoats to show you. The stoat is bigger than the weasel and has a larger tail with a black tip (the one that was used for royal ermine, as its coat goes white for winter camouflage – the weasel stays brown all year) otherwise they do look pretty similar, and have the same astonishing jaws.

The skulls of stoats and weasels are where their specialized life style is best demonstrated. Weasel skulls are unusually long and narrow, have exceptionally large areas for jaw and neck muscles, and

enclose large brains. The bones of an adult weasel's skull are fully fused, forming a single, box-like unit of massive strength. Sturdy, bony crests along the top (the sagittal crest) and back (the nuchal crest) of a full-grown skull provide extra space to anchor the temporalis muscles, which are responsible for a powerful bite.




The skull of a stoat, in lateral, dorsal, and ventral views


This feature is unusual among small mammals: In general, only large mammals have crests on their skulls. For example, the large cats must have huge jaw muscles and need large crests to anchor them. Most small mammals need no crests. Even a wild cat the size of a house cat, which may weigh 10 times more than a weasel, can function well with no crests on its skull at all. Similarly, the skulls of adult red foxes show no large sagittal crests for jaw muscles. By contrast, the exceptionally well-developed temporalis muscles and tremendously powerful jaws of the stoat need to be anchored to crests on the skull, just as in the large carnivores.

A short thick jaw is a better lever than a long slender one, and it can exert a stronger force. The jaws of stoats and weasels are short, and their teeth are specialized for a diet of flesh, to a degree matched only in the cat family. The four carnassial teeth, (the last upper premolar and the first lower molar on each side of the jaw), are critically important. They are strategically placed at the back of the jaw so as to take the utmost advantage of the leverage of the jawbone and the huge strength of the temporalis muscles. This arrangement explains why weasels, like dogs, chew bones at the corners of their mouths

The upper and lower carnassial teeth on each side are parallel and slightly offset, and they shear closely past each other, to slice flesh and bones from a carcass into swallowable lumps. Weasels do not grind up their food finely; indeed, they physically cannot and do not need to, because meat is digestible in chunks without grinding. In the upper jaw, the first molar is set a little behind and crosswise, with a deep recess in its centre. The rearmost blade of the lower carnassial slots exactly into it to form a slicing guillotine. Not only is this arrangement devastatingly effective, it is also self-sharpening and self-tightening. The joint between the lower jaw and the skull is cylindrical, and flanges from the skull wrap around the mandibular condyle on the lower jaw to prevent any sideways motion or dislocation of the jaw. Sideways movement would make the carnassials ineffective, like scissors held together with a loose screw. When the temporalis muscles contract, they pull on the coronoid process, causing the jaw to rotate around the jaw joint and creating torque.

The next most highly specialized teeth are the long, slim canines, whose function is not to slice food but to catch it. The canines act together as a trap and humane killer, grabbing hold of a fleeing mouse and dispatching it with a piercing bite through



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the bones of the neck and skull. The crunch can be audible several meters away.

With this equipment, a weasel can kill a mouse or bird in seconds or less. The big cats of Africa are usually regarded as the ultimate in predatory power but, in relation to their size, the stoats and weasels are equally formidable predators.



Stoats playing

Interesting that as one local predator - our cat - has died, another has come into the garden. I used to keep a cat as the best deterrent to rabbits eating my vegetables in the garden, and mice and rats around the house. But she wasn't really very good at either and more interested in the wild birds that I love. Now it seems as if the stoats are doing a good job of keeping the rabbits and rodents at bay. I just need them to control the wood pigeons now! A study in Canada showed the weasels and stoats feed more on voles and mice than anything else, though they do take young birds from nests sometimes. And as I only graze or mow my fields on a 2-year rotation, that has encouraged a large population of voles to flourish in the dead grass tunnels, which in turn has brought in scarce breeding owls and kestrels. Seems the stoats have come in for the voles too, and I have unwittingly solved my pest problems. Nature will always find a balance! © Jan Miller 2021

AURA LIBRARIES – WHAT'S ON!

(Paula Jones)

You can now visit your local library to choose your books, to use a computer, print and access the photocopier. To use the computer you will need to make an appointment to visit so that we can make sure there's enough room to keep everyone safe. Please phone your local library to make an appointment.

Remember from the comfort of your home you can join the library, browse the catalogue and download e-books, e-audiobooks, the latest magazines and daily newspapers all for FREE! There are also lots of online activities taking place to learn new skills and search your family tree also.

Holywell Library have the following sessions FREE of charge taking place every week:-

Rhymetime	Tuesday 9.30 and 10.30
Babies and Books	Wednesday 2.00pm – 2.30pm

To book a place contact 01352 703850 or email holywell.library@aura.wales

Aura Home Library Service

During the winter months let Aura Libraries help prevent you from feeling lonely or isolated, we can bring your books to you via the Home Library Service. Aura offers a direct Library delivery service to your home if you have no other way to visit a Library. Based on your personal preferences our Library staff will select books for you. Our Home Library Service Assistant will deliver them straight to your door on a regular basis, free of charge. For further information or to request a visit

from the Home Library Service contact 01352 704400.

Aura Library Link – Community Calls is a service that keeps our customers connected and makes every conversation count! If you are lonely or would like to talk to somebody Aura Libraries will contact you free of charge and have a conversation, a chat or simply catch up. All you need to do is contact your local library to register for a call or email libraries@aura.wales and ask for a community call. You don't have to be a library member this service is open to all Flintshire residents to allow you to share your thoughts and enjoy talking with someone, it will also benefit your health and wellbeing.



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HANNAH BLYTHYN MS



I would like to open by reflecting on the continuing efforts of our communities over the past year as we continue to fight the coronavirus pandemic and work to recover in a better, greener, fairer way. Whether from our local schools and businesses, or community groups and neighbours, I am extremely proud to represent a corner of the country which prides itself so much on helping one another in so many different ways.

For the last Five Villages Chronicle I shared with readers that I had launched a transport survey to better understand the experiences of constituents in using our transport infrastructure and to gather their ideas on how it can be improved. I am extremely grateful to all those who took the time to complete the survey and I will now gather the results, and work with Flintshire County Council, the Welsh Government and others to champion further investment here in North Wales.

We recently had some positive news regarding rail services after it was announced that services between North Wales and Manchester would not just be retained, but improved, and that the Welsh Government were proposing a new train station at Greenfield as part of their Metro plans.

I will continue to push for improvements for our communities, but please feel free to get in touch to share any experiences or ideas.

It has also been a busy return to the Senedd providing updates on the progress of the Welsh Government's Social Partnership and Public Procurement Bill, answering monthly oral questions and responding to an opposition debate on a Four Day working week. The Social Partnership Bill will, amongst other things, place working in social partnership between government, trade unions and employers on a more formal footing in Wales and a Fair Work Duty on Welsh Ministers.

The coronavirus pandemic has really shone a spotlight on those workers whom we depend on for so much, from caring for our nearest and dearest to going about

our daily lives. That's why the Welsh Government has committed to making a key election pledge to pay social care workers the Real Living Wage a reality. The Social Care Fair Work Forum is taking this forward, alongside more broadly addressing conditions and recognition for the social care workforce.

This year has also brought into sharper focus challenges in other sectors, such as in hospitality and retail. In response to this, the Welsh Government is exploring how a partnership approach in other sectors can help respond to challenges not solely in terms of fairer work but also the sustainability of those sectors as a whole.

In recent months I have had the opportunity to represent the Welsh Government at both the Welsh Veteran's Awards and commemorations of the Battle of Britain at Cardiff City Hall and Westminster Abbey. It is vitally important that we continue to support our Armed Forces communities, both past and present, and I will of course be paying my respects at services across the constituency as always.

Although defence is not devolved to the Welsh Government, many of the services which are important to serving personnel and veterans are. Here in Wales we are committed to ensuring that our armed forces community is rewarded for their service, not disadvantaged by it. We have Veterans NHS Wales, Armed

Forces Liaison Officers and many more projects across our country, demonstrating our commitment to supporting our armed forces community as much as possible.

November is a time for reflection and provides us with an opportunity to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice so that we can live the lives we live today.

Coronavirus does continue to have an impact on our lives and the Welsh Government is continuing to review this impact - I will of course do my best to keep constituents updated through my regular columns and social media. If you have any questions or queries please contact me on 01352 762102 or at Hannah.Blythyn@senedd.wales

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CARMEL W.I. BOOK CLUB (Sally Brighton)



*Back row:(left to right) :
Gail Lewis, Ann Taylor, Pat Hadfield,
Sally Brighton, Jacqui Astall
Front row:(left to right)
Lindy Moore, Kath Williams, Sally
Jones (photo: Joe Wainwright)*

October was the month our W.I. Book Group met together 'live' at the Holywell Leisure Centre, to talk together about books we had read during lockdown. How momentous it seemed, and how strange that even during that time, we had managed to grace the pages of our National Magazine, 'W.I. Life' with a printed 'discussion' about our group and our serial writing project, together with the colourful results of our 'photo shoot'. We had posed for Joe Wainwright, (the professional prize-winning photographer from Mold), in the lush green Leisure Centre parklands.... and as you can see, the warm days of summer were still with us, a welcome reminder as the 'oh so cold' days of winter begin to envelop us now. Sadly, our group has lost Sally Jones, one of our reviewers, who has gone to live elsewhere, but kindly she has left us with her last recommendation... perhaps a possible present for a dedicated reader this Christmas?

The Pull of the Stars by Emma Donahuereviewed by Sally Jones

This is a well-written novel, well-researched and with a basis in facts. "Enjoyable" however is not an adjective that I can use. It is not an easy read,

especially at this time. The story revolves around Julia, a midwife working in a Dublin hospital during the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918. It was written in 2018, inspired by the centenary of this pandemic, but the arrival of Covid 19 precipitated its publication in 2020. The parallels serve to heighten the impact of the story, which in any case has an intense, charged sense due to the short time-frame in which the story unfolds and the literally small space in which most of the events take place. Julia is found working in a maternity ward allocated to women who are also victims of the flu. The precarious nature of life is therefore ever-present. As a survivor of the flu, Julia has acquired immunity to the disease.

The parallels of her situation with the experiences of hospital staff in the past two years, both practical and emotional, do not need spelling out. That this is set a century ago does not make it feel any less immediate and moving, although at the same time, the distance does provide some relief and perspective for the reader. The book's Dublin setting allows the author to touch on wider issues – Irish independence; the role of the Catholic Church in Irish society and in particular the institutions run by it that are still the subject of scrutiny; social class and poverty; also the aftermath of WW1, exemplified in particular by Julia's brother's mental health difficulties. I recommend this novel; but do take a deep breath before reading, and have tissues ready!

The Girl With Seven Names by Hyeonseo Leereviewed by Helen Audley

This is the true story of a 17-year-old girl who escapes from North Korea to China and eventually gets asylum in South Korea.

Life in N Korea is 1984 writ large, and curious to visit China which is across the river from where she lives, she goes across to spend a few days. But there is a crack-down and her mother tells her by phone not to come back. This is a 'heart in your mouth' story of her struggle to survive

in China hiding her true identity and facing all sorts of trials and betrayals. Her attempts to get her mother and brother out is an epic in itself - dealing with corrupt officials, imprisonment, and corrupt brokers. This gripping story makes you appreciate the hard-won freedoms from human rights abuses which we enjoy in the west.

The Appeal by Janice Hallett.....
reviewed by Gail Lewis

A most unusual read. There is a mystery to solve in the small town of Lockwood. It starts with the arrival of two secretive newcomers and ends with a tragic death. Rodney Tanner QC has assigned law students Charlotte and Femi to the case. Someone has already been sent to prison for murder, but he suspects they are innocent. And that far darker secrets have yet to be revealed.

The story is unusual in the sense it has been set out totally in email and text format. So, reading between the emails you start to unravel who is the murderer. A most enjoyable story.

Find you First by Linwood Barclay.....
reviewed by Jacqui Arstall

This novel is based on a unique and clever premise, out of which he creates a fast-paced thriller. Throughout the book many of the chapters end on a cliff-hanger and contain a smattering of humorous dialogue.

The central character, Miles Cookson, a wealthy, single, technical entrepreneur is diagnosed with an incurable genetic disease. His doctor believes him to be childless, however as part of his consultation discloses that there is a 50% chance any close relatives could be affected.

However, 20 years previously to raise money for the establishment of his business, Miles sold his sperm to a fertility clinic. Miles makes a decision to trace his children. He wants to give them the opportunity of medical assessment and to share his wealth amongst them.

Then the rollercoaster of revelations begin....

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NEXT EDITION

Our next edition will be published on 19th March 2022 and the submission deadline for that edition will therefore be 18th February 2022.

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THE FIVE VILLAGES CHRONICLE ASSOCIATION

Established in 1986, the Five Villages Chronicle Association publishes the *Five Villages Chronicle*, a quarterly community magazine which is delivered to most households in the Flintshire villages of Carmel, Gorsedd, Lloc, Pantasaph and Whitford, with 1,300 copies of each edition currently being printed and distributed by a dedicated team of volunteers.

Chairman - Peter Erasmus (01352 712067); Secretary - Margaret Williams; Treasurer - Bob Brown (01352 710967);

Advertisements - Melanie Wallis (01352 712369); Distribution - Chris Dolphin (01352 713415); Jonathan Duggan-Keen, Terry Ireland, Robert Moore. At present there is an editorial committee.

We do have a simple web page at www.5villages.org.uk

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Please send any articles, photographs, comments, snippets of information or local humour, details of births, marriages, deaths, graduations, emigrations and other events and achievements to editor@5villages.org.uk or post: FVC, Bodlondeb, Chapel Street, Caerwys, Flintshire, CH7 5AE (01352 720477).

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