



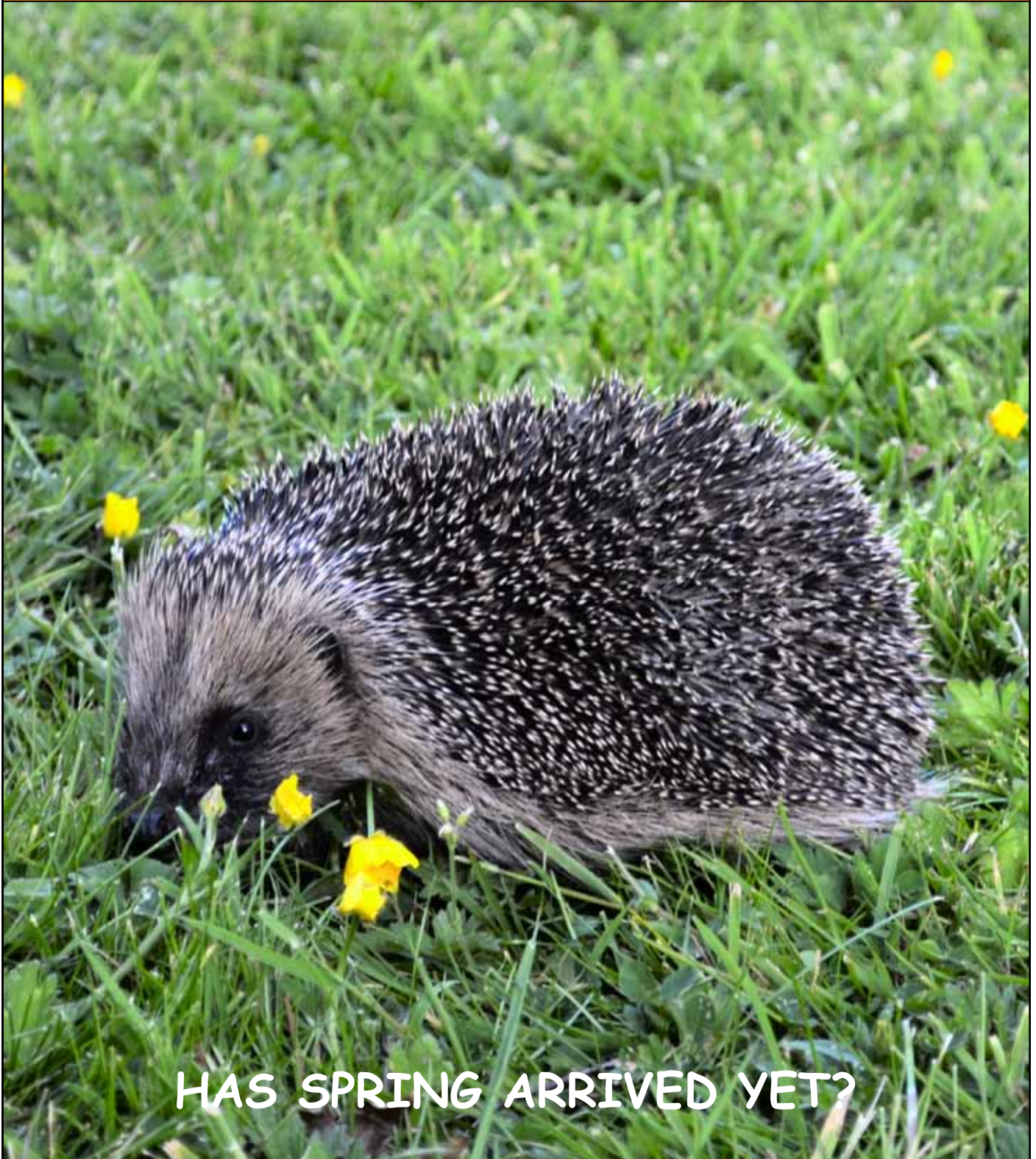
THE FIVE VILLAGES CHRONICLE

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ISSUE NO. 145
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SPRING (MARCH) 2023
GWANWYN (MAWRTH) 2023

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EDITORIAL

This issue we have quite a lot of club and society news and reports and part one of an analysis by Professor Moore of the 2021 census and what it reveals about the Five Villages area.

We have some excellent news regarding a local resident taking part in an under 18 cricket tour of India! We also have another tale of derring-do from Geraint Roberts.

We hope you enjoy all of this issue and please consider writing something yourselves for inclusion in a future issue. We are particularly interested in reports of local celebrations.

Finally, please try to support our advertisers and mention the Five Villages Chronicle when you use them.

THE FIVE VILLAGES GARDENING CLUB (Isabel Burnage)

The 2022 programme finished happily with Christmas lunch at the Druid Inn, Gorsedd. Members agreed that the meal was delicious and the company most enjoyable.

At our first meeting in 2023 we welcomed Mr Ray Bailey as our guest Chairman for our annual Gardeners' Question Time. It was a lively afternoon with Ray answering all our gardening questions ranging from sowing a wild flower meadow, when best to prune apple trees and fuchsia plants and to how to deal with slugs and snails. Questions developed into discussions and tips from other members. This was all followed by tea and cake. The competition for a floral table display was won by Mrs Isabel Burnage who was presented with the Rose Bowl.

The programme for the next few months is as follows:

Thursday 2nd March

A demonstration on using herbs with vegetables given by Mrs Isabel Burnage at 2pm.

Thursday 6th April

A talk on 'The Language of Flowers' by Janice Edington at 2pm.

There will also be a sales table.

Thursday 4th May

A visit to the Laundry Retreat garden, Llanrhaeadr at 2pm.

Thursday 1st June

A plant sale at Carmel Village Hall at 2pm.

Thursday 6th July

A coach trip to Ness Gardens and Gordale Garden Centre.

For further information please contact David Hughes on 01352 712243

All our indoor meetings are held in Carmel Village Hall on the 1st Thursday of the month starting at 2pm. New members are always welcome.

For further information please contact either Christine Hamer on 01352 7162763 or Minute secretary on 01352 715156

COVER PICTURE

"Has Spring arrived yet?"

Many thanks to Steven Jones.

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FIVE VILLAGES NATURE COLUMN

(Jan Miller)

We had just got back from visiting our first baby grandchild in California in mid July, and caught Covid on the return flight, when the BBC rang up out of the blue to say they wanted to come and film a wildlife gardening special for Gardener's World from our garden! I staggered round with Covid, on the hottest day of the year to show the producers what we might film. The pond had completely dried up in the drought so they had to go to other gardens for that. There were 10 people or more, plus two celebrity presenters from 8.30 in the morning to past 6 at night for three days. Quite an operation. The producers and cameramen were the ones who did most of the work putting it altogether. They got the Barn owls on film, which was lucky so late in the year, partly because there was still hunting in the fields for voles due to not having the grass grazed or cut until winter. There were loads of butterflies due to the planting of Eupatoriums and many other pollinator plants. And the solitary bees were busy in the bee houses. I talked to Rachel about the ideas behind wildlife gardening and there were drone shots of the garden and fields. We had a soil specialist come and show the wonderful myriad creatures under a microscope in our conservatory, and I showed Arit the moths I had trapped the night before. The programme went out the day after the Queen sadly died, so I think a lot of people missed it. But you can still catch up on i-player (episode 25). It won the Garden Media Guild Roy Lancaster award for gardening programme of the year, and I went down to London in November to collect the award at a big dinner, with Rachel and Arit, but there caught Covid again which I had all over Christmas and New Year!



GMG awards 2022

Chris Baines gave a wonderful Zoom talk in late February about the positives to think about with climate change and the current political pressure to capture carbon. Windfarms are now becoming natural havens for much wildlife because fishing trawlers cannot get between them. Sea grass is growing around the bases and sand eels proliferating, which means declining Kittiwakes and puffins will benefit.

Kelp forests are beginning to grow again and all the wildlife that goes with them. This also reduces storm surges on coastal areas, as does the reintroduction of saltmarsh. Seal populations along the coast where there are windfarms are increasing. It is not all an impossible dream to benefit from green energy and biodiversity increase. The extreme heat in cities is now being counteracted by much more green planting - even on roofs and walls, and our gardens can make up a great deal for the wildlife lost on intensively farmed countryside. The Wildlife Trusts are doing a lot to restore peat bogs by damming up the drainage channels, and also introducing beavers that dam rivers in the uplands so we will not have so much flooding downstream in increasingly wet winters. Chris says we are learning how to reverse the damage we have done and climate change is giving us the political imperative to do it. © Jan Miller 2023

Jan's garden can be visited by appointment under the National Garden Scheme (NGS) Halkyn Mountain Conservation Group Bioblitz 10th June, 11am to 4pm. Halkyn Parish Hall. Open to families and all ages and abilities for free. Drop in to see displays of local wildlife, wildflowers, moths, birds, fungi, fossils and Cofnod recording centre will be there with help identifying anything you find and putting the records on their computer database. There will also be guided walks led by local experts, activities for children - and don't forget the tea and cakes!

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CARMEL BOOK CLUB (Sally Brighton)



Our book Club continues to flourish, although we were sad to hear in February of this year, of the death of Ann Board, who had until recently, been one of our members. Active and helpful, Ann always contributed willingly to our discussions, and having been one of our contingent of ex nurses, had a particular vantage point from which she often spoke with effect. Our sympathies go to all her family.

As far as our reading goes, at the close of 2022, we read 'Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day' by Winifrid Watson, an unusual book commented on below by two of our members.

Kath Williams tells us of its background.

It was published in 1938. Owing to its risqué content, the publishers needed persuasion to accept it. But it seemed to be just the right escape from the harsh reality of war and was a huge hit until world events conspired against the book's continued success with the Nazi invasion preventing its publication in France, whilst the Pearl Harbour bombing stymied musical and film versions. The film version was eventually made in 2008.

The story concerns an unfortunate governess who is 'left on the shelf' so to speak, at a time when women far outnumbered men after the first World War. She had a sad existence, hailing from an overly severe religious background and now at the beck and call of rich unpleasant employers, she had little money or security. Her life seemed bereft of fun or pleasure. Due to a clerical error with job interviews, Miss Pettigrew entered an entirely new world with characters and behaviours one would consider quite outrageous to the spinster's sensibilities. Amazingly, she found this hitherto unknown way of life quite exhilarating and fascinating, discovering amazing new and rewarding depths in herself that had lain dormant. She found that she could assert herself and problem solve to assist others very effectively. In return, she was shown warmth, friendship, and appreciation as never before. Miss Pettigrew's transformation was heart-warming. The book proves very uplifting and amusing in this challenging time, much as it was when it was written all those years ago.

Our other reviewer, **Pat Hadfield**, concentrates on its themes, effects and presentation:-

First impressions, it could easily be a Noel Coward type farce, but it's much, much more. It's a compact, social and political history conveyed in 24hrs of the life of Miss Pettigrew. Men and women did not have equal status in the era in which this book was written – a woman's role was to make a man happy and to be a homemaker. There were few opportunities for women to live independent lives. Miss Pettigrew had little material wealth and had been a governess, which, she freely admits, she was completely unsuited to. When we

meet her, she is desperately needing to find new employmentand this is where her journey begins.

Miss Pettigrew's character – she is resilient, humble, eloquent, intelligent, well-read, non-judgemental, courageous and loyal. WHAT A ROLE MODEL!

The layout of the book, all taking place within this 24 hrs, has beautiful little illustrations throughout, which together transport the reader into Miss Pettigrew's world. Women's struggle for emancipation is evident throughout, and in retrospect, we can see how changed society now is. Definitely less 'politically incorrect', racist, sexist and anti-Semitic. A work of fiction, with so much more to it that it definitely warrants a re-read.



(Lynda Wilson) Holywell Art Club Golden Anniversary year!

There are so many good memories from these last 50 years including fond memories of members who lived/live in the local villages, Brenda Bruce, Bill Coffey, Ken Radcliffe (Club's president) to name just a few.

The club has always been held in high regard and to this day has maintained a friendly social aspect as well as producing great art from members. Over the years we have hosted many exhibitions, most of them would always include a private viewing evening which were very enjoyable and well attended occasions.

These last few years have proved to be more difficult with regard to finding venues for exhibitions, however, the art club are intending to exhibit their work this year and in addition are planning to hold an open day to mark the club's anniversary.

The Art Club was first established in 1973 by Ken Radcliffe and David Chance. In those early days membership was just a modest six, and weekly meetings were held at members' homes.

Today, meetings are held every Wednesday at Pentre Halkyn community centre, 10.30 am - 1.30 pm.

Members enjoy a varied programme which includes occasional visiting artists who give demonstrations and workshops on a wide variety of mediums and subjects.

We are not a "teaching club" however, whether you are a complete beginner or just want to improve your skill, members are more than happy to share their knowledge and their experiences on a variety of art techniques and mediums. The club also provides a library of art books and DVDs.

If you would like to find out more, please visit our website: www.holywellartclub.com

Or maybe just come along to see us and have a chat and a coffee. We would love to meet you!

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GOING, GOING, GONE (Chris Dolphin)

The last mighty Oak tree of the old Saithaelwyd Estate, now Ocean View Estate which was built in 1969 and early seventies. The pictures show, a full leaf tree, and the felling day of Tuesday February 28th 2023. The Oak was about 180 years old, and has been monitored by the Council. Very "spongy" in the base and for safety had to come down. The tree was situated on Llys y Mor, Carmel, a sad day, the outlook is now completely changed.

Perhaps it was planted by the then owners in about 1837... to celebrate a new young Queen Victoria?

Photos courtesy of Jayne Roberts, Carmel and Terry Ireland




Going! Going!





Gone!



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COUNCILLOR CHRIS DOLPHIN

Hello everyone, Sut mae pethau: BLACK WASTE BINS:

72,000 black bins are used Flintshire, we all have them, and they have a long life, recycled when needed. Wales is one of the top countries in the world for recycling and Welsh Government (WG) set targets for all local authorities for recycling and residual waste which is the black bin waste. The target at present is 64% set for Flintshire and at least 70% to be achieved by 2024/25. The financial penalty if not achieved can be considerable.

Before the Covid pandemic, Flintshire hit a peak figure of 63.98% recycling, just 17 tonnes below the target, Welsh Government chose not to fine the Council, it would have been a fine of £3,400, (£200 a tonne). However, the following year 2021/22 the target was missed by 3,314 tonnes a massive potential fine of £662,888. For 2022/23 an improvement to 63.17% was possible, giving a potential shortfall in tonnage of 622 tonnes and a potential fine of £124,428. However, since September 2022 residual waste has massively increased, following a sustained increase in April - August. So, therefore a much larger financial fine will be billed. It is now certain, Flintshire has to act decisively with changes, further recycling education and fines....for residents.

Flintshire at present has a 180-litre black bin and collects fortnightly. Those

authorities achieving or closer to achieving the required recycling targets are either using Sacks and/or collecting 3 weekly or monthly. Please remember this is Black Bin collections only. The best comparison at present replicating Flintshire is Powys, same bin size but collecting every 3 weeks, with 66.77% recycling. So, what is to be done to improve matters?

Now, like me you are a resident/customer; A physical waste compositional analysis has been undertaken, this is where samples are collected from kerbside collections, including residual/food waste and recycling. Results have so far shown that up to 50% of contents in a black bin can be recycled, furthermore 27% is food waste, a significant amount being in an edible condition. So, we have weekly food and recycling collections, what's to be done about helping to improve residual waste collections in our present 180 litre black bins. Welsh Government want 60 litre a week figures achieved; however, it would cost the council more than a million pounds to change the black bins...for a smaller one, and move on/recycle the present bins, let us discount this scenario.

Larger families of 6, can and will continue to have a large 240 litre black bin.

As well as ensuring that statutory targets are met, a reduction in waste arising and increased recycling performance would bring associated financial savings. 3 weekly collections to 27,176 properties per week, 4 vehicles a day, with 16 operatives and

a labour saving of £560,00. Operatives will be allocated to alternative areas in the service. Education and Enforcement where it is sadly known some residents still resist any form of Recycling will be ramped up.

I would wish to end this item on a happier note; however, this is real life in the Council, the council receives approximately 32,000 garden Brown Bin subscriptions a year. The rate will rise by a pound (£1). The rate has not been increased since 2018/19, although a budget pressure of £50k is effective due to rising operational costs.

BIODIVERSITY:

Last Summer the banks fronting Ocean View Estate off the A5026 were a feast for our eyes and insects. Yes, the grass grew long during a hot summer and looked passed its best during mid-September. To have successful blooms the best way is to have a single cut, collect and removal of all cuttings from late August to mid-October. I am assured by well qualified environmental officers, expert in their knowledge, the timing of the cut allows all the wildflowers to set seed and the banks of Ocean View are a Flintshire priority. A significant change this year is new machinery being available. If possible, the long grass will be cut as early as possible. The new robot mowers may be implemented during the summer on the long steep grass bank.

Parc Gorsedd, Gorsedd the small roundabout is sadly too small for wildflower growing as a metre on the outside must be kept clear on highway grounds, however a

The Simple Mirror Will – Should it be that Simple?

By Emily Littlehailes of Celtic Law Ltd

This is my first article in the Five Villages Magazine, so thank you for having me!

I will begin by mentioning Wills. I could easily write an essay, but I will try to keep this short and sweet!

Wills are very personal and one size will not fit all, hence why it is important to get it right. When I meet with my clients to discuss their Wills, I ask, 'What do you want to happen?'

Most will respond with 'we want everything to go to one another, and then to our children when we both die'.

This is the classic Simple Mirror Will. Though popular, it may surprise you that I don't do many Simple Wills.

Clients frequently express concern about the following:

- What would happen if one of us go into care?
- What about children from a previous relationship? How can I guarantee their inheritance?
- What if the survivor remarries? Will they inherit from me too?

If, like many of my clients, you are concerned with any of the above, a Simple Will may not be the best option. Making a Will is the starting point of protecting your lifetime wealth in the right way – for the right people, this is what a Will Trust can do...

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small Apple tree will be planted and some bulb planting. The wide banks in Crecas Lane and Tan y Coed, Carmel are under review and suitable for wildflower planting, however this area is unadopted by the Council, and ownership is being sought for any permissions. The wide steep grass verge in Alt y Golch. Carmel is hoped to be a wildflower site in 2024 once the school extensions are completed. The grassed area in front of the Carmel Village Hall is high above Carmel Road and is not suitable on highway grounds and is occasionally used as recreation for some Hall groups such as Cubs/Rainbows. It's great news that a biodiversity plan for Pen y Gelli nature reserve in Lloc has started. Clearance of the pond area and opening sections of path are welcome. The removal of invasive species will enable us all to see more easily the Rough Hawkbit, Quaking Grass, Dog Violets and Crosswort more easily.

COUNCIL TAX:

Where does the Councils money come from – 67% comes from Welsh Government, 28% comes from Council Tax, 5% comes from fees for services such as planning, register offices, Brown Garden waste etc. Local Authorities are all allocated a financial Settlement figure from Welsh Government (WG), this enables Flintshire to help have a legal balanced budget. The financial gap for Flintshire has been more than £32million this year. For many years Flintshire has been one of the lowest funded councils per head of population in Wales, ranked 20 of 22 Councils. In the last fourteen years, Flintshire has had to cut back its spending by over £100M. Cost pressures make up the funding gap and partly consist of; nationally set pay increases for teachers and non-teaching employees; increasing costs of goods and services driven by inflation; Rising education costs in schools such as energy; increased demand for social care services.

The settlement for Flintshire this year after much lobbying has improved, however this may be a one-off settlement figure and we must look ahead to subsequent years, so caution and risk are being discussed. Do not be surprised! if our Council tax rises by 5%.

PLANNING:

The Local Development Plan (LDP) is now adopted and all planning applications are now judged by this plan. In the 5 Villages our village boundaries are the same and we remain unaffected by any major developments, including housing.

CONTACT:

If you need to contact your 5 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 cyngorydd 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

ELA CLOSS - SHARP INDIA 2023



Cricket has been a part of my life since I began playing at 9 years of age.

Everyone initially thought it was one of those after school clubs that we joined and that I would get bored with it - well, at the grand age of 17 - I'm still playing and my passion for the sport and my development as a player is as real now, as it ever was... my love for the game and my determination to develop within the sport is my main driver!

I play cricket locally for Hawarden Cricket Club. I play for the Ladies and more recently I've been invited to join the 3rds and 4ths mixed teams as well as the midweek mixed teams although I am the only female regularly playing, for which I travel all over North Wales and Cheshire.

I was an active member of the Cricket North Wales Squad and represented North Wales in the U15 team. Being a part of this squad meant that I travelled the country representing the team - it was a great opportunity to meet and develop my skills not only as a cricket player but also as a team player.

Being a part of the North Wales squad gave me the opportunity to take part in trials for the Wales squad. Again, as most of the training and trials take place in Cardiff, we have spent a lot of time travelling to and from these fixtures. However, during the 2021 season, I actually got into the Wales U15 squad. A Summer I'll never forget!

I decided to rest during my GCSE year and was more determined than ever to succeed when I finished and work towards team selection for the U18 in the Autumn of 2022. I received notification in October 2022 that I had been selected for the Winter Squad of 2022-2023 - I was ecstatic!

I joined the Pro Cricket Academy and played and won the Mersey cup. I became a regular for the Hawarden 3rd and 4th team and played in the U 18 midweek team.

With hard work and effort I have been rewarded with a place on the tour of India with Wales U18. We will be going to Mumbai in April for 10 days, playing 4 matches, and attending an IPL league match.

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At the time of writing (mid February), Carmel's male and female senior players had commenced training sessions in the nets at Holywell Leisure Centre in preparation for the forthcoming season. Winter nets are always a great opportunity for players to gain valuable pre-season bowling and batting practice which can make a huge difference to their game once the season begins.

In the men's section, Carmel First XI will be competing in Division 2 of the North Wales Cricket League in 2023 under the captaincy of Ben Sim, and the season will begin on 22nd April with an away game against Brymbo Second XI. Carmel Seconds will be competing in Division 4 and will be captained by Cameron Ackroyd. The season for the Seconds begins on 29th April with a game away at Hawarden Park Third XI. In addition to these two senior men's league teams, Carmel will be playing

regular friendly matches on Sundays.

Carmel's women's team will once again be competing in the North Wales Women's Cricket League. This is the third season that Carmel has competed in the league, which is going from strength to strength and will have 13 teams competing in 2023. This season, Carmel's captain will be Haf Morgan Reed and the vice-captain is Carol Owen, and everyone is looking forward to another exciting season of cricket and the opportunity to compete against teams like Bethesda, Menai Bridge and Buckley.

The club would remind readers of the Five Villages that new senior male and female players of all abilities are always welcome. Carmel is a proud club with a long history in north Wales cricket, but it is also a very friendly and welcoming community club which is keen to attract new members. Anyone interesting in joining should e-mail carmelcricket@hotmail.co.uk.

Similarly, a warm welcome awaits any spectators at Carmel's matches in 2023. The club is rightly proud of its ground at Pen-y-Gelli and is always eager for new people to discover and enjoy the stunning location here on a bright summer's day.

CRICKET CLUB - JUNIORS (Alun Davies)

The local juniors are raring to go for the new cricket season at Carmel & District Cricket Club with indoor sessions beginning in February 12th at Holywell Leisure Centre

for seven weeks before we move our training sessions outside to prepare for when the leagues start. However, some of our juniors haven't been idle with a few attending MCC sessions with the boys at Rydal school and the girls at Denbigh Leisure Centre. It's also been great to see some of our girls take on the challenge of moving onto hard ball sessions. What a change there has been in girls (and ladies), sport over the past few years, absolutely fantastic to see. Two of our boys are also benefitting from specialist coaching under what is known as the The Pathway, which is aimed to develop talent.

We expect to have at least four junior teams this year, under 9s, two under 11s and an under 13s. The coaches are going to be very busy! Whilst we are on the subject of coaches we currently have three attending an advanced coaching course, a great commitment for the whole club as it is held over four full days with plenty of homework.

Once again we shall be hosting All Stars (for ages 5 to 8), and Dynamos (for ages 9 to 11), which are national programmes designed to encourage more children into the sport. This will be our fifth year of having loads of activity and fun which will be starting on May 12th. It is rather popular to say the least with seventy two children signing up to it last year.

Here's to a busy and enjoyable year of sport and if your child or grandchild would like to try the sport, please contact Alun Davies on 07889 095712.

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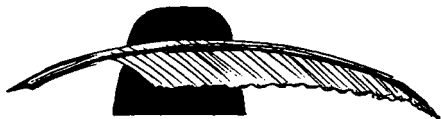
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Any comments, opinions and feedback relating to the Five Villages Chronicle or any aspect of local news would be gratefully received.

Dear Sir,

it's the day after the day before...The Five Villages Chronicle winter issue is out on the streets, always a busy day, and always a mucky car afterwards. This though is a now delayed written 'Thank You' to Lilly and Gareth.

Delivery day in December, it's dark and I am out with a torch looking for my lost glasses. Along Ffordd Gwelfor and Ffordd Aelwyd in Carmel, near my home, this is where I must have lost them...on my own delivery Route 1. Shining a torch up Paulines drive, I start to cross the road, (without looking) and Gareth is cycling home, he startles me with a Hello...watch out...brings me back to my senses...as he passes, I say, "I am looking for my glasses". On he goes and on I go too, just a few dark steps from home.

So, no luck, glasses gone. I will have a tot of Port and reflect. Been a good day, Peter in Gorsedd is on the mend after his operation; Alun in Carmel is recovering, although his eyesight is not the same at all; Emma in Pantasaph smiling and importantly her dog was in the house (always a bonus when delivering); Melanie in Lloc is extending her Round, and John in Maes Rhydwen is happy to chat even with a big bruise on his chin. Yes, a good day, I missed chatting to some who were out, Daphne, Victoria, Graham, and Dave who was on the phone, but still showed "Merry Christmas". Lots of vehicles on a farm, but no one around not even the smashing small white terrier, well whitish with a dab of muck, there was a new black kitten though.

So, back to my Thank You to Lilly and Gareth, a ring of the bell at about 20.30hrs (Royal Navy time, you never forget). Gareth is at the door, glasses found in his drive by Lilly. A Good day, I met a lot of Good People.

Chris Dolphin

CARMEL BOWLING CLUB

Are you of a certain age?

Are you looking for enjoyable exercise?

Have you considered a less exhausting sport?

If you answered yes to any of these questions then your answer is:

Contact Carmel Bowling Club who are currently recruiting membership for the current season

Commencing March 27th 2023

Our club house and outstanding green is situated just below

Carmel Junior School (Ysgol y Bro)

An outstanding location giving spectacular views over the Dee estuary

The club are currently running carpet bowls in the main hall in Holywell Leisure Centre on Tuesday mornings between 10.00am and 11.30am

If you are interested call in and speak to any member present or call:

Brenda Taylor - 01352712465

Frank Cowan - 01352713372

Phill Thomas - 07442170252

ANNOUNCEMENT

St Pauls, Gorsedd.

Monthly Coffee and Chat, all welcome, on the third Saturday of each month from 10.00am to 12noon. We look forward to meeting friends old and new.

Matthew's Tree & Gardening Services

Contact Matthew McIntyre on:

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Email: matthewstreeandgarden@gmail.com

Our services include:

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| • Hedge cutting | • Crown reduction and thinning |
| • Planting | • Sectional felling |
| • Weeding & flower bed maintenance | • Pruning |
| • Landscaping | • Processing timber into logs |

All cuttings and material can be removed and any suitable timber can be processed into logs if required.

If you have a more specific problem that has not been listed here, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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YSGOL BRO CARMEL



Helo, we are Criw Cymraeg.

In Ysgol Bro Carmel we are celebrating our Welsh culture and are promoting the Welsh language in our school.

We are proud of our Welsh culture and enjoy remembering Dydd Gwyl Dewi (St. David's Day), singing Welsh songs, such as the National Anthem, Mae Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau (Land of My Fathers), reading books, performing poetry and holding a Welsh week each year. We love our beautiful country and culture and we want to tell everybody what a fantastic place we live in.

Welsh is also a great language to learn. We have been talking about the advantages of learning it. It is a fun language to learn and it builds our confidence when we can hold a conversation. We can understand and speak with people who only speak Welsh. It will also help us to get better jobs when we are older. One of the most important aspects, is that it keeps our language alive.

Cofion cynnes,

Ollie, Harri, Daniel, Jamie, Ophelia, Osian, Maxwell and Emily.

Criw Cymraeg.

HANNAH BLYTHYN MS



I know many people will be particularly feeling the pinch as we head towards the end of a harsh winter and the cost-of-living crisis is making things really difficult for a lot of people in our community, with the soaring price of food and energy and the hangover from Christmas and New Year taking their toll.

In order to offer some help and advice, my team and I have put together the booklet '*Help to Beat the Cost of Living Crisis / Helpu i Drechu'r Argyfwng Costau Byw*', which outlines various ways to get help and advice. It's practical and helpful, so make sure you pick up a copy – it's available from my office in Mold and it'll be sent out to community hubs and foodbanks and generally distributed around Delyn. You can also receive a digital copy by emailing hannah.blythyn@senedd.wales or visit my website at www.hannahblythyn.cymru/help-with-the-cost-of-living. Please drop me a line if you can think of any local organisations which would like some copies, we want to make sure everyone who needs help can easily get hold of one.

On that note – have you claimed your Winter Fuel Payment? Eligible households, regardless of how they pay for their fuel, can claim a one-off £200 payment from Flintshire County Council to provide support towards paying their fuel costs. The scheme will be open to households where an applicant or their partner is in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits at any time between September 1, 2022, and January 31, 2023. For full details of the Winter Fuel Payment scheme, along with other support available, visit www.flintshire.gov.uk – this is a real help from your local authority, so if you're struggling with the cost of living I urge you to apply as soon as possible. All applications must be received by 5pm on February 28.

In the Senedd, I've been standing up for my constituents and I'd like to highlight some of the work the Welsh Government has been doing which will directly impact the people of Flintshire and north Wales as a whole. Firstly, in January the Welsh Government announced the creation of new North Wales Medical School and the



THE HARDY PLANT SOCIETY CLWYD GROUP

We are a friendly gardening group.
We enjoy talks and garden visits.

Meetings are held at the **Halkyn Cricket Club**, Holywell CH8 8BS on the third Tuesday of the month. Talks start at 7.30pm. Doors open from 7pm for plant sales and raffle tickets. Visitors welcome £3 admission.

The next meetings in 2023 are:-

Tuesday 21 March Holland and its Tulip Story, Mary Jones.

Tuesday 18 April Hardworking Plants for the Small Garden, Maureen Sawyer.

Tuesday 16 May Beautiful Borders, Jenny Hendy

Sunday 21 May, PLANT FAIR, 10.30am to 1.30pm.

Stamford Gate Hotel, Holywell, CH8 7SJ. FREE ADMISSION

Public welcome. Invited nurseries and members plant stalls.

Programme can be subject to change.

Information: 01352 781458 (leave a message)

email: clwydgroup@hardy-plant.org.uk

www.facebook.com/HPSClwyd

www.hardy-plant.org.uk/clwyd

funding of 140 medical student places each year, starting from 2024. We all know that our NHS in Flintshire is facing many pressures and this plan will help Wales to train more medical students and ensure that training opportunities and the provision of qualified doctors are spread across Wales and it's a real boost for north Wales, for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and for Bangor University.

Also in January, the North Wales Transport Commission released its progress report and it makes for interesting reading – from the North Wales Metro scheme to the Welsh Government's active travel programme, the final report is likely to suggest a number of recommendations which will help to improve our area's often challenging transport network and provide better, more sustainable methods of travel – something I've been pushing hard for on behalf of Flintshire residents.

For a lot of Flintshire residents, the so-called 'Red Route' (Flintshire Corridor) proposals, which would have seen a new eight-mile stretch of dual carriageway linking the A55 at Northop with the A494 via the Flintshire Bridge, were controversial and I very much welcome the confirmation in the Welsh Government's Roads Review report that it will not go ahead. As someone who is from here and lives here, I know first-hand the challenges we face when it comes to transport, whether that's better bus services or traffic build up on the A55. We need roads, but simply doing things in the same way we have always done will not meet the needs of the future, not least as we tackle the climate crisis. I want to see a more sustainable approach to developing and investing in infrastructure, from continuing the work on additional train stations such as in Greenfield to seeing greater priority given to buses in any road scheme.

Currently making its way through the legislative process, the Agriculture (Wales) Bill introduces a new framework for agricultural support based on 'Sustainable Land Management' and offers a real step forward for the future of farming and land management in Wales. We all know our environment is in dire need of help and this bill establishes a framework to produce food and other goods in a sustainable manner while adapting to climate change and enhancing our ecosystems and to conserve the countryside and cultural resources, including the Welsh language.

Finally, if you have any questions about my work as your Member of the Senedd or would like to ask for advice and support, please don't hesitate to get in touch at my constituency office – 52 High Street, Mold, Flintshire, on 01352 753464 or by email hannah.blythyn@senedd.wales. You can also keep up to date via my Facebook page www.facebook.com/hannahblythynMS.

THE HOLYWELL & DISTRICT SOCIETY CYMDEITHAS TREFYNNON & ARDAL (Sally Brighton)

The 'Winter Warmer', held on January 14th 2023 was just as its name suggests...a sociable and warm meal cooked by 'The Corner Cafe' and brought to us at our usual venue in Whitford Street. Cakes to follow, baked by our committee members, creating a whole event blanketed in good cheer, mirth and appreciation by our members and their friends, who had happily taken us up on our invitation to attend.

The more formal programme of our society, began as promised on Saturday February 4th, although the promised speaker, Steve Griffiths who had been advertised to speak on 'The Battle of Coleshill', was unable to fulfil his commitment. Fortunately, our Research Officer Ray Bailey proved well able to come to the rescue, with a talk on 'The Greenfield Valley' which was enjoyed by all. Thank you Ray.....every society should have one!

Preceding Ray's talk, was our A.G.M. at which the following officers were elected:-
Chair – Gwladys Harrison
Treasurer – Pam Thomas
Archivist – Linda Jones
Research Officer – Ray Bailey
Press Officer – Sally Brighton,
Committee members – Christine Hamer and Paul Brighton.

Our next event was on March 4th, when Jill Burton speaks on 'Sir Thomas Myddleton, The Civil War and more....'

Thereafter an interesting programme of events will unfold, including a summer visit, details which have yet to be finalised.

Please join us as a visitor or member, at our usual place in the former 'Penbryn Chapel' now known as Eglwys Gymraeg Bro Trefynnon in Whitford Street. You will be guaranteed a warm welcome for the next year, anyway, though after that, some of our most hardworking officers will regretfully retire, and if there are no replacements, our group will become unviable.

CARMEL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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**CYNGOR CYMUNED
CHWITFFORDD
WHITFORD COMMUNITY
COUNCIL**

**(R. Phillip Parry, Clerk)
WHITFORD COMMUNITY
COUNCILLORS: NAMES OF
COUNCILLORS AND CONTACT
TELEPHONE NUMBERS:**

Councillors: Tim Barks - 01352 720375
/ Richard Dolphin - 01352 710764 /
Matthew Foster - 07900 520790 / Billy
Glynn - 01352 712418 / Sharon James -
01352 716822 / Caradoc W. Jones - 01352
712079 / Matt Marshall - 077639 75531
/ Gareth Sharp - 01352 715614 / Paul
Urquhart - 01745 563133 / Melanie Wallis
- 01352 712369 / Emma Warbrick - 01352
712356 / Joseph Williams - 07850 924805
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 - 1 x Anti-social behaviour / 1
x Criminal damage / 1 x Theft / 1 x Vehicle
crime / 2 x Violence

Gorsedd - 1 x Anti-social behaviour / 1
x Criminal damage / 1 x Drugs

Lloc - A55 Services - 2 x Drugs / 2 x
Theft / 1 x Violence

Pantasaph - No crimes reported.

Whitford - No crimes reported.

**CHILDREN'S SUMMER PLAY
SCHEME:**

The Community Council received
from Flintshire County Council (Aura
Leisure) the attendance figures during
the 2022 play scheme: Over the three
week period the attendance at Carmel
were: 410 total attendances = 17 average
daily attendances / Whitford: 55 total
attendances = 2 average daily attendances.

The Council have agreed to provide
funding for the 2023 play scheme at
Carmel (bilingual) for five weeks at a cost
of £2,657.00 and Whitford for three weeks
at a cost of £1,595.00.

THE BRYN, CARMEL / PEN Y GELLI



The Bryn, Carmel



Pen Y Gelli Woods, Lloc

QUARRY, LLOC:

The Community Council are working
with Flintshire County Council Bio-diversity
Officers in identifying areas within the
community that can be either extended
or newly created as bio-diversity areas.
Whilst a number of areas have already
been identified for the future; more recently
new signage has been erected at The

Bryn, Carmel – an area of bio-diversity
– which provides updated information.
Various work has also been identified in
the Pen Y Gelli Quarry Nature Reserve
area, whereby Flintshire County Council
Access and Natural Environment Team
(Biodiversity) will fund the initial project with
the Community Council providing a budget
for the upkeep thereafter.

COUNCIL BUDGET – 2023 / 2024

The Community Council are to
increase their budget / precept for the
forthcoming financial year from £55,000.00
to £59,000.00. This would increase the
Band D property charge from the current
£47.85 to £50.08 - an increase of £2.23p
a year (4.66% - 38 / 39p extra per month).

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

(1) A5026 Road – Junction to Gorsedd
by Lime Kiln. Damaged signage bent to a
50% angle (2) Flashing bulbs on roadside
signage: Give way sign – travelling on the
Babell Road approaching the cross roads in
Gorsedd / Cross roads sign – on approach
from Carmel and just before the Druids Inn,
Gorsedd (3) The entry / exit road on the
A5026 road at the MacDonald's services:
The white lines have faded; request to
be repainted as vehicles are awaiting a
clear way whilst attempting to exit which
results in vehicle bonnets being over a
third of the A5026 road area (4) Two Pot
Holes: Monastery Road, Pantasaph, near
a property named Staithes and another
two properties away (5) The metal screen
opposite the MacDonald's services junction
(embankment to the A55) is loose again. It
appears that the previous repair had been
completed by using cable ties; suggested
a jubilee clip or similar be used which will
create a stronger repair (6) Carmel Road:
Request for the road sweeper to clean the

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areas near the Children's play area and Carmel Village Hall (7) Pot Hole: At the top of Celyn Park, Carmel (8) Request to cut back hedge running alongside Glebe field in Whitford (9) Request received from a resident in Carmel to refill a salt bin in Park Drive (these requests can be made on-line on the Flintshire County Council web site or by telephoning: 01352 701234 (10) Information received from a resident that a person was emptying the salt from a nearby bin into the back of their van (11) A5026 Road, Carmel: Tarmac on pavement breaking up making it difficult for pedestrians and especially perambulators (Approximately 100 - 200 yards past the Whitford junction and Celyn bends (12) Carmel Road, Carmel: Pot holes in the area of the play area entrance (13) Carmel Road, Carmel: Pot holes in area of the Chapel (14) A5025 Junction with Dyserth Road: Road surface breaking up by Lloc Garage (middle of the road).

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

The Community Council Members provide their observations to the 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 web site, or from the Clerk – as per details below:

(1) Application number: FUL/000535/22 – for proposed new rear and front extensions and decking area, at Argoed, Celyn Lane, Carmel (2) Application number: FUL/000712/22 – for proposed replacement silage pits, at Mynydd Mostyn Farm, Pen-Yr-Allt, Mostyn (3) Application number: ADV/000723/22 – for Roundabout Sponsorship Signs - 4 no signs to be positioned to the right of the traffic chevrons, at Roundabout No. 24, Crossways North (A55), Adjacent to McDonalds, Caerwys (4) Application number: ADV/000724/22 – for Roundabout Sponsorship Signs - 3 no signs to be positioned to the right of the traffic chevrons, at Roundabout no 25, Crossways South (A55), adjacent to Dragons Rest Cafe, Caerwys.

PLANNING DECISIONS:

The following planning decisions have been received from Flintshire County Council:

(1) Application number: FUL/000106/22 – for Demolition of existing garages and the Building of a New Garage/Workshop (For personal use only) at, 2, Garreg Cottage, Gelli Road, Trelogan. Approved (2) Application number: 064259 – for the erection of a new standalone building to provide early years and wraparound childcare facility with additional site improvement works, at Ysgol Y Llan Church In Wales Voluntary Aided Primary School, Whitford. Approved (3) Application number: 064156 – for Change of Use in a Conservation Area from BT payphone box

to house a defibrillator unit, at Monastery Road, Pantasaph. Approved (4) Application number: 064262 - Listed building application – as above. 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 - Samaritans (Rhyl Branch) / £200.00 - Urdd National Eisteddfod / £250.00 - Carmel Paper Craft Club / £500.00 - Cymdeithas Thomas Pennant / £500.00 – Holywell Leisure Centre.

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

Hair and nails



By Sam

01352 720328

07825 525912

*Bron Haul
Lloc
Cŵs a Rŵg*



CYNGOR CYMUNED CHWITFFORDD WHITFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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 meeting room hire, general running costs, together with capital purchases.

The Council have adopted a Financial Assistance Policy and Application Form, which can be either downloaded from the Council web site (Public Notices & Financial – page), or obtained from the Clerk – details as below. Councillors look forward to receiving financial assistance applications for consideration, whereby further information can be obtained from the Clerk to the Council.

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



CYNGOR CYMUNED CHWITFFORDD WHITFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Community Award

The Community Council wish to receive from residents nominations for a Community Award. The award is to promote pride and give recognition to those who have made a significant contribution within the community as something to be valued. The presentation of the award will provide an opportunity to increase awareness of those people - who voluntarily and selflessly work to improve and enhance the lives of people in the Whitford Community Council area - and to allow that work to be celebrated. (Council area: Carmel, Gorsedd, Lloc, Pantasaph & Whitford).

The nominees can be an adult (over 18), a young person (under 18) or a Community Committee / Group, who must either reside, provide a contribution to the area, or be registered within the Whitford Community Council boundary.

The award policy and nomination form are available to download from the Council's web site at: www.whitford-council.wales (Public Notices & Financial – Page). Copies can be e-mailed or posted upon application to the Clerk – as contact details below.

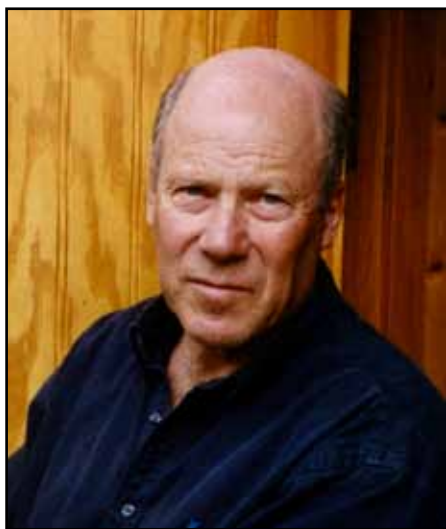
The closing date for nominations is 12 Noon on Friday 28th April, 2023.

R. Phillip Parry – Clerk & Financial Officer to Whitford Community Council
01352 720547 / clerk@whitford-council.wales

MY LONGEST DAY! (Geraint Roberts)

Most people who have heard of the Tour de France will have heard of Team Sky (now called Ineos Grenadiers); one of the most successful (and richest) teams in the Grand Tour events. Many will also have heard of their Coaching Director, Dave Brailsford who, as the media like to remind us 'hails' from Deiniolen, Gwynedd. He takes the credit for kickstarting the British cycling revival in the 2008 and the 2012 Olympics when Britain won 16 gold medals in cycling.

His father John was a competent sportsman too, he was both a road cyclist and an alpine climber and it was with John (JB) I spent one of the longest, most strenuous days of my life when we claimed a first British ascent in the Dauphine Alps back in 1974.



John Brailsford

At the time JB was Senior Lecturer of the Outdoor Education Department at Bangor where I was a student. Ten of us had gone out to the Alps for, ostensibly, a fortnight's Alpine Training course which would stretch to a month of route and peak bagging. I was young, strong and keen and had become a reasonably capable rock climber back in Snowdonia; but out in the Alps I was to be tested!

Starting from camp down in the village of La Berarde ten of us set off for a long trudge up the valley carrying everything we needed for three days. We were heading up for the Pilatte hut perched on a rocky spur overlooking the lower section of the Pilatte glacier. As the day wore on green trees and grass gave way to scrub, stunted bushes then bare rocky moraine. The mountains rearing up around us were huge and magnificent with their distant peaks glistening with snow, the knowledge I was to climb one of them was thrilling.

And then, sometime late afternoon we turned a corner and could suddenly see the snout of the glacier, grey, black and pockmarked with rocks but with enough white and turquoise to fit into my image of being a proper glacier, it was my first. The milky white streams issuing out of

various tunnels, fissures and cascades were growing by the hour under the sun's daily thaw.

Our route veered right of the actual nose and followed a well-trodden path over compacted snow for another two thousand feet and up on to a large rocky shelf on a ridge where the hut waited to welcome us. It was well out of the firing line of avalanches and any rock channelling gullies.

I don't think any of us slept well that night. A combination of altitude, fatigue and the sleeping arrangements saw to that. The dormitories comprised of two long wooden shelves on opposite walls pretending to be bunks, and we lay together side by side like a box of fish fingers. Ours was very cosmopolitan with bed mates from France, Germany and Italy. Someone had been eating garlic and someone else had a cough.

The following two days were spent on the glacier honing ice climbing skills and crevasse rescue techniques little knowing how useful the crevasse rescue skills would be for some of the group on day three! JB would cast his pearls of wisdom from his fifteen years alpine experience, and we would pick them up and dutifully practise them.

While all this was going on he was quietly pairing us up according to perceived abilities, performance on the ice and energy levels for a variety of graded climbs for the last of the three days. On that second evening we were told who we would climb with and which route; I had been chosen to climb with JB himself along with the two Daves who would be climbing a route nearby. We were to tackle the North face of Les Bans and it would prove to be quite an epic!

Another stuffy night I couldn't remember sleeping, which was heightened by my nervous anticipation; there was someone

talking French in their sleep and there was the inevitable smell of garlic.

Suddenly there were grunts and movement everywhere; it was 2.00am and time to get up. Climbers wordlessly bustled everywhere making breakfast, sorting equipment and packing rucksacks. It was still very dark and surreal in the gentle purring of gas stoves but by 2.30 we had emerged from our catatonic zombie states and had our crampons on and were away up the glacier moving together roped in pairs.

An early start is essential to climb a route which is comprised of a mixture of rock and ice because as the sun climbs over the surrounding peaks during the late morning a melting process occurs which releases stones and rocks frozen to the face but paradoxically weakened by the freezing action. Even a small stone the size of a walnut could shatter your shoulder or split your helmet. It was therefore standard practice to climb with head torches and get most of the lower face done before the sun arrives.

The pristine snow was hard and glinted magically in our bobbing lights as we set off up the glacier. We soon negotiated the ice fall guarding the upper cwm with its jumbled pinnacles and huge blocks formed by the steepening of the glacier. Knowing any one of them could collapse at any moment we were relieved to emerge on to the huge amphitheatre of the upper cwm surrounded by several towering peaks. It was humbling to realize just how big they really were. A crevasse field three hundred yards long was our next obstacle where the slow-moving glacier travelled over a bulge and fragmented. Some of these bluey white tombs were several hundred feet deep and many were covered with fragile snow bridges; it was imperative we stayed roped together and we hadn't even reached the climb!

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I gazed across the snow and watched different pairs of torches moving together towards whichever climb they had in mind for that day, some of the more distant early risers reminded me of glow worms pulsating in the white darkness; a comparison I was to remember in another 22 hours!

This was certainly different to Snowdonia.



Les Bans

Once we were safely through the crevasses the snow slope dramatically steepened as the four of us aimed for the Central Buttress of Les Bans, a mountain over 12,000 feet first climbed in 1878 via a route we hoped to descend. We climbed the back wall of steep snow and ice towards the foot of the routes we were going to climb. A particularly large crevasse lay between the snow and the rock where the glacier fractured and actually began its slow slide down to the valley. This was called a bergschrunde and we would have to cross it before we could start climbing.



*Curver Ice Axe and Moac wedge
invented by John Brailsford*

The two Daves were going to tackle a route some way to our right; we, I was then informed were going to attempt the Goodfellow Pillar variation on this huge buttress, a climb which was still awaiting a British Ascent. It excited me, but at the same time begged the question 'how hard was the difficult section alluded to in the guidebook?' We would lead alternate pitches whilst the second man carried the heavier rucksack. The climbing had to be

quick and efficient as time would be against us; there would be no time to poise and puzzle over difficult moves for too long here.

Once we'd rigged up JB led off up the first pitch which was a nice warm up and felt good to be grappling with rock instead of using crampons and ice axes. I led the second pitch and so it went on. The standard of climbing was fairly straight forward with the main difficulties lying in route finding and loose rock. We knew there was a difficult section higher up, but the first few pitches went quite nicely. Every now and again we would catch a glimpse of our companions who were tackling a route way over to our right on the adjacent buttress.

I could tell by its looseness the route had seldom been done and the odd ancient piton with scraps of slings worn furry by wind and rock seemed to confirm this. My memory of individual sections of climbing became fused by time and effort to form, by now an un-sequenced array of snapshot impressions of mostly steep brown and grey rock.

Eventually the sun did reach us. The few falling stones which had hitherto whirled past had been down to JB or myself and had always been accompanied with a warning shout; from now on we were to expect more stones and fewer warnings.

It must have been the seventh pitch and John was leading, he had gone around a corner past a small overhang when the rope stopped moving. Verbal communication had been lost and no amount of shouting "Are you ok?" brought any response. When this happens, as it frequently does the signal of three sharp tugs means the second man should start climbing. There had been no sharp tugs and only half the rope's length had run out; five more minutes passed, and I considered un-roping and climbing to the corner to see what was happening. I had visions of an unconscious partner draped over a pinnacle which I may have had to deal with, after all he was an old man of thirty-eight! Suddenly the rope started moving again and a few minutes later I received my three sharp tugs, I duly untied and started climbing. Soon I could see him a hundred feet above as I climbed up a rib of rock towards an obvious ledge. "Avoid that ledge youth!" said John, "Jamb up that crack on your left" he added.

Being the teenager of the duo I complied despite the crack being obviously much harder. When I was level with the ledge which was the size of a small coffee table I glanced across and I realized why I had to "avoid" it. John had had to answer a call of nature, and who was I, a green youth to offer an opinion where an alpinist with fifteen seasons' experience should spend a few pennies!

Pitch followed pitch and the unrelenting sun sucked the moisture out of us as we slowly approached the final few pitches to the rocky summit. I cannot remember the difficult section as presenting any particular problems other than being a little steeper and having less holds. Interestingly I do have a very vivid memory of brown butterflies being carried up past us on the afternoon thermals; I remember wondering where they would end up and whether they would survive. I was also very thirsty. We had finished our water about three quarters of the way up and were in danger of becoming dehydrated.



Aiguille Dibona

Then it seemed, all of a sudden, we couldn't climb any higher, we were on the summit of Les Bans, and had done it! The two Daves were some three hundred feet to one side, and it was decided to re-unite on the east summit. We now had a long-roped traverse east along the ridge before deciding whether to continue along the easier route which would eventually lead back down to the glacier or to use a series of abseils directly down from a point near the next summit.

The traverse took far longer than we anticipated because it was dangerous enough to have to stay roped and move one at a time. We were by then climbing in our own lengthening shadows. It was

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late afternoon, and the sun was dropping behind the craggy summits behind us which brought a slight relief from our raging thirst. On the minus side it meant that once we got on the glacier, we would have to negotiate the crevasses in the dark just when we would be at our lowest ebb. A decision was made to abseil down directly on to the glacier rather than continue along the ridge, this would save some time. It also meant four or five abseils which would require full concentration.

Ideally, using doubled ropes with perfect anchors would have made the task easy; each drop would mean 150 feet, and four lengths would cover the 600 feet we estimated to the foot of the face. However due to having to shorten some abseils to find better quality anchors and large enough ledges we didn't reach the relative safely on the upper glacier for two hours. We had done six abseils and sacrificed four slings which we had to leave behind, but we calculated we'd saved at least an hour and a lot of energy.



Barre des Ecrins

Against all advice I dug deep into the snow with my ice axe to make a clean snowball which I put in my mouth for a few minutes to ease my wrinkled palate and swallow the melt; it probably ranks as one of my six best drinks of all time!

Roped, but walking together 40 feet apart we started down the glacier, fatigued but happy to be down. We knew the danger lay in the crevasse region where the sun had been shining all afternoon and the cold of the night had not yet had time to consolidate the surviving snow bridges over them. It would have been easy to switch our focus off at this stage but, experienced alpinist as he was JB kept reminding us of the danger of collapsing snow bridges. We reached the crevasse field and went on orange alert, keeping well away from the big ones despite the fascinating lure of their hypnotic blue depths in our torchlights, we would jump or step over the smaller ones safeguarding each other with the rope.

About halfway through the crevasse field a large patch of disturbed snow appeared ahead with an obviously fresh hole, around one edge was a crimson stain which could only have been blood. Somebody had obviously gone through during the day, been rescued but had been injured in the process; it was a timely reminder to remain vigilant.

We were on automatic pilot as we picked up some tracks which led through the ice fall where the glacier changed direction.

It was just after 10.00pm when we finally reached the Pilatte Refuge and even as we drained the last of our water reserves from our cache a new problem presented itself which would need dealing with. The other six had gone down the valley to La Berarde and fully expected us to follow that afternoon. Moreover, the note they had left described the close shave one of them had falling down a crevasse and was lucky to get out with only slight injuries! It had obviously been the blood we had seen.

We had already decided we were too exhausted to continue and had intended to stay at the hut until the morning. However, if we didn't appear there was a danger that they might call out the mountain rescue especially having already experienced the trauma of a crevasse accident themselves.

Could we take the chance and rest until morning? Or should we go down to La Berarde to let them know we were safe? None of us were really in a fit state to continue but the repercussions of a call out with all the manpower, cost and embarrassment it would entail brought out a well delivered speech of youngsters 'stepping up' by JB and in the end it was decreed that Dave and I being the two youngest should 'volunteer' to make the trip! Getting something to eat before going presented no problem but bizarrely the hut warden actually charged more for a bottle of water than a bottle of wine! As both our money and water reserves were low we left it to JB (who could speak French) to be creative with his negotiations so we could safely re-hydrate before our trip down the valley.

Dave and I wearily set off about an hour later down the well-worn path on the lower flank of the glacier which thankfully had no crevasses. We were extremely tired but still alert to the dangers and initially buoyed by a mild sense of heroism as we tackled the last of the steep snow to reach the jumbled no-man's land where the glacier snout gave way to rocks, gravel and the upper La Berarde valley. The noisy torrents of three days ago were now quiet streams locked into stillness by the night frost.

The moraines of the valley floor slowly became patches of thin grass, scrub and sparse vegetation until a few bushes and coarse grass appeared as we slowly ate the miles downhill. We stumbled down the never-ending valley in a numbing nightmare of aching bodies and fatigue. We stopped at one point and looked up to our left at another planet of lofty peaks and summit aiguilles as they caught the wan light of a three-quarter moon. It dared us to imagine and voice the impossibility of climbing up to them there and then in our exhausted state, it was a surreal moment of shared humility, magnified by our suffering. Mile followed mile, conversation ebbed and flowed; mostly ebbed and then suddenly, we saw them. Hundreds upon hundreds of bright green glow worms pulsing and fading in the grass before us, it wasn't the first

time that day I wished I'd had a camera. It brought back the early morning nearly twenty-four hours earlier when I watched the disappearing head torches in the upper reaches of the Pilatte Glacier.

The last couple of miles into camp became hard as we drew on the last of our reserves. We imagined our waiting companions around the fire feverishly discussing our fate and debating at what point should they alert the rescue authorities! Perhaps we half expected to see the flashing lights of rescue vehicles and groups of climbers preparing to come up.

We arrived to the anti-climactic relief of a dark, quiet campsite; the others were all fast asleep. So much for worrying about us! Even J.O. who had fallen down the crevasse and with whom I shared a tent was snoring!

I drank as if there was no tomorrow and finished off both mine and J. O.'s reserves and slept until the morning sun burnt me out of my sleeping bag.

JB and the other Dave arrived mid-morning, J.O. made a full recovery from his accident and I recovered enough energy to tackle a few more peaks before returning home that Summer.

We climbed the Aiguille Dibonna, Barre des Ecrins and the Meije de La Grave to name a few, all pleasant, challenging peaks. We drank a lot of local wine in various campsites and tackled a few of the valley boulder problems and local test pieces. I remember tobogganing a thousand feet on my rucksack from one col and sleeping under rocks watching a beautiful 'alpenglow' sunset in a high valley above Ailefroide but nothing came close to the experience on that Central Buttress of the North face of Les Bans for me.

There is I believe a newly built Pilatte Refuge hut above the glacier which, in keeping with glaciers worldwide will have retreated significantly in forty six years.

I still wonder occasionally if brown butterflies are still carried up that north face by the afternoon thermals and whether the valley far below still hosts those bright green glow worms which so captivated the imagination of two very tired young climbers all those years ago?



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1ST CARMEL SCOUT GROUP

Beavers (6-8 yrs.)
Cubs (8-11 yrs.)
Scouts (11-14 yrs.)

CUBS

Before Christmas the Section took part in a District competition at Laser Zone in Rhyl & had an indoor climbing session at the Boardroom, both nights were well attended & we had a good time.

Since the start of the year the section has been concentrating on the fire safety Badge, using various games & activities to learn what to do in the event of a fire & how to stay safe. We are hoping to visit Holywell fire station sometime in March to finish this badge off.

At the start of the year, we have been able to welcome to new cub leaders in Paul & Stuart. Hopefully they will be able to help us plan some exciting activities for the coming year.

SCOUTS

The new year saw the section double in size from 6 to 12, with the older cubs moving up.



The scouts had an indoor climbing session at the Boardroom at the end of January, with the leaders also able to join in, we had another good night.

By popular demand we arranged another evening with the Mobility scooter, with the section again devising some courses to test their driving skills.



The following week we set up a cooking challenge. The section was split into 3 groups, with each group set the task of making a chicken stir fry. I am glad to say the task was completed successfully by all. We finished the evening off by making bacon butties.

We are arranging an Air Rifle taster session for March & we have a Bush Craft session, and a day hike, arranged for late April.

5 of the scouts plus myself will be joining Holywell Scouts in attending the forest Fest

International camp, in Nottinghamshire at the end of July. This is something that we are very much looking forward to & we will be arranging some of our activities to raise some money towards the cost of attending the event

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.

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Group leader
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MARK ISHERWOOD MS



Poverty is a global issue that affects many people.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) is a charity that conducts and funds research aimed at solving poverty in the UK and their definition of poverty is:

‘When a person’s resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs (including social participation).’

In the Welsh Parliament, I shadow the Social Justice Minister, whose brief includes tackling poverty, and I regularly challenge the Minister in the Senedd Chamber on actions being taken by the Welsh Government to reduce poverty levels in Wales.

I am also Chair of the Cross-Party Group on Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency in the Senedd.

A household is said to be in fuel poverty when its members cannot afford to keep adequately warm as a reasonable cost, given their income.

The Cross-Party Group’s role is to raise understanding of fuel poverty and enable members to discuss the policy issues which impact on the ability of households in Wales



to afford to keep warm and safe at home.

Although fuel poverty, and all other types of poverty, have long been a major concern in Wales, the need to tackle the root causes is more urgent than ever due to the current cost-of-living crisis.

This is an international crisis, with current inflation rates higher in 23 European countries and 15 out of 27 EU member states than in the UK, and the International Monetary Fund forecasting that half of the eurozone countries at least are heading for recession.



However, people in Wales are particularly hard hit because Wales has had the lowest growth in prosperity per head out of UK Nations since 1999, pay packets in Wales are the lowest in the UK and Wales has the lowest employment rate in Great Britain, and all despite having received billions in supposedly temporary funding designed to support economic development and reduce inequality between nations and regions.

At the recent North Wales Area Welsh Conservative Conference, which was held in St Asaph, I spoke about the impact of these factors on rural communities.

In my speech on ‘Tackling Rural Poverty’, I emphasised that the key contributory factors include the fragility of some rural economies, poor access to employment opportunities and public services, low pay, a lack of affordable housing and social isolation.

I also stressed that to tackle rural poverty, “we must first recognise the evidence that rural poverty can be masked by the perceived affluence of rural areas and by a culture of self-reliance in rural communities”.

I said: “The low skills base of some rural economies is known to act as a barrier to economic growth and limited employment opportunities can result in the out-migration of skilled workers. Lack of training opportunities can also contribute to keeping incomes low.

The prevalence of low paid and fragile employment contributes to the risk of in-work poverty.

Lack of access to services makes it difficult for some individuals to secure employment. Public transport in many rural areas is infrequent, inadequate and more expensive than elsewhere. This means that it is difficult for those without private transport to travel for work.”

I added that a lack of affordable and available childcare in rural areas and limited access to the internet are also seen as barriers to employment opportunities.

I also highlighted that there is a ‘rural premium’ on some key goods and services because of a lack of competitive markets for food, fuel, energy and transport, and that this contributes to rural poverty.

Highlighting that rural Wales has some of the oldest and least thermally efficient housing stock compared to the UK and Europe, I emphasised the need to embed a ‘fabric and worst-first’ approach to retrofitting, targeting the poorest households and the least efficient homes, and to work with the Health Sector to identify and support people at risk of living in a cold home.

I said: “Rural households are known to

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be susceptible to fuel poverty. Fixed housing costs often absorb a large proportion of low household incomes and many rural areas have a lack of affordable housing. In 2020, 19% of domestic properties in Wales were not connected to the gas grid".

I also spoke of the need to level-up and join-up public transport in North Wales, improve North Wales rail links, take action to eliminate mobile phone and broadband black spots, and support our Farmers and Agricultural industries, and to develop Community-based approaches to tackling rural poverty in Wales.

As the Big Lottery Fund found when it reviewed the factors which underpinned the success of its funded projects in rural communities, those most relevant to rural poverty interventions were "the community origins of the project" and "partnership working and inclusion of the potential beneficiaries within the project".

"The Local Trust Left Behind" report in England evidences that poorer areas with greater community capacity and social infrastructure have better health and wellbeing outcomes, higher rates of employment and lower levels of child poverty compared to poorer areas without.

Yet, Building Communities Trust research found that "people in Wales feel increasingly less able to influence decisions affecting their local area".

A change of approach is desperately needed to tackle the high poverty levels in Wales, with the focus being on the underlying causes of poverty, rather than just the symptoms, and on enabling and empowering our communities.

HOLYWELL AREA COMMUNITY MUSEUM NEWS (Andrea Yarnell Dakin)

We at the museum hope you had a blessed and happy Christmas and hope you all have a happy and healthy 2023.

We are back in full swing after reopening on 9th January and now we have something on EVERY WEEKDAY. Refreshments are always available at our welcoming cafe.

Monday - bingo in the cafe at 12 noon

Tuesday - EVERY MEMORY MATTERS - all are welcome free of charge - from 10.30 onward where our reminiscence group meets in the community room - sharing and writing our memories of the area and will soon be going out into local schools and Plas yr Ywen - the assisted living facility in Halkyn Street to share all we have and hopefully gather more memories from those who come to meet us there.

Wednesday - free of charge Knit and Natter - bring along your craft / sewing/ any project or just come along for a natter with our friendly group.

Thursday - general knowledge, picture and dingbat quiz with our experienced and genial host Bob - £2 a head and a choice

of prize for everyone on the winning team. If you do not have a team to come along with - don't worry about coming alone - teams form naturally and there is always a friendly face to make up a team with you.

Friday - DON'T BE LONELY AND OUT IN THE COLD - NEW FOR 2023

WARM WINTER COMMUNITY FRIENDSHIP PROJECT. ALL FREE!!

We have received funding from Flintshire county council to host the warm welcome hub.

Come along from 10 - 3 any Friday and enjoy a free bowl of beautiful home made soup with a roll and butter, or a toastie and a cuppa. Meet old friends and make new ones.

All of the volunteers at the museum are very welcoming and we look forward to seeing you and having a chat.

All of these great things on offer at YOUR local museum as well as the fascinating displays including our 1940s living room and our Chapel room - which embraces the long and fascinating history of worship in the area.

There is always someone to talk to you about your memories and we welcome any thing we can copy and give straight back to you.

We will shortly be working on our education exhibition room - as there are only a few of us volunteers everything takes that little bit longer. So if you would like to

come along and volunteer we will welcome you (literally) with open arms.

We are good at giving hugs - they are worth so much and cost so little.

Might we see you soon at one of our events.

WARNING - the museum is addictive !!!!

Our phone number at the museum is 01352 217170, but if you would like information on any of the groups I run three of them and would be willing to chat with you if you are wary about coming along.

I am on 01352 711240 or email andreadain112@btinternet.com and will be happy to chat with you.

Love from all at the museum for 2023.

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RECIPES FOR SPRING 2023 (Isabel Burnage)

VEGETABLE AND CHICKEN BROTH:

This is a firm family favourite and is a good filling dish for a hearty lunch or supper

- 1 large onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 sticks celery, washed and chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and grated
- ! vegetable stock cube
- Sage and onion stuffing mix to thicken
- 2-3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 chicken fillets cut into quarters

Method:

1. Heat oil in pan and fry onion until lightly cooked
2. Add all the vegetables and stir for 2-3 minutes
4. Season and add garlic and stock cube
5. Cover with water and simmer for low/medium heat for about 30 minutes
6. Crush the vegetables roughly with a masher. Test for seasoning.
7. Sprinkle 2-3 tablespoons stuffing mix into broth and allow to thicken. Add more water if required.
8. Finally add the chicken pieces to the broth and cook for about 15 minutes.
9. Serve with warm rolls or crusty bread.

ALMOND AND CHERRY CAKE

- 6 oz (175g) softened butter
- 6 oz (175g) light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- grated zest of a lemon
- 1 ½ oz (40g) ground almonds + 1 teaspoon almond essence
- 6 oz (175g) glace cherries, halved and warmed
- 7 oz (200g) S R flour

Method:

1. Cream butter and sugar
2. Add eggs and lemon zest, and beat together
3. Add almonds, mix
4. Add cherries, mix
5. Fold in Flour
6. Add water if necessary to make a soft consistency
7. Bake in deep, lined 7 inch tin at gas 3, 325F, 170c for 1 hour. Turn temperature down to gas 2, 300F, 150c for about 1 ¼ hours until firm to the touch. Cool in the tin.

NEWS FROM GORSEDD AND WHITFORD CHURCHES (Rev Kathryn Evans, Vicar of Gorsedd and Whitford)



Spring is springing and I suspect you will receive your Spring magazine near to the first day of Spring (March 21st I think)! Even though I am writing this in February, there are signs of Spring already, several daffodils in the village are in full bloom, and I am confident that by the time the magazine is in circulation, there will be many more signs that Spring has sprung. Already the nights are drawing out, and the mornings lighter. I don't know about you, but I always feel better when there's a bit more daylight.

Spring also coincides with Lent and Easter in the church year and in Whitford church we are 'resurrecting' our famous Easter Egg roll on Easter Sunday. It may not be exactly as before – I've not seen a proper roll in action as I arrived just before we locked down for the pandemic but if you want to be involved, do contact me or come along on Easter Sunday at 11am (9:30am in Gorsedd but no Egg roll). Time has a way of being quite deceptive, I recently celebrated my 3rd anniversary here, in some ways I feel I've been here forever, and then sometimes I sit and think I've only just arrived, but the sense of being at home and settled is constant.

In Gorsedd church, our monthly coffee mornings are gaining momentum, and it is a lovely place to gather and meet old friends and make new ones. The church stays very warm, thanks to the new heating system and our 'coffee morning ladies' do a sterling job. Recently, it fell to me, so everyone just got tea and toast, although I did manage homemade jam and marmalade – apologies if you dropped in on one of those mornings 😊.

In both Gorsedd and Whitford churches, there are many little things which happen behind the scenes. Our churchyards are places of beauty and we are working to improve the biodiversity of our grounds. If you are one of those people who likes to do something new in Lent to prepare for Easter and pottering around outside is one of your hobbies, we would love to invite you to volunteer with us. No amount of time is too little and every contribution is hugely appreciated, do contact me if you would be interested (supporting us indoors or outside).

As always, we wish you all a very Happy Easter and every blessing for the Spring and Summer months ahead.

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ST PAUL'S CHURCH GORSIEDD

It is with great sadness that St. Paul's Church learned of the death of Revd John W K Somerville on 16th February 2023 peacefully at Colwyn Bay Hospital after a short illness.

John had served curacies in Rhosllanerchrugog and Llangystennin during the late 1960's before being made Vicar of St Paul's, Gorsedd, in 1970, and including St. Michael's Church Brynford and St. Mary's Ysceifiog from 1976 where he served all three churches until his retirement in 2002. This was alongside being Rural Dean of Holywell, which he did from 1996.

John and his late wife Eirlys enjoyed the quiet of rural ministry but were at the heart of all community activities and would often open the Vicarage up to host coffee mornings and summer fetes to raise much-needed funding for the upkeep of the churches in his care. Their lives touched the lives of so many and he will be greatly missed.

In line with his wishes, following a private funeral service, his ashes will be buried in St Paul's, Gorsedd with his beloved wife.

May John Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory.

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Here is a list of the services for the following weeks.

Mawrth / March:

19eg - Maryl Rees.
26ain - Y Parch. Huw Powell-Davies (Gweinidog)

Ebrill / April:

2ail - Y Parch. Ifor ap Gwilym, Abergele
7fed - Dydd Gwener y Groglith (Good Friday) - Y Parch Aneurin Owen Cymun yng Nghapel y Berthen Licswm
9fed - Sul y Pasg (Easter Sunday) - Y Parch. Huw Powell-Davies (Gweinidog) - Cymun.
16eg - Y Parch David Owens, Rhos.
23ain - Hedd ap Emlyn, Rhuthun.
30ain - Y Parch Huw Powell-Davies (Gweinidog)

Mai / May:

7fed - Y Parch. Trefor Lewis, Hen Golwyn
14eg - Y Parch Huw Powell-Davies (Gweinidog)
21ain - Arwel Roberts, Rhuddlan.
28ain - Y Parch Huw Powell Davies (Gweinidog)

Mehefin / June:

4ydd - Ymuno yn Licswm - Y Parch. Aneurin Owen
11eg - Y Parch. Huw Powell-Davies (Gweinidog) - Cymun
18fed - Dilwyn Jones, Dinbych
25ain - Y Parch. Huw Powell-Davies (Gweinidog)

Gorffennaf / July:

2ail - Dennis Davies, Llanrwst
9fed - Marion Simkin (Nercwys)
16eg - Y Parch. Huw Powell-Davies (Gweinidog)

Fel Eglwys rydym wedi cefnogi nifer o achosion da yn ddiweddar sef Apêl y Cyfundeb - 'Hadau Gobaith' i godi chwarter miliwn o bunnau tuag at Gymorth Cristnogol i helpu'r anghenus yn Kenya. Yn ogystal a hyn mae llawer o'n haelodau wedi cyfrannu i'r apêl i helpu'r trueiniaid ar ôl y daeargrynfydd echrydus yn Nhwrci a Syria.

Yn ystod mis Mawrth mae aelodau eglwys i'r dref yn uno i gynnal Cinio Grawys yn Eglwys Sant Pedr i godi arian at Gymorth Cristnogol.

Fel Eglwys dymunwn dda a llongyfarch un o'n hieuenctid, sef Ela Closs Sharp, ar gael ei dewis i dim criced dan 18 Merched Cymru a fydd yn teithio i'r India yn ystod gwyliau'r Pasg. Anfonwn ein cofion at nifer o'n haelodau sy'n methu a dod i'r oedfaon oherwydd henaint a llesgedd.

During the past few weeks the members and friends of the chapel have supported many good causes. One of which was the Presbytery's 'Seeds of Hope' appeal. The aim of this effort is to raise quarter of a million pounds to help the destitute in Kenya. Many have also donated to the 'Turkey-Syria Earthquake appeal'. Our thoughts and prayers are with all who have been affected by the huge earthquakes that have caused widespread destruction in Turkey and Syria. During March members of the various Holywell churches usually support the Lenten Lunches at Saint Peter's Church. Monies raised will be donated to Christian Aid.

Our sincerest congratulations to Ela Closs Sharp on being selected to represent the Welsh under 18 girls cricket team. Ela will be playing in India during the Easter holidays. We wish her well. We send our best wishes to many of our members who cannot attend our services because of ill health and old age.

GOOD COMPANIONS (John Saunders)

We are pleased to announce that the Holywell Community Hospital tea bar is now open on weekdays.

We are looking for volunteers to help behind the counter on shifts of 9am to 1pm and 1pm to 4pm. If you have a few hours to spare and would like to join us please contact John Saunders Tel. 01352 713652 for further details.

Our thanks go to the family of Mrs Gwenllian Roberts who donated £300 in her memory to the Good Companions.



WINTER 2022/2023 IN THE FIVE VILLAGES

(Robert Moore)

Weather in the Five Villages Winter 2022/23 (2021/22 in brackets)				
	Temperatures °C			Total rainfall mm
	Average	Maximum	Minimum	
November	8.1 (9.0)	15.3 (16.9)	0.5 (-2.1)	143.8 (56)
December	4.0 (6.3)	10.0 (13.9)	-3.9 (-2.1)	16.8 (142.5)
January	5.8 (5.5)	12.8 (14.0)	-0.5 (-0.5)	(78.5) (Gauge failed)
February	6.8 (6.9)	12.7 (12.5)	1.5 (-1.5)	(10.7) 122.9

Winter averages (December to February)		
	2000 - 2020	2022- 2023
Air Temperature at 1800	5.1	5.5
Maximum Temperature	12.0	11.8
Minimum Temperature	-2.2	-0.6
Days air frost	6	3
Days ground frost	16	12

The full November data are not available for the Autumn edition of the Five Villages, so they are included in the winter table. This winter has been warmer than the 20-year average. Temperatures fell quite sharply at the end of November and continued to fall at the beginning of December before rising again for the second half of the month. The relatively mild weather continued until mid January when there were two days with air frost. There was no air frost in February. Interestingly, because the temperature at 300 mm below ground changes slowly, there were five mild nights when the grass was warmer than the ground below it – more common in summer than winter.

Readers may remember the dry summer and the early leaf fall. Winter did not bring much relief from drought, where there were floods after heavy rain the water ran off the baked ground. This winter's report shows continued low rainfall. The UK needs two months of steady rain to refill aquifers and reservoirs, to raise the level of those rivers which are currently running low and to improve the soil's capacity to absorb water. If we encounter drought conditions this year we will be starting from a low base and water shortage could become a serious problem.

2022 was the hottest year on record in the UK. A conference organised by the Royal Meteorological Society warned that hot summers are probably here to stay; last year the heat was responsible for over 10 per cent excess deaths in July. Older people were more vulnerable to heat-related death and death was 'brought forward' for some vulnerable people. We think of hot days, but hot nights disrupt people's sleep and may, in the longer run, be more damaging to health than hot days. On July 9th London had an overnight minimum of 23.9 degrees – the 'natural' air temperature amplified by bricks and tarmac and trapped by air pollution. We are very fortunate to live in the countryside with clear air. This winter, warmth places or 'warm banks' were promoted for people with inadequate heating. By mid-century 'cool places' will be needed in the summer.

If you follow television weather forecasts you will know that we had a series of Atlantic high-pressure areas which held back arctic weather and occasionally drew in mild air from the south, but the circulation around the high pressure also brought arctic air down across mainland Europe and into the UK from the east. As the high pressure moved west, the cold air came directly from the north. It is no surprise therefore that the temperature charts at the weather station all show a distinctively wavy pattern, 'up and down' might best describe this winter's temperatures. January saw strong winds and mid-January brought us five days of snow on the ground (75 mm at the weather station). The series

of Atlantic highs gave February an average barometric pressure about 14 mb high than the 2000 - 2020 average.

Storm Otto (16th to 19th February) caused considerable chaos in Scotland and northern England, but the winds were negligible at the weather station which recorded little wind for the latter part of the month – though the anemometer is sheltered from the south.

This quarter's satellite image shows the UK on the 19th January. We were between Atlantic and continental lows with little wind, the edge of an occluded front can be seen over northern Scotland, broken cloud over Wales and north-west England and shower clouds off the north of Ireland. This was a period in which we experienced alternating patchy cloud and clear skies.

In sum, it has been an interesting winter.

I receive images from geostationary and polar orbiting satellites right around the globe. These are available strictly for educational purposes only. Images are normally kept for seven days, so students and teachers should email to ask about them sooner rather than later and book images in advance if possible (rsmoore@liv.ac.uk). Geo-stationary satellite images can be used to produce spectacular animated displays of the weather.

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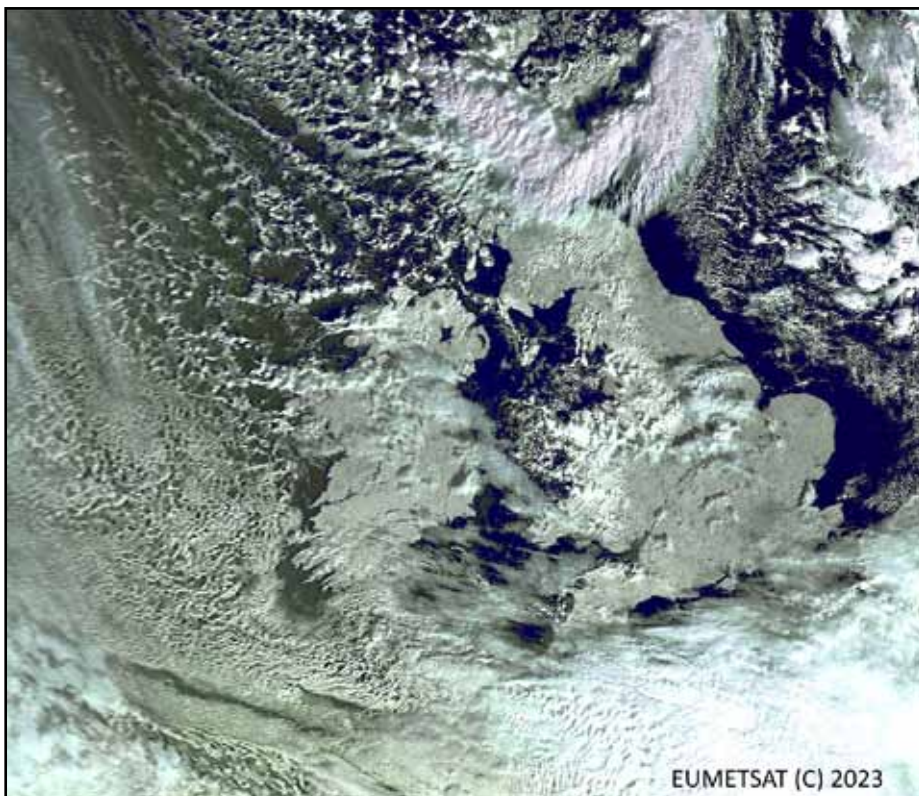
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CYMDEITHAS THOMAS PENNANT

(Paul Brighton, Sec/Ysg)

Activities Report: February, March

By the time readers of *The Five Villages Chronicle* receive the journal for March, some activities in the Cymdeithas Thomas Pennant will have taken place. Thus, in December 2022, we had a very successful Christmas Lunch in the Welsh Chapel, in Whitford St. Holywell, courtesy of the 'On the Corner' Cafe, Caerwys. On 23rd February we will have had a talk on 'Cynefin' (Habitat) in Holywell, Treffynnon, based on very successful S4C production. Our thanks go locally, to Glyn Griffiths, Ieuan Ap Sion and to our IT Co-ordinator, Heulwen Closs Sharp. But, there are some technical issues and if these are not resolved, our Chair, Norman Closs Parry

will present a 'Cynefin' based on his locality, near Llanberis.

Later in the year, we have our Annual Pennant Lecture, but, this year, it will be given in **SEPTEMBER**, Thursday, 28th at 7.00pm in Holywell Library. We have changed the date, in order to accommodate the Academic Colleague, Dr. Edwin Rose of Cambridge University, who will give the lecture, including references to Thomas Pennant and his writings on The Globe. Generally, we are finding that University academics do NOT find October easy, due to teaching commitments, etc. Thus, the change to September may well be a pointer to future lectures. Further elements of our programme will be communicated via the *Five Villages Chronicle*, but in the Spring we do hope to reactivate the Meirion Griffith Memorial Prize, in memory of our late and much loved and respected Secretary,

Meirion Griffith, who, for many years, was Deputy Head at Ysgol Bro Carmel, Carmel. This year it is hoped that the competition will be more social media orientated, in line with modifications to the Welsh curriculum for Primary Schools who we hope will participate.

Later in the year, we have other items for our programme, including a visit to Snowdonia and to one of our members Jan Miller's 'Wild garden'. For this, she won a prestigious award in a competition held in London. We also have one or two social events planned, and we would like again, to hold a Christmas Lunch in December, possibly Thursday 14th and again, involving 'On The Corner' Cafe in Caerwys.

One key event involving The Cymdeithas Thomas Pennant, will be on **March 21st at 7.30pm in Holywell Library**. The speaker will be the distinguished Welsh Naturalist and TV presenter, **Iolo Williams**. The audience will be limited to 70 and the lecture will be in Welsh, to respect the Bi-Lingual nature of the Cymdeithas.

We are very fortunate in the Cymdeithas, to have writers of some distinction. Our Chair, Norman Closs Parry has recently been involved in a study of the famous Welsh writer and miner, Einion Evans, apart from his poetry writings. Dr. Eiddwen Jones, one of our Vice-Presidents, has written a novel in English, '**Recall**', about the life and times of Thomas Pennant and our President, Dr. Goronwy Wynne has written extensively on Natural Science and he is a member of the Linnean Society, based at Burlington House in London, as well as The Edward Llwyd Society.

We continue to be involved with other local groups and will participate in events being held throughout the year. Thus, we continue to be busy, and we very much appreciate the support of our local councils, Whitford Community Council and Holywell Town Council, both in terms of their encouragement and interest and financial help!

Do keep in touch with us and we do welcome residents' views and opinions.

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(Paula Jones)

Women's History Month and International Women's Day

March 2023 marks Women's History Month and 8 March is International Women's Day. To celebrate, we have put together the following list of 10 books published this year by some of our favourite formidable female voices in literature:

1. *Old Babes in the Wood* by Margaret Atwood
2. *A Spell of Good Things* by Ayòbámi Adébáyò
3. *The Whispering Muse* by Laura Purcell
4. *Vulcana* by Rebecca F. John
5. *August Blue* by Deborah Levy
6. *Atalanta* by Jennifer Saint
7. *The Memory Of Animals* by Claire Fuller
8. *Yellowface* by RK Fuang
9. *Someone Else's Shoes* by Jojo Moyes
10. *Now She Is Witch* by Kirsty Logan

Happy Reading!

Adult Community Learning: FREE courses for people aged 19 and over

As part of the North East Wales Adult Community Learning partnership, we are pleased to be delivering free courses for people aged 19 and over. These courses are available to anyone aged 19 and over living in Flintshire or Wrexham and will take place either in person across our libraries and leisure centres or online. For more information and to sign up for any of the above course please email: ACL@aura.wales

Croeso! Welcome! - Welsh Conversation Club at Holywell Library

Join us at Holywell Library on the first Friday of every month at 2:00pm for our brand new Cymraeg Conversation Club in partnership with Menter Iaith.

We also have weekly or monthly Cymraeg conversational groups. Join us at Flint Library every Thursday at 2.00pm, and Buckley Library every Tuesday 2:00-3:00pm. These sessions are suitable for learners of all abilities.

We also have an informal Welsh learner's conversational group at Mold Library which meet on the third Thursday of the month at 2:00pm.

These sessions are a friendly and relaxed space for Welsh learners and speakers to socialise and build confidence. A very warm welcome to all!

For more information, contact:

Holywell Library on 01352 703850, or email: holywell.library@aura.wales

Flint library on 01352 703737, or email: flint.library@aura.wales

Buckley Library on 01352 70386, or email buckley.library@aura.wales

Mold Library on 01352 703780, or email: mold.library@aura.wales

We hope to see you soon!

Aura Home Library Service

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We offer a direct library delivery service that can bring library resources straight to the doors of residents across Flintshire who are unable to access their local library. Aura library assistants will put together a collection of books based upon your personal preferences, these can be normal or large print, paperback, hardback or audio. We will then pop your books into a bag ready to be delivered, free of charge every 5 weeks. To register for the service contact 01352 704400 or email libraries@aura.wales

Author Events

Join us at Mold Library for our Author evenings, Aura libraries in partnership with Mold Bookshop are delighted to welcome

- Kate Harmer-The Lost Girls- March 22nd 7pm £5 (£8.99 with book)
- Caryl Lewis- Drift- March 28th 7pm £5 (£9.99 with book)
- Mike Parker- All the wide border- April 25th £5 (A funny, warm and timely meditation on identity and belonging, following the scenic route along the England-Wales border: Britain's deepest faultline.)

Plus don't miss the three Queens of Crime at The Beaufort Park Hotel on April 28th- Louise Candlish, Lisa Jewell and Claire Mackintosh!

Look out for more exciting author events soon including Alison Weir on 28th June at Mold Library. For more information contact libraries@aura.wales



CARMEL WI NEWS (Jacqui Arstall)

Carmel WI members would like to send everyone our very best wishes for 2023.



Chatsworth group



Inside Chatsworth

Following a busy year of meetings and events, members enjoyed a November visit to Chatsworth House and Christmas Market. The market lived up to all our

expectations, offering a varied and plentiful supply of tempting goods. After emptying our wallets, we commenced a wonderful seasonal tour of the festively decorated house. Chatsworth was at its most glorious, we experienced amazing artistic decor in every room and corridor. We all enjoyed a magical day.



Christmas crafts

Our December 2022 meeting was our Christmas Cheese and Wine Party, Quiz and Christmas decoration crafting evening. Everyone agreed it was a fun evening. January 2023 Meeting.

We welcomed Rob Owen from Holywell Transition Group as our first speaker of the New Year. She delivered an informative and thought-provoking talk entitled - Glimmers of Hope. We particularly enjoyed Rob's insight into the projects and work that is currently occurring in our local community.

Later in January, some of our members watched the wonderful, talented Andre Rieu and his Orchestre in concert at Prestatyn Cinema.

February 2023 Meeting.

This was our Resolutions Night meeting. Our members voted for the Campaign they would like the WI Nationally to support next year. The Resolution for 2023 will be decided following discussion and voting at the WI Annual Meeting later this year. Following this, with the help of two experienced crafters, we did our best to

make a felt heart shaped Valentine's day brooch. It was certainly a learning curve for me!

March 2023 Meeting.

This is our AGM and Beetle Drive. We will also be discussing and putting finishing touches to our full and varied programme for the coming year.

Carmel WI meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month, 7.30pm at Carmel Village Hall.

New Members are always very welcome.

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The costs of this publication have been met by the Senedd Commission from public funds

CENSUS REPORT (Robert Moore)

Readers may be aware from press reports that more results of the 2021 census are now becoming available. Information on smaller areas has been published recently, this includes ward data which enables us to see what Whitford looked like in 2021. The population of Whitford was 2,244 of whom 1,126 were men and 1,118 were women. We are a very small part, 1.5 percent, of the Flintshire population which stood at 152,506 on census day 2021. Whitford has an older population than Flintshire, with an average age of 47 in contrast to 41 for Flintshire. The median age for Whitford is just over 50, which means if we lined the population up from youngest to oldest, the person in the centre of the line would be between 50 and 51 years of age, doing the same for the whole of Flintshire the person in the middle would be between 40 and 41. There were no centenarians in Whitford. We probably didn't need to be told that the five villages have a population weighted towards older people – but now we can put numbers on it.

Nearly ninety eight percent of Whitford people were born in the UK, the proportion was slightly lower for Flintshire. One percent of Whitford's population was born outside Europe, 1.8 percent of Flintshire's. The percentage difference is small but while 2,683 of Flintshire's residents were born outside the UK, only 24 people in Whitford were. Thirteen-point seven percent of Whitford people can speak, read and write Welsh, compared with just under nine percent for Flintshire.

Just fewer than 15 percent of Whitford adults had no educational qualifications while just over 34 percent had qualifications at degree level, for Flintshire the figures were 18 and 30 percent. Of the people in employment in Whitford 47 percent were in broadly 'professional' occupations compared with 39 percent for Flintshire.

If the numbers so far suggest that on the whole Whitford's small population looks slightly more privileged than Flintshire's, then the housing figures may turn this impression into a firm conclusion.

	Housing tenure by percentage of households				Number
	Owned outright	Owned with mortgage	Social Rented	Private rented	All households
Flintshire	38.8	33.0	14.5	13.2	66,935
Whitford	51.8	35.6	1.9	10.3	969

We need to be cautious however because some of the differences will be attributable to age, older people are more likely to have paid off their mortgages, whatever their level of affluence.

There is a lot more that we can learn from the census about the health and well-being of the people of Whitford, their household composition, their religion and national identity, caring provision, disabilities, access to cars etc. There is certainly enough for the next issue of *Five Villages Chronicle*.



GENEROUS FLINTSHIRE BUSINESSES ENSURE ROTARIANS CHRISTMAS FLOAT RAISES THOUSANDS FOR WORTHY CAUSES

Following on from another successful Christmas Float Programme, The Rotary Club of Flint & Holywell members were informed of the financial results of their efforts by Club Treasurer, Gordon Cook at last Monday Night's Club Meeting at The Springfield Hotel. In total, some £4,000 was received, and after deducting costs, this left over £2,000 available for worthy causes.

"The Christmas Float has been for many, one of the most looked forward to events of the year in our area", commented Gordon. Many local residents, who are now grandparents recall fondly their own memories when they were children, of

seeing a brightly lit Rotary sleigh being pulled by four reindeer with Santa waving to the children to the accompanying sound of Christmas carols. Unfortunately, Gordon pointed out that collections from the public have been falling in recent times to the point that these are failing to match the ever increasing costs, and in fact this year, for the first time, the public collections failed to cover the costs.

However the Club has been fortunate indeed to have the continuing support of many local businesses who, despite the many post pandemic financial problems, dug deep into their pockets this year, donating over £2,000 to ensure that there was a significant surplus of money available for the Club to support so many worthy causes. President of The Rotary Club, Malcolm Mellor, was pleased to report that he personally had received many favourable comments from parents who had brought their children along to the Town Centre events in increasing numbers to see Santa and give him their "letters", all of which were answered.

He was pleased to report that, unlike

previous years, for the most part, members had not been subjected to any significant verbal and physical attacks as they have been in recent years, although there was still a very small minority who continue to consider it acceptable to verbally assault Santa and his helpers.

Malcolm congratulated all the Club Members who had given up so much time and money and confirmed that as a result, the Club was able to donate £1,100 to be sent immediately to help those people in Turkey who have been devastated by the recent earthquake. Malcolm informed members that this money would be sufficient to provide two "Shelter Boxes" which as the name implies, provides temporary shelter and basic facilities for those unfortunate people affected by disasters such as this huge earthquake.

The Rotary Club of Flint & Holywell Thank OUR WONDERFUL SUPPORTERS	
John Sibeon	Cambrian Gas
NWC Business Forms	Kingspan
J. Reid Trading	The Pet Cemetery
Griffiths & Hughes Solicitors	Fletcher Davies
Flintshire Windows	Holywell Golf Club
Llewellyn Jones Solicitors	Flint Town Council
Trendy Blinds	Truewood Furniture
Lyonsden Fitness	Castle Cars
Roberts Manufacturing	MB Company
Celt Rowlands	Gruff Jones
Holywell Town Council	The Springfield Hotel

In addition, the Club agreed to make donations of £1,000 to St Kentigern's Hospice, £500 to The Air Ambulance and £250 to The National Military Dog's Memorial, currently being built in Holywell.

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DAFFODILS (Norman Closs-Parry)

The Hedd yr Aber family bought me Simon Barnes's newest book for Christmas – 'The History of the World in 100 Plants.'



Simon Barnes

It is a marvellous cross curricular study showing depth of research, knowledge presented by or with great penmanship and style! I caught myself wondering the other day, if years and years ago if his 'The Meaning of Sport' and his current tome and come on my desk- would I be ... but there again he was not around in those panaffin lamplight days of Sports Annual and Observer Books... However, spring is on it's way, just a little extra light (and snow and ice)- every day... the snowdrops have won, and the Lent Lilies- Lent Lilies? Daffodils to you and Wordsworth – Cennin Pedr to Welsh speakers are on their way!



The snow and ice kept me in when I had a project on- and I wanted to get out... so I started asking questions about the daffodil... for example why is it the national flower of Wales? ... why will we be sporting it on our lapels on Dydd Gwyl Dewi (St David's Day)? Should it not be the heroic snowdrop? I have heard different theories put forward. On March 1st - St David's Day, and the day of his death, the ground was covered with their dance and glee. I have heard it said that this lily (family) is the first of the big impressionist to colour the year and to cover the dead and the living!! Simon Barnes? Did he have something to add?

Of course ... and what an addition which I and you, if you go out and keep looking would have noticed. A few years



Caerwys daffodils

ago, in a smallholding on the outskirts of Caerwys there were acres and acres of daffodils which have their origin on the Iberian Peninsular. They belong to the genius Narcissus, which is always associated with the myth of Narcissus, the beautiful youth who fell in love with his

own reflection and killed himself..." The plant has also been used in medicine. It induces vomiting, and numbness, and has been used as a purgative and a treatment for burns and wounds. It can cause hallucinations. Sophocles called the plant 'the chaplet of the infernal gods.' Hippocrates recommended it as a pessary for urine tumours. A substance called galantamine has been extracted from the plant and is used to treat early stages of Alzheimer's dementia. That might explain the acres of daffodils in Caerwys, and I like the notion that they were in profusion on the day of David's going and his great sermon" Go do the little things that you have seen and heard from me!"



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A BUTCHER, A BAKER AND A CANDLESTICK MAKER (Paulene Ellis)

In our small corner of Carmel the world visited us for over the 20 years while we ran our bed and breakfast business from our home and welcomed visitors from over 40 countries.

Many amusing things happened during that time and we often said 'we should write a book'!

We had already lived at Celyn Villa for over 17 years when we decided to open our home to paying guests. Not an easy decision and one I know that others would hate. But we loved it. Meeting people from all over the world and many returning time and again was rewarding.

In the beginning we had no idea if we would get any visitors but very soon it became clear there was a need for accommodation locally. It was in the early days of being 'online' and after a friend built us a website we soon became busy. We thought we would mainly get holiday makers and people visiting the area to see friends etc. We were surprised at the amount of the working population needed a place to stay. Although I'm not sure if we ever had a butcher or a candlestick maker stay with us we definitely had a baker. He was memorable because he was working off shore on one of the wind farm support vessels and usually stayed the night before his next shift of three or four weeks on board. He was memorable because he complimented Les on his home made bread! From accountants to salesmen and engineers to farmers we had all areas of work represented!

Some stayed for one night, some came every month and some stayed Mondays to Friday mornings for months.

One funny story related to one of these long term guests. He was a lovely young man and always had porridge for breakfast. My husband Les decided that as it was all he had he would give him a bigger portion. However he didn't notice so the next day he gave him a little bit more porridge. Gradually over the next few days he increased his portion. Every morning his plate would come back to the kitchen empty. It took nearly two weeks for him to suddenly say 'have you given me a bigger portion of porridge today'? Of course we explained just how long it had taken him to notice! He laughed so much it was worth the extra porridge!

Directions were always an issue! No matter how many times you told people not to use the postcode but follow our instructions they would end up phoning us from somewhere to say they couldn't find us. However one of the most memorable was from an Australian chap who we nicknamed Pathfinder! It was about 7pm and the phone rang, 'hi we are staying with you tonight but we took a wrong turn and are nearly in Bristol' They were going the

wrong way down the M5 and hadn't realised for miles that they were going in the wrong direction. They eventually arrived and were welcomed with much mirth and they even returned several times to stay, as well as their daughter who came especially to see us on their recommendation. Another Australian couple (he had emigrated as a child as a ten pound Pom) came several times as he still had some family in the area. On their second or third visit we welcomed them in our usual way with tea and Welsh cakes and when asked about their forthcoming visit they said, "well we had booked a cruise around Italy so as we were so close we thought we would pop in and see Paulene and Les" I suppose if you live in Australia, Italy seems close to Wales! (Just a bit further than Melbourne is to Sydney in fact).

Distance was a common discussion amongst our guests as many of our visitors from the USA are so used to long wide open roads with just a 'gas station' between stops; many have no idea of how long it takes to travel in the UK. One morning at breakfast we had a full house, six guests around the table. It was always a friendly time with most wanting to talk and discuss their day ahead, recommending places to visit etc. Time was getting on, nearly checking out time and I walked into the dining room trying to get people moving. 'We're off to Edin...burg our American guests said, (in a Texas drawl) we have tickets for the Tattoo and we are going to take in a few cute places on the way'. I suggested they had better make a move soon as it was around a five or six hour drive. 'Hell no, it's only 300 miles, it'll take a few of hours, we will be fine'. We always wondered if they made it on time.

Of course once they found the house a few people had difficulty opening the gate. It's a simple five bar farm gate with a pull handle which most people could manage. In addition my husband (being an engineer) had fixed a sash weight on a pulley rope to hold the gate open when entering. We have had several telephone calls from guests at the gate not knowing how to open it, but one telephoned and said, 'I'm pulling the bell but no one is answering'!
(to be continued)

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some photographs of our day



YSGOL GWENFFRWD (Angharad Rule)

It was wonderful to welcome back families to the Ysgol Gwenffrwd to see our Christmas Concerts for the first time since Christmas 2019 and would like to thank them for their continuous support. We were incredibly proud of all our pupils for their performances; they were brilliant.

We've had a busy start to 2023 here at Ysgol Gwenffrwd. As a Welsh medium school, Welsh traditions, old and new, are of utmost importance. On January 25th, we celebrated Santes Dwynwen Day, whereby our children learned about the story of Santes Dwynwen and why she is the Welsh patron saint of lovers. The 10th of February was Dydd Miwsig Cymru, a day to celebrate and promote Welsh music. Our pupils enjoyed listening to Welsh songs (new ones in addition to the old favourites) and being introduced to new up and coming Welsh artists. To celebrate Saint David's Day, we will be welcoming parents into the school to listen to our pupils perform songs and recitations. This will happen on Friday, 3rd March as our Year 6 pupils will be in Glan-Ilyn on the day itself. How wonderful it is that our pupils are once again able to go on residential trips, we know that they'll thoroughly enjoy the experience and create memories to last a lifetime.

We would also like to wish the best of luck to our pupils who will be competing at the Urdd Cylch Eisteddfod on Saturday, 4th March at Ysgol Gwynedd, Fflint.

Our school theme this term is 'Troir Tudalen', looking at various authors and literature but also at new beginnings and turning over a new leaf, which is fitting at the beginning of a new year. Our Year 3 and 4's focus is on the wonderful Welsh author, Roald Dahl. Here we have a lovely biography of the author written by **Brooke Kennedy** (Year 4).

Biography of Roald Dahl Birth and Family Background

Roald Dahl was born to Sofie and Harald Dahl on September 13, 1916 in Llandaff, Wales. His siblings were called Astri, Alfhild, Else and Asta.

Early Years and Childhood

Roald Dahl had an older sister called Astri, but unfortunately she died from appendicitis in 1920 when she was only 7 years old. Roald's father was so sad that he fell ill from pneumonia and also died a few weeks later. At this time, his mother was pregnant with her 3rd child, who was born in autumn. She called her Asta.

Dahl's childhood was filled with tragedy. His father and sister died when Dahl was three, and he was brutally abused at his boarding school.

Adulthood

Many years later Dahl became a pilot in the RAF but later was a fighter pilot in the Second World War.

Later he discovered writing and he

fell in love with it! He started writing about experiences of flying planes in the desert. This led to Roald being paid for the first time for writing, which was published in the Sunday Evening Post newspaper.

In 1953 Roald married actress Patricia Neal. They lived in Missenden in Buckinghamshire, England. He wrote many of his famous stories there.

Fantastic Facts about Roald Dahl

His favourite smell was bacon frying.

His favourite music was Beethoven.

His funniest moment was when he put his wife's coat in a freezer over summer.

Some of his books are: Matilda, The Twits, Revolting Rhymes, The BFG, The Witches, Dirty Beasts, Ghost Stories, Boy, George's Marvellous Medicine, The Giraffe, the Pelly and Me.

Roald Dahl sadly died of myelodysplastic syndrome, a blood cancer that is very rare at the age of 74

STANDING IN THE HALL (Alice Brook)

I'm standing thinking about how things used to be. I used to be a tree and the thing I enjoyed the most was the spring when my leaves were starting to grow back after the long winter. It was when the birds started nesting. Some returned to the same nest every year. I don't know how many springs I saw, I lost count although I know if I could still count my rings I would know.

I liked my roots, but they went on for ages and to be honest I couldn't always feel them. My branches swayed in the wind and that was fun and when it rained all the animals would stay under the leaves and try and keep dry. Mainly birds but squirrels

too and tiny insects. Spring was the best though, all that romance when the birds were nesting. It was so noisy when the babies hatched and they didn't shut up until they fledged and although I was sorry to see them go, I enjoyed the peace again. Some came back to visit, reused their old nests for their eggs but most just flew off never to be seen again.

Of course that's in the past now.

I remember so well the day it happened, it had been very noisy for days, machines working through the day and lots of men in the wood. I started to see more and more. Where there had been just trees there was now a view into the distance. I could see the big blue sky and green, lots of green. But there were other things too that back then I didn't recognise.

There was a lot of shouting and noise that day, and then suddenly I felt this strange feeling in my trunk and the next thing I knew I was lying on my side, and I couldn't feel my roots any more.

It was strange, it's hard to describe, it was like parts of me were gradually disappearing. Don't really know what happened but I'm just here now. It's dry though it never rains and there's no spring. I feel like I'm stuffed full of something and I have things on me. A thin layer of dust settles over me and some things get moved or I might get a dust and a polish. Beeswax is nice. But on the whole I just stand here in the hall of this house.

I miss the spring and the birds but I suppose I'm luckier than some.

At least I didn't go up in smoke like so much of the wood that I lived in.

But I miss the spring the most and the birds.



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YSGOL Y LLAN VA PRIMARY SCHOOL, WHITFORD

Headteacher, Mr Bryan Griffiths – We've had a lovely half term in school. Lots has been going on as usual but our older pupils ended the term with an adventurous trip to Nant BH. The children all thoroughly enjoyed the trip, the challenges, and the sense of achievement. Staff also enjoyed the trip and stated that our pupils were simply amazing, and a credit to the school and parents. A huge thanks goes out to those members of staff for giving up their own time in order for our pupils to achieve such a wonderful experience.



Visitors from across the border! During February, we welcomed visitors from several Conwy schools to our school. As the first school in North Wales to achieve the Aur Award in Cymraeg Campus, we were only too happy to help when a Welsh advisor from Conwy County asked if some of their school could come and see best practice within our school.

Eight colleagues, joined by two County Welsh advisors visited our school over a duration of two weeks. They watched a Gwasanaeth led by our Criw Cymraeg, took a tour of our school - visiting each class and talking to pupils yn gymraeg, visited our Pod Siarad and heard all about our Siop Cymraeg. They then settled

down to lunch and Welsh cakes before seeing evidence of how our school community has worked so hard to get to this high standard of second language and incidental Welsh across the school.

It was lovely to have visitors in our school and I was so proud as Headteacher to listen to all of the wonderful comments being said about our journey. Seeing our visitors taking pictures of our school and appreciating what we have done here was simply amazing! We can't wait to support more colleagues from our own County and from other Counties in the near future.



Next term will be another busy one but we're looking forward to work beginning on our new childcare building. Wynne Construction have confirmed that they will be starting work in March and the project should be finished by the end of the academic year.

This new facility will be a welcome addition to our school and will help us to provide a more substantial childcare offer to our parents in the future. **Opposite** is a generated image of the design:



A generated image of our new childcare building

Senior teacher – Miss Roberts

Key Stage 2 children recently enjoyed a visit to Dangerpoint in Talacre. They learnt about different dangers they may face when out and about, as well as in the home.



Both Key Stage 2 classes have taken part in Technocamps workshops called 'Technology, the future and ethics'. One point for discussion was whether we should be travelling in self-driving cars! We are so fortunate here at Ysgol y Llan that we have an abundance of technological resources, so it's important that we learn how to use them safely. For Safer Internet Day we took part in an online workshop with Dom Traynor from Adobe.



(Richard Dolphin)

In 2023, the 'Old Loved Hall' is the thriving community meeting place for children, young people and adults within the 5 Villages. As a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) the success of the Hall is purely down to the hard-work and commitment of its Trustees and volunteers. Without these dedicated and hard working group of individuals, the future of the Hall would have been in peril. Since 2014, you will know either by visiting, word of mouth, or by reading this article regularly, that the Hall has had significant investment ensuring its longevity for social, educational, cultural, physical and emotional connectivity of 5 Villagers.

Times change, and new opportunities arise. Could you be an active member of our community and put yourself forward as a Hall Trustee? Could you continue the hard-work of like-minded citizens by volunteering your time to support a key function of Hall business? Hall Trustees are looking for a committed individual who will have the responsibility for quarterly invoicing of our regular hall users. This will not include any handling of cash or other finances as all transactions are completed via electronic transfer.



Benefits of volunteering; gaining new skills, making new friends, giving something back, boosts emotional well-being and confidence, plus many more.

If you'd like to get involved, please contact Hall Secretary – Chris Dolphin on 01352 713415 or email chris_dolphin@hotmail.co.uk for an informal discussion.

Since the last issue, the Hall has received an annual grant from Whitford Community Council. The support of our community council is gratefully appreciated. As a CIO, the Hall is dependent upon national grant-funding (pending successful application) or through fund-raising, such as our Monthly Coffee Mornings (2nd Thursday of the month) and Afternoon Bingo!

For regular updates about groups, hall availability and upcoming events please check out the Carmel Village

Hall Facebook Page – www.facebook.com/carmelvillagehall or contact Chris Dolphin, Secretary on 01352 713415 or chris_dolphin@hotmail.co.uk

THE HUMAN SPIRIT... A LETTER TO A GRANDCHILD (Edward Penrose)

Our spirit is the part of our being which is moved by the glory of colour, the beauty of words or the rhythm and colour of music.

Many young people today are aware of this and seek to find out more about it by practising yoga or attending spiritual festivals. The Beatles went to India to find out more about meditation and yoga.

It is often connected by religions, but all of us experience the moving of our spirit when we listen to music or read special passages of literature or look at great paintings. You can also term this spirit our soul, but that is moving towards religion. It is in fact, the part of religion that is devoid of dogma. When you stand and look up at the moon and the stars, you will find yourself moved to wonder at their beauty the immenseness of the heavens. Perhaps it is significant regardless of what we believe that we use this term, the heavens.

This part of our being is most important for whatever you call it or whatever you believe, it does need nurturing or feeding. People in the USA flock to the New England States in what they call the Fall, to see the amazing colours that are found in the

foliage of the trees there. When you look at trees like this in the autumn sun, your being is affected and it becomes a special and unforgettable experience.

To sit alone on a riverbank, on a mountain top or in a clearing in a forest may trigger this part of you, whatever you call it, you will relax and wonder at it. It is a very important part of you, and it will help to keep you healthy and happy. Those who seek inner peace and happiness must take time to discover their own spirit and feed it. Sometimes a very simple thing like a smell from a flower or herb will lift you in quite a surprising way. For me, this will be the smell of rosemary or lavender as it takes me back to a sunny day with my grandmother in the garden in Devonport where I grew up.

I remember on a sunny day putting on fins and sinking into the deep water in Plymouth Sound to move between the fronds of seaweed growing vertically like a jungle. It was an unknown experience and it was peaceful, beautiful and really moving. If you are lucky you will find someone to share this kind of experience, hopefully one day you can share it with a family.

However, perhaps to experience this kind of peace and joy you will need to be alone. We live in a society which values things in financial terms but what we are dealing with is something you cannot buy. Spending time thinking, looking, using all your senses to appreciate beauty is a very rewarding. I think you will not hear much about this in school or in the media.

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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.

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We do have a web page where previous issues may be downloaded 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, Bodlondob, Chapel Street, Caerwys, Flintshire, CH7 5AE (01352 720477).

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