



# THE FIVE VILLAGES CHRONICLE

*CRONICL Y PUM PENTREF*

ISSUE NO. 150  
RHIFYN 150

SUMMER (JUNE) 2024  
HAF (MEHEFIN) 2024

PRICELESS  
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## EDITORIAL

### 150 not out as they say in cricket!

Well this is it! Issue 150. we hope there is something for everyone here and would like to thank our contributors, our advertisers, our volunteers and of course Whitford Community Council for their generous financial support. Please do remember to tell our advertisers where you saw their advertisement so that they can see the benefit of advertising with us.

See below a copy of the first ever issue cover, so you can see how far we have come? Remember we are a community magazine and it is for you all to use to announce weddings, anniversaries and other family occasions.

*The Five Villages Chronicle* is delivered to every house in the Whitford community by a team of some 40 volunteers, but it is produced by a committee of just 8, some of whom have been involved since issue 1, some 37 years ago, when the Five Villages Chronicle started. The ravages of time mean that we are occasionally in urgent need of further help and the position of Secretary for the organising committee has become vacant.

Do you have some time to spare? The committee meet just 4 times a year to review the previous issue and to plan for the next one so it need not be too onerous a task. If you think this could be for you and you would be interested in joining the 5VC team please contact the committee Chair, Peter Erasmus, on 01352 746896 or drop an mail to [editor@5villages.org.uk](mailto:editor@5villages.org.uk). We really look forward to hearing from you.

## CARMEL BOWLING CLUB NEWS

(Phil Thomas, Secretary and Treasurer)

### SIX QUESTIONS – ONE ANSWER!

Is Carmel Bowling Club the best kept secret throughout our five villages area!?

Do you know where it is?

Does it have some of the best views of any Bowling Club in Flintshire or even Wales?

Did you know that it is the only bowling green within the five villages area?

Did you know that anybody throughout our five villages area is welcome to come and give it a try?

Did you know that Bowls can be played from 9 to 90 years of age?

The answer – email the Secretary at [seccarmelbc@icloud.com](mailto:seccarmelbc@icloud.com) who will be

## COVER PICTURE

The grade II listed lime kiln in Gorsedd. By local photographer Steven Jones.

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only too pleased to reveal the answers and arrange your personal invitation to the green.



### BRENDA TAYLOR AND GWYN EVANS

Two of the original founding members of the Club have retired from "active duty". Brenda and Gwyn, both life members of the Club, have clocked up over 50 years of service since its inception in 1997. The Club was formed following the provision of the new green and pavilion by Delyn Borough Council within the grounds of Ysgol Bro Carmel. Brenda, the Secretary and Gwyn, the greenkeeper, were key players in developing the Club from a fledgling social gathering of bowlers to an established Club with an excellent playing surface which fielded three teams in local leagues. Both were recently presented with retirement gifts at a Club gathering before the start of the season. Sadly, more recently, the Club's membership has declined but, with new volunteers taking up positions, it will shortly embark upon a redevelopment programme to reignite its fortunes. Brenda and Gwyn will still be around to offer support and advice given their invaluable experience.

## DON HARPER



Don Harper, of Allt Y Golch, Carmel and a long-standing member of Carmel Bowling Club has recently passed away. Rumoured to be 90 Don lived very close to the green within the grounds of Ysgol Bro Carmel. Even into his late eighties age did not dull his stamina or competitiveness and he also played the short mat game at Holywell Leisure Centre through the winter. When not playing Don also helped the grounds maintenance team and as a car owner he regularly helped several less able friends by running errands. Thank you Don!



## LOCAL DEFIBRILLATORS

Brynford Primary School, Brynford, Holywell, CH8 8AD  
Carmel Cricket Club, Pen y Gelli Cricket Ground,  
St Paul's Church, Gorsedd, Holywell, CH8 8QZ  
St Asaph Road, Lloc, Holywell, CH8 8RF  
Carmel Village Hall, Carmel Hill, Holywell, CH8 8NZ  
Holywell Golf Club, Brynford, Holywell, CH8 8LQ  
Ideal Lighting, 61 High Street, Holywell, CH8 7TF  
Old Town Hall, 46 High Street, Holywell, CH8 7LH  
Pen y Maes Stores, 5-7 Bryn y Gwynt, Pen y Maes, Holywell, CH8 7BX  
Scott the Jewellers, 46 High Street, Holywell, CH8 7LH  
Strand Walk, Bank Place, Holywell, CH8 7AN  
Tesco, Bank Place, Holywell, CH8 7TJ  
Toe 2 Toe Fitness, North Road, Holywell, CH8 7TQ  
Whitford CP School, Whitford, Holywell, CH8 9AN  
Ysgol Bro Carmel, Carmel, Nr Holywell, CH8 8NU  
Ysgol Gwenfrwdd, Whitford Street, Holywell, CH8 7NJ  
Ysgol Treffynnon, Pen y Maes Road, Holywell, CH8 7EN  
Please advise [editor@5villages.org.uk](mailto:editor@5villages.org.uk) if there are any we have missed!



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Come and visit, relax and unwind with us, you can book a table on our website or just call in to see us. We look forward to welcoming you soon. *Cheers, Ray and the team*

#### OPENING TIMES

##### BAR

Mon - Sat 11:30am - 11:00pm

Sun 11:30am-10:30pm  
(last orders at 10pm)

##### FOOD

Mon - Sat 12:00 - 9:00pm

Sun 12:00 - 8:00pm







## DON WOOLASTON

Everyone at the club was sad to hear about the recent passing of Don Woolaston. Don was head of youth coaching at Carmel for many years and his hard work led to the development and expansion of junior cricket at the club. Cricket was a huge part of Don's life and he also served as an umpire in the North Wales Cricket League for many years. Don passed away on 13th April aged 87 and the club extends its deepest sympathy to his wife Pat and all the family.

## SENIOR TEAMS

It came as no surprise to anyone when the North Wales Cricket League announced that the start of the 2024 season was being postponed by a fortnight due to the wet weather. Cricket grounds in the area were simply too wet to commence the season on 20th April as planned, so the league's Special Management Committee decided to postpone the fixtures scheduled for the first two weekends and extend the season until 22nd September. This would give clubs an opportunity to work on their grounds and also allow additional time for playing surfaces to dry out (hopefully).

## MEN'S FIRST XI

Carmel's First XI is competing in Division Two of the North Wales Cricket League under the captaincy of Ben Sim. The team had played two games at the time

of writing, both of which ended in narrow defeats. The home fixture against Bangor Second XI (see photo) was a close game which saw the visitors post a score of 202 for 7 from their 40 overs. Carmel came close to winning the game but eventually finished their innings on 189 for 6. There were some notable batting performances in this game, including Chris Barry and Sohaib Khan who scored 84 and 70 respectively for the visitors, and Ryan Roberts (51 not out), Ben Sim (38) and Danny Owens (32) for Carmel.

## MEN'S SECOND XI

The Second XI is competing in Division Four of the North Wales Cricket league under the captaincy of Cameron Ackroyd. Carmel's first game at home to Dolgellau Second XI was cancelled due to the weather, and the team subsequently lost its next two fixtures. However, there were many positives to take from these games, including Cameron Ackroyd's bowling figures of 2 wickets for 14 runs against Hawarden Park Third XI and Jonathan Fisher's excellent score of 56 against Mynydd Isa and Maeshafn First XI. It is also very encouraging to see some of Carmel's younger players progressing through the ranks and playing for the Second XI. This bodes well for the future of the club.

## WOMEN'S AND GIRLS TEAM

It is fantastic to see Carmel Women's and Girls Team going from strength to strength following its establishment three years ago. This season the team is competing in the North Wales Women's Cricket League East Division alongside Buckley, Northop Hall, Mold, Pontblyddyn, Halkyn, Northop, Gwersyllt Park and St. Asaph. It is great to see new women's teams being established each year, and there is no doubt that this is largely due to the hard work of Rachel Warrenger, North Wales Women's and Girls Cricket Development Officer. Carmel's team is

being captained by Carol Owen this year and everyone is looking forward to starting the new season.

## 150 NOT OUT

Everyone at Carmel and District Cricket Club would like to congratulate the *Five Villages Chronicle* on reaching the fantastic milestone of 150 not out! The club has a very long association with the Five Villages, dating back many years when the late Peter Ferguson started sending in match reports and club news. We have always been grateful for the coverage given to the club, and like many others here in the Five Villages area, we really appreciate the efforts of everyone involved in producing such a high-quality community newspaper. Many thanks. Llauer o ddiolch.

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Action from the game between Carmel Firsts and Bangor Seconds at Pen-y-Gelli on 11th May

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*Dyma restr o'r gwasanaethau ar gyfer yr wythnosau nesaf:*  
Here is a list of services for the next few weeks:

### Mehefin / June:

23ain Y Parch. Huw Powell-Davies.  
30ain Maryl Rees.

### Gorffennaf / July:

7fed Y Parch. Ifor Jones  
14eg Y Parch. Huw Powell-Davies (Pererindod/ Pilgrimage)  
21ain I'w drefnu  
28ain Uno yn y Berthen - Arwel Roberts

### Awst / August:

4ydd Uno yn y Berthen - Parch. Robert Parry  
11eg I'w drefnu  
18fed I'w drefnu  
25ain Corey Hampton (Paned)

### Medi / September:

1af I'w drefnu  
8fed Y Parch Huw Powell-Davies (Cymun)  
15fed Debbie Roberts  
22ain Y Parch Huw. Powell-Davies  
29ain Y Parch. Trefor Lewis (Paned)

*Mae rhai o'n haelodau ffyddlon yn methu dod i'r gwasanaethau oherwydd afiechyd neu'n oeddrannus. Anfonwn ein cofion atynt i gyd.*

Some of our faithful members are unable to attend services because they are unwell or aged. Our best wishes to them all.

---

## RECIPES FOR SUMMER (Isabel Burnage)

### LEEK AND BACON FLAN

#### Ingredients:

8-10 oz shortcrust pastry, home made or bought  
2 large eggs  
2 lean rashers of bacon, chopped  
2 large leeks, finely chopped  
100ml single cream  
100ml milk

#### Method:

1. Heat oven to 200c/gas no.6
  2. Line flan dish with the pastry
  3. Saute the bacon until brown then add leeks and cook til soft
  4. Cool then put in pastry case
  5. Lightly whisk the eggs then add the cream and milk, then mix again, season with salt and pepper.
  6. Pour over the leeks and bacon
  7. Bake in centre of oven for about 30 mins until brown on top and set.
- Serve with a green salad and buttery new potatoes

### APPLE CAKE

#### Ingredients:

10 oz SR flour  
5 oz butter or marg  
5 oz brown sugar  
10-12 oz cooking apples, peeled and cut into small dice  
Milk to mix

#### Method:

1. Heat oven to 180c/gas no. 4
2. Rub the fat into the flour to resemble breadcrumbs
3. Add the sugar
4. Add the apple cubes
5. Mix altogether with the milk to make a fairly firm mixture.
6. Put into a greased ,fairly shallow tin and level surface.
7. Bake for about 30 minutes, test with skewer, until cooked
8. Turn out after 10 minutes onto plate
9. Serve warm with whipped cream

## NEW RELEASE FROM GINA ROSS



For 35 years, Gina, a professional singer living in Gorsedd put family first and put her own music dreams on hold. Now she's BACK!

Gina Ross feels blessed. At 63, she's overjoyed to release her first single in 35 years with a song she's written for her beautiful daughter Carmen.

Gina put her own music dreams on hold to care for her daughter and more recently, her husband who has been receiving treatment for an incurable cancer. She was touched when her daughter responded to the news of her new single release ...

"Mum it's your turn; go sing your songs!"



### NEW SINGLE: 'GO EASY'

Gina Ross's success has been defined by her ability to deliver a song. The power and range of her voice allows her to captivate and relate to audiences that have won her worldwide praise and approval.

So it seems only fitting that Gina's single release, 'Go Easy', should show off this powerhouse of a voice. Her new single, with its driving energy and anthem like chorus's, will have her audience totally engaged, with its positive, uplifting and life-affirming message. Be assured that her delivery is straight from her heart, straight to theirs!

This song was written in collaboration with platinum-award-winning songwriter and producer Martin Sutton. Martin has written hits for stars like Backstreet Boys, Sir Cliff Richard, Leanne Rimes and many more. This song was recorded as part of The Songwriting Academy's Ultimate Artist Release Program, where fifteen songs by fifteen different artists will be released all on the same day.

Find it on all streaming platforms including Spotify, Apple and Youtube.



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### DAVID CECIL EVANS (DEVS)

David passed away on the 30th April 2024 at his home in Pantasaph following a short period of illness. After a full life – David spent his remaining days with wife Patricia Anne and close family and friends.

David was the third child to Joan and Cecil Evans. Brother to Yvonne, Vincent and Chris – David was born and raised amongst the Holywell community - which he would later serve.

At a young age David became a qualified engineer – a career that would see him travel the world as a member of the Merchant Navy. While his career shifted, his passion for travel remained. Married to Patricia Anne in 1972 David went on to raise 2 children - Charlotte and Adam. On his return to dry land David continued as an engineer before joining North Wales Police in 1978.

As a serving officer David worked across Flintshire and Denbighshire finding himself based in many of our local towns and villages including Holywell, Mold, Mostyn and Rhyl. A man driven by values, and a sense of community – David went on to support and assist many. During his 24 year career David was recognised on a number of occasions for his service including saving two local boys that found themselves in difficulty.

Known by many as a regular in the Rock Inn, David also became an established quiz master at the Crown Inn in Lixwm, raising thousands of pounds for local charities.

David and Patricia spent their retirement together in the home they loved. They took time to indulge their passion for travel – including revisiting some of the places David first visited as a young Officer with the Merchant Navy. During their time together they became parents, Uncles, Aunts, and Grandparents.

Following his passing David was buried in Holywell Cemetery on 17 May, 2024.

On behalf of the family, Patricia would like to thank those that offered their condolences at this time.

Known by many – loved by all – David, Devs, Taid, Taity will be sadly missed.

### FIVE VILLAGES GARDENING CLUB

(Janet Tattum)

**MARCH 7TH**

Our first talk of 2024 was outstanding. Howard Drury gave us an illustrated talk on climbing plants and we were treated to stunning pictures of climbers in all colours and varieties from all around the world. The competition for three hellebores was won by Buddug Neale.

**APRIL 4TH**

Our April speaker, David Winnard, talked about edible and poisonous plants and fungi and surprised us all with what we could and could not eat. His suggestion that we let weeds, mainly dandelions, have the run of the garden was not well received! The competition for a vase of spring flowers was won by Buddug Neale.

**MAY 2ND**

We were so lucky with our visit to Dolhyfryd Garden in Denbigh. The weather was glorious and we were able to stroll around and explore this sprawling garden with its river running past lawns and flower beds, where we enjoyed tea and cake later. We were all slow to leave such a beautiful setting.

Meetings are held in Carmel Village Hall on the first Thursday of the month at 2.00 p.m. New members will always be made very welcome.



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## HANNAH BLYTHYN MS



This May saw many events across Wales to commemorate 25 years of devolution for our nation. Devolution symbolised a new chapter for the politics and the people of this country. With devolution has come greater autonomy and a stronger voice. Over a quarter of a century, Wales has led the way in so many ways, both in the UK and the wider world, and I am extremely proud that for eight of those 25 years I have had the privilege of serving the community that shaped me in the Welsh Parliament. It is something I could never have imagined when I was growing up here and I am absolutely committed to doing all I can to create the Wales we all want for the future.

Since my last Five Villages Chronicle column, I have started my street surgeries for 2024 and recently I was out in Talacre and Mostyn – my street surgeries always offer a good opportunity for me to reach out to different parts of the constituency

and for people to raise any issues with me from the comfort of their own homes. Over the coming weeks and months, I'm planning on doing other street surgeries across the constituency – this will be alongside my regular appointment advice sessions,



*Hannah Blythyn MS at Holywell Food Festival*

which you can book an appointment for by contacting my office on the details below.

Recently the Welsh Government announced a new scheme to support food and drink festivals and events across Wales – the small grant scheme aims to add value to the food industry in Wales and will go some way to encourage co-operation between Welsh hospitality and food and drink businesses to source more local food and drink. In May I attended the Holywell Food & Drink Festival and the local produce on show there was a really good reminder of how much excellent local food and drink is available and really showcased the best of our community. There are many regular events across Delyn which would benefit from this fund – helping our local hospitality industry and providing a boost for tourism and innovation in our area. You can find out more about the scheme at [www.businesswales.gov.wales/foodanddrink/growing-your-business/food-tourism-and-culture](http://www.businesswales.gov.wales/foodanddrink/growing-your-business/food-tourism-and-culture).

Last month I met with Sustrans to discuss the charity's new report on the

National Cycle Network, which runs up the Dee Estuary from Connah's Quay towards Holywell and then up to the coast. The report, entitled Walk, Wheel and Thrive, details the benefits of cycling and sets out the contribution of the National Cycle Network against all seven of Wales' wellbeing goals and highlights the urgent action needed to protect this important asset for future generations. The National Cycle Network includes more than 1,200 miles of cycle paths in Wales passing through every one of our local authority areas and it passes within a mile of almost 60% of the population, connecting many schools, universities and workplaces – making safe, healthy, low-cost travel to work, school or university a real possibility for many people. We had the chance to discuss further opportunities for investment in our area and plans to get out on the network later in the summer.

As many of you might already know, BT is planning to switch off its analogue phone system – known as the PSTN system – at the end of 2025. I know many Flintshire residents will be concerned by this big change in the way their landline phone works and there will be plenty of questions which will need to be answered. A good starting point is this article from Ofcom – [www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/future-of-landline-calls](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/future-of-landline-calls) – which details the requirements that phone companies have to fulfil as part of the switch-over to digital phone technology on landlines. I'll be keeping a close eye on this issue in the months ahead so if you want any help or if you have any questions, do reach out to my office for assistance – you can call 01352 753464 or email me at [hannah.blythyn@senedd.wales](mailto:hannah.blythyn@senedd.wales).

Finally, I have been reaching out to local businesses and companies across the constituency to see if they can offer

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work experience opportunities for 14 to 16 year-olds. With year 10 and year 11 students approaching their GCSEs and other qualifications, many will start to look ahead to what they want their career to be, others will want to start a part time job during their studies. This work follows on from the Democracy in Action Day that I hosted in autumn last year for secondary schools from across Flintshire – young people on the day raised access to decent work experience opportunities as something that they thought there could be more of. It's really important for young people to have the best start when entering the world of work, that's why I am looking for companies and businesses to offer quality work experience for young people. If you are or know a business where you could provide some work experience, please get in touch with my office.

As always, if you would like advice and/or support, please don't hesitate to get in touch on any of the following contact details – 52 High Street, Mold, Flintshire, on 01352 753464 or, if you prefer, by email [hannah.blythyn@senedd.wales](mailto:hannah.blythyn@senedd.wales). If you use social media, you can also keep up to date via my Facebook page – [www.facebook.com/HannahBlythynForDelyn](https://www.facebook.com/HannahBlythynForDelyn). Constituents are, of course, welcome to contact my office to arrange an appointment to see me, you don't need to wait until an advice surgery.

## GORSEDD CHURCH LADIES' GUILD



The Guild meeting in May was a little different. Members were confronted on arrival by the sight of a magnificent Honda Motorcycle called 'Carina' outside the Church. It was adorned with the logo of 'Blood Bikes Wales'.

The very interesting, illustrated talk was given by a senior representative of Blood Bikes Wales with the help of two other colleagues. All are unpaid volunteers who assist the NHS by transporting samples and supplies of blood, human milk, medical notes and other essential materials from hospitals to wherever they are needed. Blood Bikes are not part of the NHS and



are totally funded by donations. Their local base is on the site of Ysbyty Glan Clwyd. Their work was brought to life by the need for one of the colleagues to leave early to meet another motorcycle at Colwyn Bay and to transport a urgently needed blood sample to the Countess of Chester Hospital. Motorcycles are more usually a man's world and on this occasion a few husbands could not resist the desire to at least see and hear about this fascinating and vital service.

The Guild's meeting in June is a visit to the Llaeth y Llan dairy and yoghurt factory followed by a farm afternoon tea. The July meeting is a lunch at Caffi Cariad in St Asaph.

New members are always welcome, we meet on the first Wednesday of the month at Gorsedd Church.



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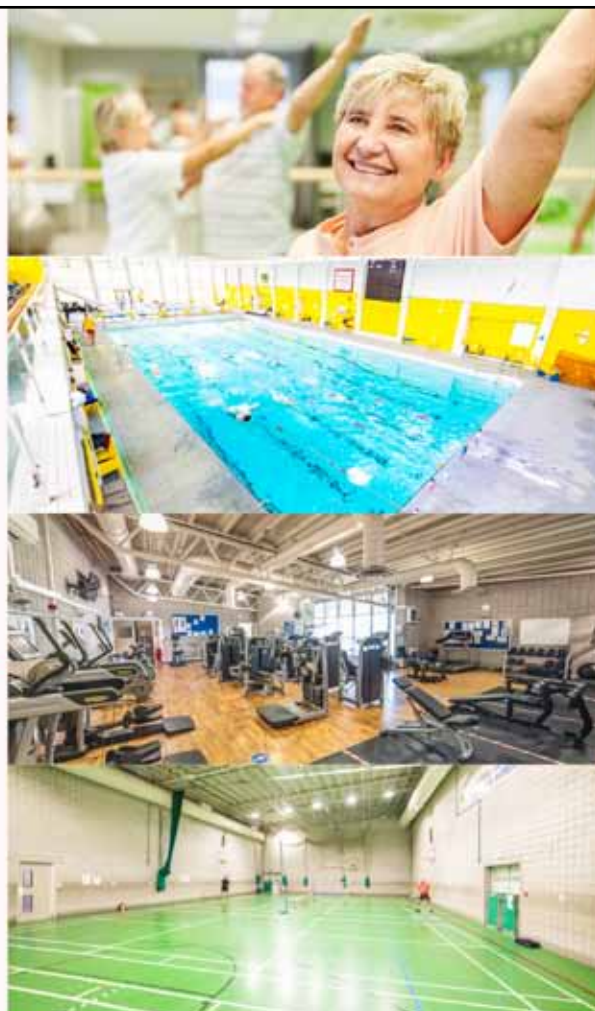
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## BLOSSOMISE (Norman Closs-Parry)

Saturday, April 20th was just an ordinary Saturday - which turned out special for me.

I must say that it was the first full spring feeling day in terms of weather and the great awakening outdoors!

I was in St Paul's Church by 10.00am - it was the first of my split person act - spend some time with friends over a cup of coffee and superb scones - then away for phase two in the special day in the Greenfield Valley - "Coal and Cockles" day.

I was delighted when my old colleague from Holywell High school teaching days joined me - Peter Erasmus. I don't see so much of him now that he has moved to Caerwys but am still an admirer of his efforts rejuvenating the church and guiding the Five Villages. It was he who reminded me that this issue is special (150) What an achievement and a newspaper which has grown in influence and standard from issue to issue!

But we two octogenarians did not talk about village papers - we got straight in - 'Do you see anything of...now? Is ....still with us? Do you remember when...? Do I indeed - who could not but? and our Druid Cross and Mr Jarvis' house over there. With the Wrexham Football Club successes of late - I wonder how many caps he would have lost? He was a great fan! He was a fine head and no denying it!

More and more came in, it is a growing

popular event no doubt - everybody seems to pull together for the sake of the 'cause'...

Walking to and from the church, I could not, by glancing at the headstones - forget people and events whom I knew between 1960 and now - good solid country folk, their word their bond...wonderfully led by the pastor - John Somerfield and his good lady - oh I must not forget the little Jack Russell! - do you remember? Maybe John was not a Spurgeon - but what a priest!

The colour and the name and the creed don't matter - that was Rev John...

'Then over there' I could go on and on - and Greenfield was calling!

Not just Greenfield - of late my hearing has become somewhat dull - my family call it selective hearing - what me?! Never!...On the way to the car from church I distinctly heard two different warblers...the chiff-chaff (easy to recognise) and from deep in a garden the marvellous willow warbler.

There was a bit of congestion on the cross - there was a lot of Druid traffic as well - another addition to the five villages but full of ghosts - yes the 1980's! Moi Parri [everyone knows Moi] had an idea - let's form a bardic gathering - bards - druids and beers! It was a terrific success. Bob the Druids supported us and supplied half time sandwiches in The Snug [fireplace now] when the poets read their efforts! We had an adjudicator and a small winners chair to be returned in six weeks' time. I was fortunate enough to win one week with a

lyric paraphrasing Ceiriog's famous poem 'Mab y Mynydd'. I was big headed enough to send it to the Faner - bardic column and low and behold it was published prominently! Actually, eventually it found its way to a GCE Welsh Lit exam paper in a couple of years for the examinees to analyse and discuss! Think of it - it had gone national! Well, the end of this story for me is that I read the examiner's report that year. I just could not believe it!... The set question was 'Where do you think the poet was when he wrote the longing lyric? Nearly 100% of them had placed me on top of a mountain with a flock of sheep and a couple of sheep dogs look up from the valley below! Now -you know that it was in the snug in The Druid at Gorsedd where a dozen or so Welsh Rhymers met to enjoy their pie and pints!

"Time passes- listen time passes..."

Dylan Thomas U.M.V

I rushed down to Greenfield Heritage Park. I missed the first lecture in an excellent cultural environmental day arranged and supported by the Curious Travellers 2 project based at Aberystwyth University and Glasgow University jointly led by Professor Marie Ann Constentine and Nigel Leac. The exhibition itself is well worth visiting (it runs until the end of July).

If you are lucky and you call and see the excellent displays - you will be able to get a new booklet about the area, its history

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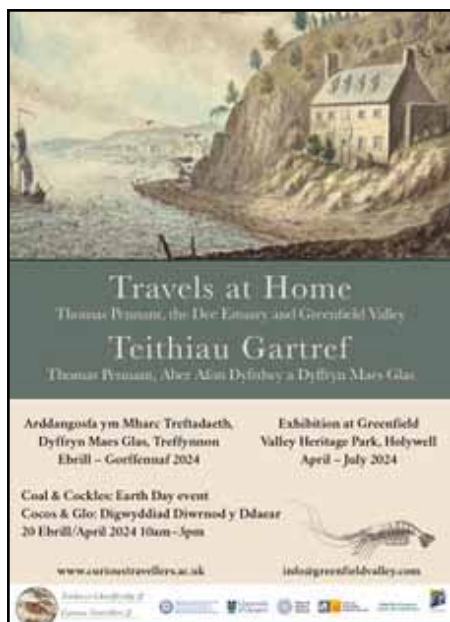
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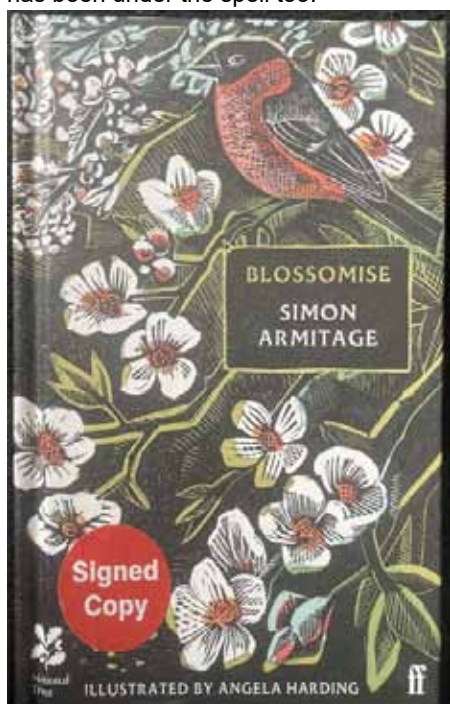
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and natural history produced by the Curious Travellers 2 project. The essay content is excellent and the old Ingleby and Moses Griffiths watercolours of the present sites as they were in the 1700's very educating in themselves. Do you recognise Pen y Ro? What about Llety Gonest?

The sun came out strong, the warblers sang, nature shouted Spring! Dr Eiddwen, Glyn, Alun and myself played truant. We went out and sat in the sun and 'cherry' display- It so happened that Simon Armitage, the Poet Laureate, had brought out a thin volume of Spring poems for the National Trust the same week - I'm a poetic bibliophile!! The volume is excellently and hauntingly illustrated by Angela Harding. What a title! Blossomise easy to understand this year "Loveliest of trees the cherry now" Houseman - but it is splendidous, incredible, soul spirit touching...Armitage has been under the spell too.



I half listened to my colleagues, but my emotional half was with some haikus

[Japanese short poems] that had been included for the volume - maybe for this special occasion, for...me...

The streets are learning  
the language of plum blossom,  
The trees have spoken.

The bees buy and sell.  
It's market day on Plum Street,  
Pollen changes hands.

Ignite the beacons,  
News of the blackthorne's return  
Shuttles hill to hill.

Constellations bloom  
in orchards of April skies.  
The stars blossomise.

'April 20 '2024 - ordinary Spring  
Saturday - no April 20 2024 - covered me  
in petal snow. NCP.

Before April 21st 2024 I had had a  
stupid fall in the house which has restricted  
my movements this Springtide...however  
I have had solace in my books. I have re  
read 'A Shropshire Lad', A E Houseman  
very often...I give to the 5 Villages the final  
lyric of this tremendous Ode...

LXIII

I hoed and trenched and weeded,  
And took the flowers to fair:  
I brought them home unheaded:  
The hue was not the wear.

So up and down I saw them  
For lads like me to find,  
When I shall lie below them,  
A dead man out of mind.

Some seed the bird devour,  
And some the season mars,  
But here and there will flower  
The solitary stars,

And fields will yearly bear them  
As light-leaved spring comes on,  
And kickless lads will wear them  
When I am dead and gone.

And so ends one of the great ones in  
the English language written by a Latin  
Professor at Oxford but his thoughts were  
in Ludlow town and the Borders.

Here drinks to the next 150!

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## COUNCILLOR CHRIS DOLPHIN

Hello everyone, Sut mae pethau:

Issue 150, binding a community together, it's just so good. I started writing in this chronicle as councillor in 2004, issue 71, I still have my copy. The article included Speed on the A5026; it was 60 mph then), Carmel Village Hall, planning, bollards, and school bus stop at Crown Estate, Lloc, road resurfacing in the Saithffynnon area, and how to bring Carmel Play Area up to an acceptable standard.

Just let me indulge a little more in some memories from issue 71 - adverts for, Caerwys Golf Club; Black Lion Inn and restaurant in Babel; The Halfway House, Carmel; The Rock Inn, Lloc; The Calcot Arms, Halkyn Road, Holywell; The Llyn y Mawn Inn, Brynford; and on page 27 The Druid Inn with a new menu and wine list, bar, and snack menu too. Thankfully the Druid lives on and thrives. Articles included, Carmel Cricket Club from "our man" on Carmel Hill; Summer in 2004 weather report from "our man" on Carmel Road; the MP now Sir David Hanson; Eileen and Barry of Pantasaph known to many had both written articles; a memorable visit to Normandy with Paul "our man" in Crecas Lane; the AM Sandy Mewies then resident in Pantasaph; Bernie Rogers had written again (a pseudonym for "our" Gorsedd man) and Isabel wrote about the Gardening Club and gave us some recipes too; Carmel Bowling Club had an article from its secretary Brenda; Bob the Builder wrote in; "I will Arise" on page 31 wrote Norman Closs-Parry (it was about W B Yeats); Terry Ireland wrote the Editorial. The Chairman in this summer of 2004 was Peter Erasmus, and he is now too. Binding a community together, literally priceless.

### COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM:

The Council first introduced a local premium scheme in 2017 and premium

rates of 75% are currently charged for long term empty properties and 100% for second homes. The latest analysis of properties shows a total of 786 properties are currently subject to the premium charge, consisting of 616 long term empty properties and 170 second homes. This equates to 1.1% of all domestic properties in Flintshire being liable for the charge. The consultation opened on April 16th for twelve weeks and closes on 8th July 2024. Further information and online questionnaire are available at; [www.flintshire.gov.uk/CouncilTaxPremium](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/CouncilTaxPremium)

### SINGLE PERSON DISCOUNT:

A review is taking place concerning council taxpayers who receive a 25% reduction on their bill as single occupants. In appropriate cases residents may receive a new form to update. At present and surprisingly one in three households claim single person discount. The Council will be working in partnership with Datatank Ltd a specialist provider in this type of review. Further information is available at; [www.flintshire.gov.uk/spd24](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/spd24)

### CLIMATE CHANGE:

The county council website has a great deal of news and information regarding the council and climate change, and reducing the county council carbon footprint is a real priority. The background: Councillors in 2019 approved a motion to develop a clear Climate Change Strategy which will set key aims and actions for creating a Net Zero Carbon organisation. During 2020/21 identified accomplishments and proposals for future ideas were explored.

Welsh Government had already set Net Zero Carbon Status by 2030, very challenging. Reductions in emissions can only come about through partnership and focus has been on how to reduce both the council's own emissions and those of the wider county. The local authorities own direct emissions only make up 2% of the

area's emissions, however, the authority has influence over 33% of local emissions due to its influence as an employer, social landlord, and buyer of goods and services etc.

Latest examples of ongoing work include the following - Over the next 2 financial years, Flintshire has committed to a £1.5million investment in a UK introduced scheme Re:fit programme. This programme is an initiative for public bodies to implement measures to improve energy efficiency. The aim is to introduce measures such as insulation, low energy lighting, upgraded heating systems etc which does help to boost local investment and reduce the councils overall CO2 emissions.

Many new actions are being developed and implemented. Even the new county Facebook page is part of the councils push to put information out to residents in a greener way. During April, Schools, Town, and Community councils have received support in reducing their emissions through the launch of a toolkit to measure and understand their own carbon emissions while also engaging learners and local communities. The toolkit launched online, [climatechange@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@flintshire.gov.uk)

Further work includes - achieving a tree canopy cover of 18% by 2033, Flintshire have spent the last year working locally with schools, communities, and local councils to identify and agree a few urban sites for tree planting. Throughout the tree planting season between December 2023 – March 2024 we have planted 126 standard trees, 130 maiden trees and 4,168 whips across the county on 28 different sites.

### CARMEL BANKS A5026:

The wildflower banks area adjacent the A5026 in Carmel have not fully flowered this year, and there are reasons. Unfortunately



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the Streetscene department have not given the site the correct management as prescribed by biodiversity staff.

There will now be an early cut this summer. There will also be regular monitoring, and as I write Red Campion has flowered however the banks are far too grassy. Another full cut will be in February/March 2025 this then should support a reduction in grass. I am assured this particular site will have priority going forward. I am informed by the experts in biodiversity/ecology, the right management will support an increase in wildflower diversity. The final judgement will be next summer, it will then have enhancements in 2025.

#### CARMEL SCHOOL FIELD:

Reopening up the northern end of the school field has been an objective ever since it was closed off. A few years ago, the Community Council had applied for a lease to have the area as an open green space for the community with the support of the County Council, however, were unable to proceed with full co-operation. Soon the pedestrian gate at the bottom end of the public footpath will remain open, I am lobbying to have the fencing removed. A new fence will be erected at the top of the banks and hedging will also be planted at the appropriate time of year. There will be improvements to the public footpath entrances/exits for walkers. Wildflower planting will take place on some of the green space and a path will be featured, which will be in keeping with the space.

#### 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](mailto:chris_dolphin@hotmail.co.uk) or write to me at 11 Ffordd Aelwyd, Carmel, CH8 8SH.

#### CYNGOR CYNGHORYDD:

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

#### AWARD

Ruth Davies of Babel was awarded a prestigious community award on Wednesday March 20th. She was given a certificate by the High Sheriff of Clwyd, Kate Louise Hill-Trevor.

Ruth has been involved with Guides for 38 years and was involved with District Guiding over the last five years.

The Guides group are accepting new members, for their Wednesday meetings during term time at 6.00-7.15 in Carmel Village Hall. Details on [go.girlguiding.org.uk](http://go.girlguiding.org.uk) Anyone interested in volunteering as a leader is also welcome.



1st Carmel Guides and Rainbows leaders. Izzy LaFlamme-Williams, Nia Griffiths, Ruth Davies, Kate Hill-Trevor, Sharon Lloyd and Susanne Hughes



Ruth with Kate Hill-Trevor, High Sheriff of Clwyd

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## NEWS FROM GORSEDD AND WHITFORD CHURCHES



**(Rev Kathryn)**

Another year has flown by and it's time to write our article for the summer magazine. As I write this (mid-May), we have just had a glimpse of some better weather, with some beautiful days, and of course, lots of 'liquid sunshine' as my husband puts it! Many of us will have noticed the increasing changes in our weather patterns over the years, with all seasons feeling very different to when I was a child – winters are warmer and wetter, and summers are – well still wet and with a fair bit of wind too! But this brings the occasional pleasant surprise – many of you will have been blessed to see the aurora borealis that was over North Wales last weekend. My neighbours took some gorgeous photographs of the stunning colours and patterns in the sky, and social media has been flooded with many truly outstanding glimpses of this rare phenomena. The beauty of the natural world is amazing, awe-inspiring and several people have said how emotional it was to see something so beautiful and so unexpected in our skies (especially as some of my friends have been 'chasing' the Northern lights for ages, only to discover them right over their homes (see photo in Northern Lights article). Unfortunately, I was at a conference in Derbyshire so missed the spectacle completely but it was a wonderful reminder to remain alert, keep watch and be reminded that there truly are wonderful things to celebrate right on our doorsteps.

Our churches are no exception for interesting things happening. By the time you read this, Whitford church will have had its afternoon with Thomas Pennant and the Hawarden Singers, and I should like to thank everyone who made this event possible and all who supported us on the day. As we approach the tri-centennial anniversary of the birth of Thomas Pennant, I hope there will be many more opportunities to learn more about this unique local man whose interest in the natural world, and writings are still a source of information today. I can imagine that his Tour of Wales was an early travel guide and introduction to our beautiful country – do keep your eyes open for future events and occasions.

Over in Gorsedd, our monthly 'Catch

## GRUFFYDD OWEN JONES

It is with sadness that we announce the death of Dr Gruffydd Owen Jones, Gruff to his friends. He was a lovely and generous person and his death will be a huge loss in Holywell. A very caring doctor and his patients thought the world of him. He was an example of a doctor going the extra mile to ensure that his patients had the very best of care. All who knew him have memories of a true and loyal friend, remembered with pride. Our deepest sympathies are with his wife Dr Gwenan and the children Elin, Mari and Sara and all his grandchildren. He thought the world of them. For them it is the biggest loss. This is Elin's tribute on behalf of the family.

On 5th March 2024, Dr Gruffydd Owen Jones of Cilan, Gorsedd passed away, leaving his wife, Dr Gwenan Meirion Jones, their daughters, Elin, Mari and Sara, and ten grandchildren.



Gruff was a well-known figure in the area as a GP for over 30 years at Pendre Surgery, Holywell. He was also a governor at Ysgol Gwenffrwd and a member of Y Cylch Cinio and of the Flint and Holywell Rotary Club.

Gruff was raised in Carmel near Caernarfon. His father Tom was Liverpool Welsh and he and his wife Elizabeth Blodwen ran a builders' merchant business. His late brother Arfon taught at Ysgol Morgan Llwyd, Wrexham. Gruff attended Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle, Penygroes and went on to study medicine in Liverpool, where he and Gwenan met.

After they married at Capel Tegid, y Bala, they moved to Bermuda where Gruff was appointed to the staff at King Edward VII Hospital in Hamilton and Elin, their eldest daughter, was born.

They returned home to Wales and worked briefly in Llangollen and

Prestatyn, before settling in Holywell, where Mari and Sara were born. With Gruff at Pendref and Gwenan at Bodowen surgery, between them they had a deep knowledge of their community and served patients and their families for many decades. Among Gruff's longest standing colleagues was his secretary, Mrs Betty Marsden.

In 2011 Gruff was honoured by the Welsh Government for his contribution to the Health Service at a special ceremony at Castell Rhuthun with the First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, and the Minister for Health, Lesley Griffiths. He was one of the founder members of the Gymdeithas Feddygol Gymraeg (Welsh Medical Society), when it was established in the early 1970s. At this same time Gruff was also among the first GP Trainers in north Wales. He served as Medical Secretary of the Local Medical Committee, represented GPs on health boards and represented Wales on the British Medical Association. He was one of the founding members of the Welsh General Practitioners Committee, where tributes were paid to him at the annual conference in March.

Gruff and Gwenan travelled widely and visited many parts of the world. In his spare time, Gruff enjoyed walking, skiing, gardening and spending time with family and friends.

His funeral service, conducted by the Reverend Casi M. Jones, was held at Bangor Crematorium on 23 March and was attended by family, friends and colleagues. Tributes were paid by his daughter Elin, Dr Phil White and Dr Wil Roberts.

up and chats' continue on the 3rd Saturday of each month. On 15th June, our usual coffee morning will be exchanged for our Summer Fete (from 11am – 2pm), do come along and enjoy all that we have on offer. The Artisan Fayre was very popular last Autumn, and so we will host that again this year on 19th October.

These events, together with all the many other groups that meet across our locality are real cause for celebration and

giving thanks – thanks for our beautiful landscape, thanks for our wonderful people and thanks for the community in which we are placed. Since the last magazine was published, the Druid Inn has re-opened, so if you are visiting the pub for Sunday lunch (which I'm told is excellent), you are most welcome to join us at one of our services first - Gorsedd church 9:30am or Whitford at 11am (alternate Sundays) – we'd love to see you, do pop in and visit 😊.



## 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 Editor

Much to my surprise Peter (Erasmus) has asked me for some notes. Where has time gone? 150 editions and more than 30 years of the Five Villages, it is amazing and what a wonderful use you have all made of that time.

When I was elected for the second time as Chairman of Whitford Community Council, I came home and said to my husband, that the sense of community was disappearing because there were so many new people coming to live in the area, and they needed to be able to feel part of the community. Saithaelwydd Hall had been taken down after Nigel Birch had moved and Clifford Ogle had built an estate on the land, and this brought many new people into the area.

There is much history in this area, and I felt people should know about it and everyone who lived within it. I put the idea to people like Bob Brown, Bob Williams and Terry Ireland and held a meeting in our house. The resulting magazine was called the Five Villages as this was the size of the area covered by the council, and so the name fitted. As the chairman, I donated my allowance to start the fund to create the Five Villages, which has gone from strength to strength over the years.

You have no idea how proud and pleased I am to still be able to enjoy this wonderful magazine, full of great articles and useful adverts. More than anything I hope the contributions keep coming. To everyone who works for and with the editors, printers, distributors etc. very sincere thanks for making an idea of 30+ years ago something worth doing for all who live or have lived in the area. Congratulations and good luck for the next 150 editions.

From the lady who started it all.

## BORE DA

I would like the opportunity to teach Welsh to a group of learners at Carmel Village Hall.

My name is Irfon Williams and I live on a farm in St Asaph with my wife Olga and 6 year old daughter Elan. I used to work in Primary Schools and for several years taught Welsh in High School.

I also taught Welsh to Adults at Llandrillo College but since our daughter Elan was born decided it would be easier to arrange my own classes.

At the moment, I teach Welsh to classes in Rowen, Conwy. I would like to arrange

new classes at various locations in the weeks / months ahead.

I am able to teach either Tuesday or Friday at a time which is most convenient for you and the learners.

Also, any individual or couple with interest in learning Welsh and would like more info are welcome to email or message me - 07780994512.

Diolch  
Irfon

## CONGRATULATIONS!



Congratulations to Georgia May Davies of Ffordd Aelwyd, Carmel who recently graduated from The University of Chester with Master of Science in Sociology of Sport and Exercise with Distinction.

We wish Georgia every success for her future career. (Paula Davies)

## EVERY MORNING (Jonathan Pryce)

Every morning, with her hand in mine I walked my small daughter to school. And every morning we saw an older lady with permed greying hair, pale spectacles wearing a mac, or in colder weather a light overcoat buttoned to the neck, and with her handbag in her right hand, seeming to lead the way.

Every morning she glanced up as I said a hello which she acknowledged with a nod and a small non-committal smile.

One morning my daughter squeezed my hand and asked if I knew the lady. I told her I didn't. But you said hello to her. Why if you don't know her?

Because, I told her, where I grew up in Wales that's what you did. You said hello or half smiled or nodded by way of greeting in passing. It was a way of saying we share the same small patch of earth. We share a small collection of houses, bungalows, streets, fields and gardens.

We shared a village.

Since leaving Carmel, either by design or coincidence I've nearly always lived in a village in north London. Hampstead is a village. As is Primrose Hill. As is Highgate.

Highgate, the village where our children grew up and went to school was once an outpost of the city. Not many miles from the centre it was once regarded as countryside with fields and farms and sheep.

The house we lived in was originally described as a bijou country cottage. Built in 1750 it was enlarged into a house by the Victorians. We lived in the same street for over 20 years and like almost every street in London it was a mix of all humanity, the outgoing and the introverted. Young families and ageing grandparents. The scandalous and the mundane.

However, I like to think I brought some of my Welsh village ways to our street.

Ways learnt from my father, Ike Price - a generous and warm-hearted man who was ready to talk and listen to anyone and everyone - getting to know about their lives - their sorrow and their happiness. Ways I learnt from my mother Maggie who, every Sunday would make an extra lunch for our elderly neighbour Mrs Harper.

And in our street in London, we did the same. All of us looking out for young and old alike.

A village.

We now live in east London in one of the oldest inhabited streets in the city. Built in 1720 the front doors open straight onto the street. The houses opposite do the same. There's no hiding from your neighbours! But these are people you wouldn't want to hide from.

Some have lived here for 40 years when the houses, which had become very run down were saved from demolition by brave young warriors who occupied the buildings as the wrecking ball was poised outside.

Some are newcomers. Some are passing through. But the sense of community is palpable.

We really do look out for each other. We share the joys and the sorrows. The births and the bereavements.

Like most communities covid was an extra unifying moment. We shopped for each other. And we cooked and baked bread for each other (and of course, having a Michelin star chef as your neighbour certainly helped!)

We have a famous pub on the corner with an amazing landlady who makes everyone welcome. And with little or no excuse we will have a street party where the whole neighbourhood is invited.

A village has been created - the fifth one I've lived in (the sixth if you count the west village in New York where I lived for a while in the 70s when I was working there!)

And the old lady on the way to school?

One day we didn't see her. Nor the day after. We never saw her again.

I like to think she was enjoying her retirement. Drinking tea in her garden and not having to make the daily tube journey to work.

Or maybe she had found a different route to the station in order to avoid this strange man who insisted on saying hello to her!

Who knows!

## BLAST FROM THE PAST (GERAINT ROBERTS)

Isn't it ironic that the annually awarded 'Peace Prize' is named after Alfred Nobel who is famous for inventing dynamite! At one time he actually owned 90 armaments factories. The story, however, is a little more complicated than that, and worth recounting.

When Alfred Nobel's brother died in 1888, because of a misunderstanding in the press, it was actually reported that it was Alfred himself who had died. When he read the newspaper reports referring to him as a "trader in death" he was both shocked and disappointed. His conscience must also have taken a bruising because soon after he changed his will, leaving his amassed fortune to establish five annual monetary awards to pioneers in the fields of Literature, Physiology, Chemistry, Physics and of course Peace! And that is how the 'trader in death' is forever linked with the 'Nobel Peace Prize'!

Anyway, having set a little background I shall describe two trips I made in the last few days before the covid lockdown looking into a shocking incident which literally rocked Eryri.

Up to the mid 1850s most of the quarries in North Wales had been using 'black powder' (gunpowder) to bring down buttresses of workable slate and rock. At this time however a powerful new explosive became available – Nitro Glycerine. This was ten times more powerful than gunpowder and much cheaper, it came in liquid form but was so unstable that a combination of heat and rough handling could be enough to set it off, this resulted in several fatal accidents countrywide.

In 1867 Nobel succeeded in stabilising the compound into a solid form which was far safer to handle; he called it 'Dynamite'! Unfortunately for five people and the little hamlet of Cwm y Glo in North Wales, in 1869 the Llanberis quarries were still experimenting with Nitro Glycerine despite dynamite being readily available.



*One of the Llanberis quarries*

On Sunday, June 27th five tons of Nitro Glycerine were unloaded off a ship called the 'Heroine' and safely stored in a purposely adapted building on a remote Anglesey shore. It had been wisely decreed that no explosives of that quantity could enter the dock at Caernarfon. The building at Abermenai Point is about as far from civilisation as it is possible to get and when

the explosives were needed, they would be rowed across the Menai in sensible quantities and carted up to the quarries.

On the morning of June 30th five such loads were assembled for the trip up to Llanberis. Two of the carters, David Roberts and Ifan Jones set off together, each walking and leading his horse and cart; each cart carried a ton of explosives! The Nitro-Glycerine had been well packed inside wooden crates and packed with sawdust with the crates themselves further packed with straw. It was a hot day and after the six mile walk from Caernarfon, they stopped for a drink in Cwm y Glo, tethering their horses outside both the 'Blue Bell' and



*The old 'Alexandria'*

the 'Alexandria'; ('health and safety' 1869 style!) Eyewitnesses later claim the two men were seen walking together beside the first horse with the second horse and cart tamely following behind. And then, at 5:45 at a place known as 'Wastad Llwyncoed' just outside the hamlet of Cwm y Glo a massive explosion took place which damaged several buildings including the railway station and the Snowdonia Inn, (then known as the Railway Inn), blew out almost every window within 400 yards, and tragically killed five people. Even in the sub-context of military detonations with troop training during the second world war and the frequent quarry blasts in the area, it was by far the greatest single explosion to occur in Eryri. Both carters and the horses were blown to smithereens, two children and a passer-by were also killed, and eight others injured. Pieces of wood, flesh and glass were blown more than half a mile away and a huge double-crater was formed on the old track by a small bridge still known today as 'Pont Powdr Oel', (Oil Powder bridge). The sound of the explosion was reportedly heard as far away as Holyhead.



*Site of explosion (Pont Power Oel)*

Several opinions and theories were put forward as to the cause of the accident.

A possibility was raised that one of the glass containers was leaking, it was even suggested the load had been tampered with whilst the two men were slaking their thirsts. Another theory was that the following horse had been spooked, possibly by a horsefly, and without the carter holding its halter it had jerked and attempted to bolt forward. The inquest failed to find the answer but did significantly refer to the hot sun as a contributory factor.

A couple of days following the explosion pieces of one of the cartwheels and a strip of horse harness were found half a mile away by the side of a mountain track between Llanberis and Llanrug. Someone scratched a cross on a stone in the wall nearby.

I personally believe its location to be a significant and possible clue to what may have happened, and the first of my two trips was to cycle to try to find the cross on the stone. I should perhaps explain that over the years it has become traditional for locals walking past to further scratch the cross with a nearby stone thus perpetuating both the memory of the event and the actual cross; so it was hoped that finding it would not prove to be too difficult.

Having parked up by the side of Llyn Padarn in the shadow of 'Craig yr Undeb' (rock of the union) where the early meetings which formed the quarryman's union took place, I set off westwards.

I soon crossed the A4244 and down a little track for about a hundred yards to where a sluggish little stream percolates its way through wetland. This used to be the main road in 1869. The little bridge is still known as 'Pont Powdr Oel', and it is here that awful explosion took place. The patch itself betrays nothing physical of the massive blast which lasted a milli-second, but the shadows of overhanging willows and the small peaty stream gurgling through the rushes below creates a sombre atmosphere, perhaps befitting the spot where five people and two



*The poorly sited plaque*



horses died. I took a couple of photos and reflected on the tragedy before moving on past the 'Snowdonia Inn' (now known as the 'Fricsen') to find the memorial to the incident erected a few decades ago.

One had to know of its existence to find it, located as it is high up on a rock on the south side of the A4086. It seemed a strange siting two hundred yards away from where the accident happened, an add-on; detached and incongruous; surely it should have been on the little bridge itself.



*Site of blast from scratched cross, down in the valley*

I cycled on to the village to find the two taverns where the carters enjoyed their last drinks. The 'Alexandria' is now a private house (as many of our pubs are rapidly becoming). The 'Blue Bell' too had ceased to trade since many years and had been demolished to build a garage which had itself been closed for apparently quite some time.

The next stage of the trip would involve some toil and much grunting as I tackled the steep hill which began by the 'Alexandria' and the old chapel where the inquest on the explosion had been held. I eventually climbed up through the 'Bwlch' and past Bryn Bras castle to eventually reach the top road from Llanrug to Llanberis. Along here I hoped to find the scratched 'cross' and test my personal theory as to what may have happened.



*The 'cross'*

The stone was easily located in the wall near Gallt y celyn cottage; it even had a smaller stone nearby which was obviously and frequently used to scratch the cross. I turned and looked down towards the Pont Powdr Oel track which was a good half a mile away and realised Gallt y Celyn was at right angles to the track! For the explosion to have hurled a piece of horse and its harness here surely the horse would have had to have been on this side of the blast

and not in front or behind the exploding cart? Could it be that the following horse bolted and hit a wall or overturned as it drew level with the front horse and the co-walking carters? Apart from the ground itself there were no confinements to channel the explosion so the blast would have erupted in a classic dome shape. So, if the horses were walking behind one another as they were when they were last seen they would have been blown backwards towards Cwm y Glo or forwards towards the lake (Llyn Padarn), depending which cart exploded first. However, if the back horse was attempting to bolt past the leading horse on such a narrow track, it would certainly have come to grief and would thus explain how such specific pieces were blown to Gallt y Celyn. It was a macabre theory and over a century and a half on, academic.

My way back to the car entailed a long and enjoyable descent into Llanberis where I forced a coffee and cake upon myself before following the lake-side path and short tunnel running along the bed of the old railway track back to Craig yr Undeb. Whilst cycling and randomly thinking about that fateful day six generations ago I couldn't help reflecting how small, seemingly inconsequential decisions occasionally had tragic consequences. If the two carters had continued walking the final mile and a half or so each leading his own horse instead of walking together this tragic accident may never have happened; but we will never know. The three other carts were impounded by the authorities whilst the investigation took place but were eventually delivered to the explosive stores owned by Webb and Co. sited outside Llanberis, the company who supplied the quarries. The incident served as a catalyst which brought a nation-wide ban on the use of Nitro-Glycerine in industry paving the way for Nobel's dynamite and later gelnite as the 'go to' explosives.

Having heard the rumour of a possible covid lockdown and having looked on the map to find the explosive store at Aber Menai Point I decided to embark on what was to be the last trip I, and everyone else in the country would enjoy for months whilst we were confined to an hour's exercise a day to and from our front door!

The walk down to Llanddwyn beach from the little car park whose slate surround has been decorated by the local school children is about a mile and a half. It's a pleasant path, along the edge of the pine forest, sandy with coarse grass and the occasional root trying to trip the unwary. A few ramblers emerged out of the trees using some of the many paths and we exchanged pleasant greetings.

I could hear the surf and smell the subtle tang of salt and rotting seaweed long before I reached the beach and as I climbed the last sand dune to see the breaking waves I emerged into the full face of the prevailing wind. Millions of sand grains

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were snaking their way to form baby sand dunes and the sound of breaking waves all but drowned the souging conversation between the growing gale and the nearby treetops. Screeching gulls wheeled through the sky and a couple of oyster catchers padded along the wet sand where the spent waves left quivering foam and the odd morsel. It was a magical arrival to such an enchanting spot and I selfishly thanked fate for providing Llanddwyn island, its long sandy beach and a massive car park much further west to absorb the many hundreds of other visitors and leave this, the eastern section all but deserted for me. I turned left and set off along solid sand for what would be a two-mile walk. Three other sets of footprints had also been going my way and in the far distance I could see them with a dog.



*Telephoto view of the hut from across the Strait*

Soon I had to play 'dare' with the encroaching froth of broken waves to stay on firm sand, or plough through soft drier sand further up the beach which left saucers instead of footprints. Out in the bay hundreds of white stallions were demonically dancing on Caernarfon Bar to the wild tune of the increasing south westerly, I shuddered when I imagined being out there in a sailboat on such a day!

The tide was coming in and would soon cover the rippled sand which fancifully looked like a giant musical score utilising the odd cockleshell as notes!

The occasional piece of red jasper could be seen waiting to be washed by the waves and several pieces of driftwood lay amongst the black line of seaweed which showed the last high tide. The occasional rainbow coloured orb was blown up the beach from the froth and spume of breaking waves, their movements nervous and spasmodic. Mermaid's purses and the polystyrene-like dogfish egg cases were amongst many seaside features I also recognised. I was walking between the sea and a range of sand dunes and with only the owners of the footprints who were by now on their way back I was enjoying the illusion of being totally alone. Soon we met, greeted and then I was genuinely alone.

Every so often the beach changed, and I had to clamber over polished round boulders or climb up a storm ridge as I slowly made my way along. At one point a

small lagoon of brackish water had formed behind a dam of boulders built over years by storm driven dumping waves; there was enough driftwood there to keep my log burner going for two winters!

It was probably an hour before I realised I was near to my destination. I left the beach and climbed up through the mixture of marram grass and low sand dunes which levelled out to form Aber Menai Point, the furthest south you can go on Ynys Mon. I could immediately see the little building, roofless and forlorn with a tree growing out of its shell about a hundred yards away. The coast of the Gwynedd mainland was only a further four hundred yards across the strong current of the Menai Strait. With my binoculars I could clearly see the old cannons of Fort Belan still pointing out to sea and still redundantly countering the Napoleonic threat of over two centuries ago.



*The old explosives storehouse with Caernarfon in the distance*

Inside the old storehouse, clambering over the roof rubble one corner still had some timber which indicated some sort of storage facility, but in reality there was little to see which would betray its one time use. I made a cup of coffee with my little stove and ate my sandwiches (which actually did have the gritty presence of sand).

And so, this was where the Nitro Glycerine which almost destroyed a small community and devastated five families began its journey. It was hard to envisage such an innocuous building having shelves of wooden crates packed with straw containing glass containers which contained such a deadly liquid. It was also hard to imagine the voyage across the Menai in a rowing boat with such a dangerous cargo! In reality coming to Aber Menai had been more about the journey than what was left to see.

By now the tide was in and only the 'hook' of Aber Menai was above water for me to explore. High tide certainly magnifies the feeling of isolation on this lonely peninsula of marram grass and sand where the currents of the Menai Strait have over years shaped it into a hook pointing to the east. There were several bits of plastic, wood, flip flop and the odd lighter washed up among the small dunes; but the strangest item was a golf ball. I conjectured perhaps it may have been hit across from



*Washed up boat*

Fort Belan? Even with a southerly wind it would have been some drive! There was also a wrecked rowing boat, which, with a little fibreglass was repairable. An interesting place where I would have liked to tarry longer, but the forecast predicted rain so although none had arrived thus far, I decided to head back.

The direct route back across the ebb sands was clearly not possible so I determined on a mid-way route through the sand dunes and just head for the distant trees.

It was certainly a more strenuous journey; first through a salt marsh and then up and down through some pretty dramatic but soft sand dunes. My way was never more than a few hundred yards from the sea and whenever a significant gap appeared in the dunes to seaward the strength of the wind blowing the sand into my face would increase creating a 'Beau Geste-esque' mini sandstorm. Sand, more sand and marram grass, but no camels!

Eventually I joined the path I had come down by the side of the forest and wasn't long getting back to the car.

Although both trips had been ostensibly to 'field research' the explosion story in Cwm y Glo the latter had certainly been more of a 'good walk' where the desolate setting, beautiful sights and quality of the walk had superseded the historical angle. The bike trip however, to where the incident actually happened, had been more reflective and carried with it a more sombre air.



*Washed up channel buoy*

It is 155 years since that terrible explosion; both mental and physical scars have long disappeared and only a mis-sited plaque remains for those who choose to seek it to tell the story of the largest explosion to ever occur in North Wales.



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## NATURE COLUMN (Jan Miller)



Early summer has always been a time of celebration and ritual since man began. When I was a child in Hertfordshire in the 1960s we crowned a May Queen with wild flowers and used to spend weeks practicing the Maypole dances and loads of country dances ('Goddesses' was my favourite because you all went hand by hand all the way down the rows of other dancers each time. I tried to teach it to Whitford school when my son was there, but the other boys



went 'Euew! I'm not touching any girls!')

Here in Flintshire a similar old celebration was called 'Cadi Ha', which died out in the early 20th. Century but was revived in the 1980s /90s. No Maypoles were ever in evidence, neither May Queens, but they did have a Branch bearer who carries a flowering May tree branch in front of a procession of lovely Welsh costumed dancers and children. Nowadays they try to perform it on the Saturday closest to 1st



May, but due to having to avoid the Bank Holiday weekends, it is sometimes a bit early for the May blossom to be out and they carry Blackthorn instead, which does flower earlier. Now the ancient peoples would know that these two trees have very different superstitious meanings! But I'm afraid authenticity is getting lost like in so many other old country customs. The May tree and the health giving properties of many other plants are probably related to the Green Man seen in other May Day traditions. At Cadi Ha they still have a man



dressed as a woman 'Cadi' who carries a long handled frying pan to collect pennies from the crowd, and a man in black clothes



and hat known as Billi who carries a broom. These two rascals also skip around and tag and tease the dancers and musicians.

In Holywell high street, and later at Aberkahns this year, after a lull during the pandemic, they had several schools dancing with wonderful musicians and dancers from the Welsh Folk Dance Society: Cymdeithas Ddawns Werin Cymru



(Who meet every Monday evening at Mold Rugby Club, all newcomers welcome!)

It was a pity not more people came to see them, look out for them next year, it is lovely to dance and sing in the open air !

(C) Jan Miller 2024

Photos from Holywell 28 April 2024.



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### WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP INCLUDE?

As a member of the Clwyd Group:-

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- \* Discount on plants at selected garden centres.
- \* The summer programme offers visits to local gardens - some are private gardens so not usually open to the general public and there are occasional coach trips (a minimal additional cost applies).
- \* Opportunities to buy nursery and Clwyd Group members' plants at reasonable prices, some plants are unusual and cannot be found in garden centres.
- \* HPS Clwyd Group Newsletter every Autumn.
- \* Free seeds and free books available at some meetings.
- \* Email reminder of monthly meetings, news of garden events and plant sales.

As a member of the National HPS you will receive:-

- ◇ 2 issues of The Hardy Plant Journal
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- ◇ Free seed distribution scheme (postage and administration charge applies)
- ◇ Events, lecture days and the

opportunity to join specialist groups for your particular interest.

### MEMBERSHIP

You will need dual membership of the National HPS and our Local Group. Both are renewable annually in January.

Membership of the National HPS is £17 single for the year; £19 for two members at the same address and students £10. Further information: [www.hardy-plant.org.uk](http://www.hardy-plant.org.uk)

HPS Clwyd Group membership is then £7 single for the year; £10 couple and free for students. The National HPS provides insurance cover for the HPS Clwyd Group.

HPS Clwyd Group meetings are advertised on: [www.hardy-plant.org.uk/clwyd](http://www.hardy-plant.org.uk/clwyd) and [www.facebook.com/HPSClwyd](https://www.facebook.com/HPSClwyd)

### NORTHERN LIGHTS (Peter Stutchfield)

The Northern Lights produced a spectacular display on the 10th May which we never expected to see from our location, near Whitford, in North Wales. Looking at the eastern sky with the naked eye, at midnight, all appeared dark with high cloud with a streaky appearance. When however you looked at the same view through the mobile phone, on camera mode, this revealed the incredible multiple colours in the sky, from light green to red purple. It was quite a spectacular show. It was possible to photograph the changing patterns without a long exposure. The camera of the mobile phone is much more sensitive to colours than the human eye so they were then visible.



*This photo was taken by Peter Stutchfield*



*This photo was taken by Megan Edwards*



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## MARK ISHERWOOD MS



Wales is facing a housing crisis and the evidence indicates that the Labour Welsh Government are failing to address this.

Two decades ago, the sector first launched the 'Homes for All Cymru' Campaign, warning that Wales faced an affordable Housing supply crisis unless urgent action was taken, but they were ignored.

The 2012 UK Housing Review stated 'it was the Welsh Government itself that gave housing lower priority in its overall budgets, so that by 2009/10 it had by far the lowest proportional level of housing expenditure of any of the four UK countries'.

The Holman report, and reports from the house building industry, the Chartered Institute of Housing, the Bevan Foundation, and the Federation of Master Builders, all said that Wales needed between 12,000 and 15,000 homes a year, including 5,000 social homes. Even more modest forecasts

identified a need for up to 8,300 new homes a year.

As Shadow Minister for Housing and Planning, I recently raised my concerns about the Welsh Government's lack of practical action to address the housing crisis when responding to the Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government and Planning, 'Working with Local Government to Deliver more Affordable Homes'.

I expressed concern that only 5,720 homes have been delivered on average annually in Wales between 2010 and December 2023, barely half the rate delivered in England and an annual average of just 940 affordable homes over the same period.

I also expressed concern that the Welsh Government is failing to meet its target to deliver 20,000 new low carbon homes for social rent during this 5-year Senedd term, with only 2,825 new dwellings completed by Registered Social Landlords and Local Authorities in the first three years to last December, and referred to the difficulties people are experiencing trying to get on the property ladder.

Pointing out that average full-time employees in Wales needed to spend over 6 times their earnings to purchase a home in 2022, I noted that this compares with just 3 times average earnings in 1997. Further, Welsh pay packets are now the lowest in the UK nations.

I therefore asked what discussion the

Cabinet Secretary has had with Cabinet colleagues about the impact of the Welsh Government's economic policies on the affordability of houses in Wales.

I also questioned the Cabinet Secretary over actions to bring unoccupied dwellings back into use, and over private rentals and concern that landlords are leaving the sector because of Welsh Government legislation.

Referring to the Welsh Government's "Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 Evaluation: Phase 1 Report", released the previous week, I stated that "consequences identified by participants included: Private landlords choosing to leave the sector, exacerbating existing property shortages; that losing private landlords would mean fewer are prepared to partner with local authorities to provide much-needed properties; Rent increases for tenants and fewer properties being available; and Private landlords cherry-picking the best tenants".

Raising the Evaluation Phase 1 Report with the Cabinet Secretary again the following day, I noted that: "There were 676 responses to the Survey of landlords and managing agents, of which 539 were fully completed and 479 cited a negative impact of the changes for landlords".

One question respondents to the evaluation were asked was: 'What negative impacts will the changes under the Act have on you as a landlord/managing agent?'. →

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44% of all the respondents who cited a negative impact to the Survey stated that the Act was forcing Landlords to sell and leave the sector.

As I stated during the legislative process of the Renting Homes (Amendment) Bill 2020, this is what ARLA Propertymark, the professional and regulatory body for Letting Agents, and the National Residential Landlord's Association both warned would happen.

Given the Cabinet Secretary's words in 2020 that she wished to strike 'the right balance of support and regulation', I therefore asked her what action, if any, she will now take to re-open the legislation to ensure that the Act stops driving good landlords from the Private Rented Sector.

With the Welsh Government still considering the introduction of rent controls, despite private rental prices in Wales having risen by 8% between January 2015 and June 2022, compared with 12.6% across the rest of the UK, I warned that this could also force more residential landlords to leave the sector.

Research evidence shows that rent control policies can lead to reduced market supply – as well as a range of other housing and labour market problems.

Since the introduction of Rent Controls in Scotland in 2022, average rents on new tenancies have increased, rising by nearly 14% in the last year as rents on existing tenancies have been frozen and then capped, and there has also been a reduction of nearly 20% in the availability of private rented properties in Scotland over the last year.

A recent YouGov poll showed that nearly 40% of Private Landlords said they would reduce the number of properties they let even with a 'light touch' intervention.

I stated: "If landlords are unable to meet rising costs, many will reduce their portfolios, exacerbating current Private Rented Sector-supply difficulties and reducing the availability of rentable first homes".

Rather than dealing just with the symptoms, the Welsh Government needs policies to actually increase rental housing supply, the shortage of which is the primary reason why rental prices have increased.

Having previously worked in the sector for over two decades, I know too well that the housing supply crisis in Wales goes back to the very early days of devolution and is the direct responsibility of policy-led decisions initially taken by Labour and Labour-led Welsh Governments from 1999. Rather than work with the sector, private and social, it chose to give housing a low priority, to slash funding for social and affordable housing, and to demonise private house builders. Sadly, Wales is still reaping what they sowed and the situation will only improve if there is a change of approach.

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**Whitford Community Councillors:  
Names of Councillors and contact  
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Tim Barks - 01352 720375  
Richard Dolphin - 07526 515873  
Billy Glynn - 01352 712418  
Caradoc W. Jones - 01352 712079  
Matt Marshall - 07763 975531  
Gareth Sharp - 01352 715614  
Paul Urquhart - 01745 563133  
Melanie Wallis - 01352 712369  
Emma Warbrick - 01352 712356  
Joseph Williams - 07850 924805  
Steve Watts - 07778 673334

**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 Burglary / 2 x Vehicle crime  
/ 2 x Violence  
Gorsedd - 1 x Other crime / 2 x Violence  
Lloc - No crimes reported  
Lloc (Services) – 1 x Burglary / Criminal  
damage / 1 x Public order / 2 x Violence  
Pantasaph - No crimes reported  
Whitford - No crimes reported

**NEW CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF  
COUNCIL:**



*Councillor Billy Glynn (right) with  
Councillor Caradoc Jones*

At the May Annual Meeting of the  
Whitford Community Council, Councillor  
Billy Glynn was elected as Chair of Council  
for the period 2024 / 2025. Councillor  
Caradoc Jones was elected as Vice Chair.  
The retiring Chair of Council Councillor

Richard Dolphin thanked the Council and  
Clerk for their support during his year of  
office, with the new Chair Councillor Glynn  
thanking Councillor Dolphin for both his  
work and support over the past year.

**CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR:**

Councillor Steve Watts was co-opted  
onto the Community Council in February  
following publication of Public Notices.  
Councillor Watts resides in the Whitford  
area.

**COUNCILLOR VACANCY:**

The Community Council have a further  
vacancy for a Community Councillor.  
Please see Public Notice in this edition of  
the Five Villages Chronicle.

**COMMUNITY AWARD - 2024:**

The Whitford Community Council  
have issued a Public Notice in relation  
to the 2024 – Community Award. The  
Public Notice can be found in this issue  
of the Five Villages Chronicle, the various  
notices boards throughout the Council  
area, including the Council's web site. The  
Community Award policy can be perused  
on the web site whereby the application  
form can be downloaded at: [www.whitford-council.wales](http://www.whitford-council.wales) (Public notices & Financial  
page).

The Community Council seek  
nominations from residents who reside  
within the Whitford Council area. The aim  
of presenting an 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.

**WHITFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL -  
END OF YEAR REPORT 2023 / 2024**

Under the Local Government and  
Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (Section 52)  
all Town & Community Councils in Wales  
are required to provide an end of year  
report. The Whitford Community Council  
recently agreed their report which has been  
uploaded to the Council web page.

The report covers the following  
headings: Information about the Community  
Council / Councillors / Complaints /  
Freedom of Information Act / Details  
of outside Committees & Organisations  
the Councillors attend / Council's  
objectives and achievements during the  
reporting year / Council's objectives for  
the new financial year of 2024 to 2025 /  
Financial sections relate to: Asset Register;  
Budget; Financial Assistance; Members  
Allowances; Publication Audited Accounts  
/ Environmental (Wales Act) 2016 (S6) /  
Flintshire County Council: Planning and  
Street Lighting / Council Training Plans.

The Council's full report can be perused  
on the Council's web site at:

[www.whitford-council.wales](http://www.whitford-council.wales) (Public  
notices & Financial page).

**PENNANT PARK GOLF CLUB:**

David Eccles (Chief Executive of  
Wayfind); John Bratherton (Park Design  
Consultant); Philip Jones (Savills,  
Chester) attended a recent meeting of the  
Community Council. Mr. Eccles provided  
the following information: The historical,  
the current and proposed development at  
Pennant Park Golf Club, including the work  
completed to date, together with proposed  
future work at the site, various financial  
costings and employment number of staff.



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The Councillors discussed with Mr. Eccles: the increase in traffic to the site, the public bridleway, including damage to grass verges by delivery vehicles.

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

Potholes outside Pensioners Bungalows on Carmel Road / A5026 Road: Footway from Whitford Road junction – westbound to Gorsedd / Crossroads / Pot hole on Allt y Golch / Carmel Road junction / From the area of the Monastery no exit sign to the former Fielding Arms public house, the highway is in an appalling condition and requires substantial repair, most probably re-surfacing / From the top of the hill towards the White House and Babel Road, the pot holes are appalling / Pant Y Wacco: Request for installation of a red dog bin at the corner of the road. Local residents advise that this area is very popular with dog walkers who are leaving dog bags around the Pant Y Wacco sign. The installation of a red dog bin would assist to alleviate this practice / Concerns expressed with the ever increasing pot holes in all five villages within the Community Council area. Could an inspection please be carried out / A5026 Road, Lloc. Road flooding in area of Pen Y Gelli Quarry / Blocked gullies: Travelling from Sarn Cross Roads to Ty Gwyn / Broken Right of Way gate by Glol Woods / Pot holes: Lower end of Mertyn Lane / Pot hole (large): From area of the Tree – junction travelling towards Tre Mostyn / A5026 Road, Lloc, Near Carmel Cricket Club: Constant flooding in the area. Could the link pipe to the soakaway in the adjoining field please be inspected to ensure no blockage or damage.

#### **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:

Application number: COU/000696/23 – for amendment to submitted application, for the conversion of former redundant Chapel to single dwelling at, The Seion Chapel, Allt Y Goch, Carmel / Application number: FUL/000083/24 – for proposed installation of 10 x solar panels on the north facing side of the roof and the installation of a 10kw air source heat pump at the rear of the property, at 1 – 2 Mount Pleasant, Whitford / Application number: FUL/000084/24 – for extension to existing access including two metre high boundary wall and new field gate, at Groesffordd, Llwyn Ifor Lane, Whitford

#### **PLANNING DECISIONS:**

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

Application number: FUL/000556/23 Removal of agricultural occupancy condition (condition 1 of application ref: Y494) Dwyndant, Whitford. Approved.

Application number: FUL/000659/23 Application for Variation of Condition No. 1, Ref: 058502 Ocho Rios, A5026 Lloc to A1511 - Pen Ffordd Llan Roundabout, Lloc. Approved / Application number: Planning application number: TPO/000030/24 – to remove the one Lime tree covered by a TPO, at 69, Ffordd Aelwyd, Carmel. Refused / Planning application number: COU/000808/23 – for Change of Use of existing vacant Chapel into new dwelling, at Carmel Chapel, Carmel Road, Carmel. Approved / Planning application number: DET/000781/23 - for Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions no 3,4,5,12, 13,

at former Halfway House, Allt Y Golch, Carmel. Approved.

#### **APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND DONATIONS:**

The Community Council have granted the following financial assistance since the last edition of the Five Villages Chronicle: £250.00: Flintshire Vintage & Classic Tractor Society (Application for funding towards a charity event in Whitford) / £500.00: Holywell Leisure Centre (Application for annual grant) / £500.00: Cymdeithas Thomas Pennant Society (Application for annual grant) / £2,000.00: Carmel Village Hall (Application for annual grant) / £250.00: The Five Villages Gardening Club (Application for annual grant).

R. Phillip Parry  
Clerk & Financial Officer to Whitford Community Council  
Tel: 01352 720547  
E-mail: [clerk@whitford-council.wales](mailto:clerk@whitford-council.wales)  
Web site: [www.whitford-council.wales](http://www.whitford-council.wales)



### CYNGOR CYMUNED CHWITFFORDD WHITFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

#### COMMUNITY AWARD

The Whitford Community 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 Council area - and to allow that work to be celebrated.

The nominees can be an adult (over 18), a young person (under 18) or a Community Committee / Group, who must either reside, 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](http://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 Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2024

**R. Phillip Parry - Clerk & Financial Officer**  
01352 720547 / [clerk@whitford-council.wales](mailto:clerk@whitford-council.wales)



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## CARMEL VILLAGE HALL



### (Richard Dolphin)

The Old Loved Hall continues to be a focal point of our 5 Villages community. Given the original structure of the building is now 162 years old and the remarkable use of its facilities, it is important the Hall has a period of rest for maintenance, upgrades and restoration. Annually this occurs during the 'Summer Term School Holidays' in July & August. There are planned works taking place inside and out to ensure groups, activities and celebrations continue to bring people together strengthening social engagement across all age groups.

In a similar plea to the last edition, Carmel Village Hall needs your help! As a Charitable Incorporated Organisation the Hall is reliant upon grants and fundraising in order to afford general running costs, and planned projects. The Trustees are seeking fundraising volunteers who are passionate, reliable, and willing to be actively involved at Hall events. The Monthly Coffee Morning is the main fundraising event at present and we are seeking a leader (or leaders) to take charge. However new fundraising volunteers can also offer and develop new opportunities – so what could you do, or what would you like to do to support your local meeting place?

If you are interested and would like to discuss further, please contact Hall Secretary, Chris Dolphin, on 01352 713415 or email [chris\\_dolphin@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chris_dolphin@hotmail.co.uk). Also, for regular updates about the groups, hall availability and upcoming events then check out the Carmel Village Hall Facebook page – [www.facebook.com/carmelvillagehall](http://www.facebook.com/carmelvillagehall) or contact Chris Dolphin on the details above.



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6:15 – 7:45pm	Cubs	Weekly – Term Time
Tuesday		
1:30 – 4pm	Craft Group	Weekly
7:30 – 9pm	Scouts	Weekly – Term Time
Wednesday		
8:30 – 10am	Tea & Toast with Carmel Christian Church	Weekly – Term Time
2 – 4pm	FCC Meeting	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday
4:45 – 5:45pm	Rainbows	Weekly – Term Time
6 – 7:15pm	Brownies & Girl Guides	Weekly – Term Time
7:45 – 8:45pm	Yoga with Julie	Weekly
Thursday		
1 – 4pm	Gardening Club	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday
10am – 12pm	Coffee Morning	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday
1 – 3pm	Yoga with Julie	2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday
6:30 – 7:30pm	Beavers	Weekly – Term Time
7 – 9:30pm	Carmel WI	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday
Friday		
2 – 4pm	Tai Chi & Qi Gong	Weekly
5 – 7:30pm	Irish Dancing	Weekly
Sunday		
5:30 – 7:30pm	Carmel Christian Church	Weekly



## CYNGOR CYMUNED CHWITFFORDD WHITFORD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### PUBLIC NOTICE

### VACANCY FOR ONE COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR

Applications are invited to fill one vacant Community Councillor seat, by co-option, on Whitford Community Council. More information on how the vacancy will be filled, can be found on the Council Web Site at [www.whitford-council.wales](http://www.whitford-council.wales) (Public Notices) or by contacting the Clerk to the Council, as details below, for either a paper or electronic copy.

Closing date for applications (Expressions of Interest) is 12 Noon on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2024.

R. Phillip Parry,  
Clerk to Whitford Community Council  
E-mail: [clerk@whitford-council.wales](mailto:clerk@whitford-council.wales)  
Tel: 01352 720547

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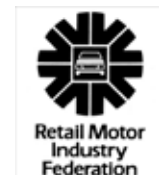
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## SUMMER FUN AT AURA LIBRARIES!

The 2024 Summer Reading Challenge will be 'Marvellous Makers' about getting creative, music, junk modelling, photography, dancing, storywriting.... the possibilities are celebrate play and participation, encouraging children to get involved in games and sports in any way that best suits them.

When you sign up to the Summer Reading Challenge at your local Aura library a special collector folder will be given and your challenge begins, special incentives will be awarded at every visit to the library throughout the Summer, when you reach the challenge goal a certificate and medal of completion is presented.

Look out for a wide variety of events and activities taking place at Aura libraries throughout the Summer!


### Coming soon to Mold Library



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In partnership with Mold Bookshop Mold Library will be hosting Adele Parks Author evening on 1st July. Tickets are available from Mold Bookshop or online at Events – The Bookshop. Mold. ([mold-bookshop.co.uk](http://mold-bookshop.co.uk))

### Holywell Library Weekly Activities

Why not join us for our 'FREE' friendly, weekly activities for more information contact Holywell Library 01352 703850

- Monday Lego Club 10.00am and 3.30pm
- Tuesday Rhymetime 10.00am – 10.30am  
Drawing club 4.30pm – 5.30pm
- Wednesday Weekly Wednesday Craft and Chat 2.00pm – 3.00pm
- Thursday Rhymetime 10.00am – 10.30am
- Friday Welsh Conversation 2.00pm (1st & 3rd Friday of the month)
- Saturday Lego Club 10.00am

### Adult Make and Meet

Join us on the last Wednesday of the month for our Make and Meet sessions in Holywell Library, make a craft item and meet fellow crafters.

All sessions are £3.00 per adult with refreshments included, places are limited so you will need to book.

Contact Holywell Library 01352 703850 to book your seat at the crafty table.

### Advice and Guidance at Holywell Library with C.A.B.

Looking for help or guidance a representative from Citizen's Advice is available at Holywell Library every Tuesday morning from 09.00 a.m.

### Story and Rhyme time with Aura libraries

Relax and unwind, join us at Aura libraries for story and rhyme time. These sessions are free of charge and are a great way for you and your children to socialise with others. No need to book just turn up on the day!

- |                         |                      |                    |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| • Buckley Library       | Tuesday and Friday   | 10.30am            |
| • Broughton Library     | Wednesday            | 10.30am            |
| • Connah's Quay Library | Thursday             | 10.30am            |
| • Deeside Library       | Wednesday            | 10.30am            |
| • Flint Library         | Wednesday and Friday | 10.30am            |
| • Holywell Library      | Tuesday              | 10.00am            |
| • Mold Library          | Tuesday              | 9.30am and 10.30am |

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## 1ST CARMEL SCOUT GROUP

**Beavers (6-8 yrs.)**

**Cubs (8-11 yrs.)**

**Scouts (11-14 yrs.)**

### Beavers

The Beavers have been doing lots of different activities & having lots of fun working towards different badges.

Several will be transferring across to Cubs after the half term, which means there is space if anyone would like to join.

### Cubs

We started the year with quite a few new faces to the section, as a large number had transferred from the Beavers.

The first activity back was an Archery taster evening, which for some was a first proper go with a Bow.

The main focus of the term was the Home, Personnel and Road safety badges with the cubs doing various activities to complete the criteria for the badges.

As part of this we arranged an evening at the Dangerpoint activity centre.

To finish the term off we had a 'Nerf' party. The cubs were using the Nerf guns for target shooting, other games & generally having a wild time. Even the leaders got a chance to join.

Since the start of the summer term the cubs have been working on their environmental badge. They have been exploring the local wood, making a bug hotel and had a model making evening using recycled materials.

Our summer camp this year is taking place on the 17th to 19th May at a campsite in Llysfaen. This will be a joint cub and beaver camp, so we are hoping the weather will be kind to us.

### Scouts

The scouts have been quite active this term, despite the fact that a few things I'd been trying to arrange hadn't come off.

We joined Holywell scouts in February to do a night walk and overnight camp. It was a nice night for a walk, but a bit wet underfoot in places, and the sleeping arrangements were a bit uncomfortable, but it was an adventure.

They're going again at the end of May.

February also saw us do a climbing session at the boardroom climbing centre. Some of the Scouts are getting quite experienced now and are trying harder climbs.

March saw us do a Bushcraft session at the Woodskills centre in Bodfari. This was preceded by a pen knife handling & safety session.

The term was finished off with a fun Nerf gun evening.

At the end of April, we took a group of Scouts up Moel Siabod, nr Capel Curig.

The weather was good and we were blessed with some great views at the top.

In May they have had a go at a simple orienteering course and also had an evening cooking food of their choice, on Hike stoves.

They have an air rifle shooting session

planned for the end of May, and we are hoping to go camping in mid-June.

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

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

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

Russell Williams

Group leader

07936197962



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## CARMEL & HOLYWELL WOODCRAFT ASSOCIATION (Geoff Hill, Chairman)

As we progress throughout the year, the Woodcraft Association grows from strength to strength. The ongoing development of working with wood is now attracting a wide range of people from the experienced, to others with no knowledge of wood or machinery. For newcomers there is no shortage of help available and our new members have made amazing advancements in a short space of time exceeding their wildest expectations in what they can achieve. Spoon carving is a perfect introduction to working with wood and can provide enough interest for a lifetimes work.

Our members continue to venture out into the community giving talks and demonstrations to such groups as the Women's Institute, Residential Care Homes and Hospitals. Not only listening to a speaker, the audiences are given paper and pens and are encouraged to design their own spoon which is unique to them. From these outside activities and visits, a small shop/display area has been introduced at the Craft Centre, Greenfield Road, Holywell whereby members of the public can purchase items or just admire the work of our members.

For the person looking to give that unique gift for such occasions as weddings, christenings, anniversaries or retirements (the list is endless), visitors can now sit with



*A bespoke spoon in its presentation box*

one of our designers and commission an item which can be tailored to the recipients lifestyle or interests.

For people wishing to try a new hobby, we have now introduced a voucher system which can be purchased as a gift to be used by a family member or friend. These introductory sessions will be held over a two day period.

As more people continue to join the group, we have expanded our hours of



*New Shop and Public Display Area opening.* Apart from the normal opening times of Thursdays and Fridays 9am - 3pm, to accommodate people still in employment,

Tuesday nights 5pm - 9pm and Saturdays 9am - 1pm are now available.

AND FINALLY, repeating last years success, the Craft Centre will be holding its Open Weekend on Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 August 2024 9.30am - 4pm. Apart from viewing what goes on behind the gates, guests will receive a voting slip whereby they can participate in the judging of work on display by Association Members. All the businesses at the Craft Centre will be available during the Open Days.

We look forward to welcoming you the readers of the Five Villages Chronicle to the Open Days.



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**YSGOL BRO CARMEL**

For the special 150th edition of the Five Villages, we thought you may like to hear from the pupils themselves, as to the variety of experiences that they have enjoyed this academic year:

In celebration of Ramadan and Eid, Adam and Roshan kindly gave a treat to the whole school!



**BOOK SWAP**

As part of our project on encouraging a love of reading, the School Council held a very successful book swap. This involves children swapping pre-loved books all for free!



**CRIW CYMRAEG**

Mrs Moss leads her Criw Cymraeg team to increase and improve spoken Welsh throughout the school. Each week they present certificates to people they have heard speaking the most Welsh.



Maddison and Winter : "We learn to speak Welsh and check each classroom has the Welsh phrase of the week on display."

**SCHOOL COUNCIL**



The School Council have a very important role to play in helping with school improvement. This year they have been exceptional. They have consistently shown their skills of creativity, organisation, blossoming leadership skills and a passion for making a positive difference.

Luca: " I love being on the School Council because it's fun to make the school

an even better place!"

Joni: " I Like being on the School Council because I like being kind, helpful and making good changes."

Charlie: " I like how we make the school even better"

Matilda M: I've enjoyed helping people, organising events and helping people"

Danny:" I like seeing the younger children happy with what they're doing. We get even more pupil voice."

**SPELLING BEE**

This new inter-school competition has provided a wonderful opportunity to learn and collaborate alongside having fun. Thank you to Ysgol y Llan and Ysgol Trelawnyd!

**PUPIL VOICE:**



We have enjoyed taking part in 'Spelling Bee' together with Ysgol Whitford and Ysgol Trelawnyd.

"The headteacher tells you the word and you have to spell it out. I really enjoy it



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**MARK ISHERWOOD MS | AS**

Member of the Welsh Parliament for I  
Aelod Senedd Cymru dros  
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Talwyd costau'r cyhoeddiad hwn gan Gomisiwn y Senedd, o gronfeydd cyhoeddus  
The costs of this publication have been met by the Senedd Commission from public funds



and I like watching the other children do it too. We also get juice and biscuits.” Sienna

“Spelling Bee is lots of fun. It is challenging but I enjoy it. We practice the words on Spelling Shed and we like practicing them. I like it because my friends do it with me.” Rose

“Spelling Bee is fun. You have to write the words down on a white board and then one person from the team spells them out. I am always nervous the day before it but I really enjoy doing it. I practice my spellings at home and in school.” Lucy

Spelling Bee is about spelling new words. I practice at home and in school and I enjoy it. We do it in different schools.” Arthur

### PBUZZ YEAR 3

Thanks to the Flintshire Music Service, our Year 3 children receive a free weekly music lesson. This year they have been taught how to play the Pbuzz.



Jesse : I love every Monday because Chris comes to our school and teaches us how to play the Pbuzz. The songs that we have learnt are ‘Hall of the Mountain King’, ‘Let your Spirit Fly’ and ‘Firebird’. We play games like ‘get in the snake pit’ where if we don’t clap the right rhythm then we are out.

I have learnt some of the notes on the Pbuzz like F, G, A, B flat, and C. The Pbuzz is an instrument where you move the instrument up and down to play the right note. We have learnt how to play all of the songs.

It is fun because I like to sing and play fun games. I also enjoy playing the Pbuzz with my friends and I really like the games we play. My favourite part is playing ‘Hall

of the Mountain King’. Our class have a concert next week and are playing all of the songs we know in front of our parents. I am really excited for the concert and I am happy that I get to show my family how good I am. “

### SCHOOL SLEEPOVER

An annual fundraising event is our School Sleepover. It is always a great success and as always the children were a real credit to their families!

Max L: “We had so much fun at the school sleepover because we got to come to school in our pajamas. We had fun activities like riding down the corridor on a scooter, mindfulness drawing and decorating wooden pencil cases. We had delicious ‘chippy’ chips and went to get ice-cream with everything on it.

Here’s the fun part, we got to bring our own sweets and watched a movie. I was really happy because I was with my friends. We could read our books before we went to sleep and we had a good night sleep. Overall, I thought it was great!”

### DOSBARTH LLYN BRENIG (RECEPTION & YEAR 1)

The children in Dosbarth Llyn Brenig have been sharing their experiences of the various extra-curricular clubs that they have the opportunity to attend at Ysgol Bro Carmel.

### FUN FIT

Phoebe – “I like playing a game called Cheeky Monkey. The cheeky monkey tips the balls out of the washing basket and we have to put the balls back in the basket.”

Amelie – “We play the traffic light game. Someone is in charge of shouting out colours, red, green and amber. When they shout a colour everyone else must run to the right cone.”

Eleanor – “We play a game where one person is a shark, and when you are tagged by the shark you are also turned into a shark. The last person left who hasn’t been tagged is the winner.”

Aida – “We practice rolling on the mats. We can do forward rolls, backward rolls and sausage rolls.”

Kaci – “Every time we go to Fun Fit it helps us to get fitter. I like playing Cheeky monkey because it is entertaining and can last a while.”

Bea – “I enjoy dancing, playing musical statues, and hide and seek.”

Martha – “I like playing games with my friends.”

Gioia – “We create and play new games and sometimes we practice gymnastics.”

### FOOTBALL LAB

Arlo – “I enjoy being a goalie and saving shots.”

Jacob – “I like scoring goals against the other teams. Football lab is the best!”

Harvey – “I enjoy tackling the other players.”

Elis – “I like celebrating when I score a goal.”

### YEAR 6 AMAZING CARDIFF TRIP!

On 17.1.2024, we went to Cardiff . We got up really early in the morning to get to the train station. We met our teachers at the train station and then eagerly waited for the train. As we got onto the train we passed our bags to one of our teachers and sat down. I sat with one of my friends Leila. She brought her Uno set so we played Uno on the way there. Then two hours into the trip, we swapped seats. Leila and I were put on a four table with Sofie and Mabli. We all played Uno and ate snacks, but not sweets because it was only 10 o’clock in the morning. Sofie brought chess which was really fun to play with but then we made our way into Cardiff Train Station.

As we got off of the train I was filled with excitement. We made our way up the stairs and into the big city of Cardiff. We got into a taxi and headed to the Urdd Centre. We put our bags in a room and went for food.

After we had eaten lunch, we then went to the top floor where we found our rooms. I

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was so happy I was with Mabli, Evie, Leila, Charlotte and Annie. I was really joyful and happy. We settled in and went for our tea.

Then it was time to get ready for bowling. Bowling was fun. After bowling, we came back to our dorms and got ready for bed.

We took lots of pictures every day and I loved all the things we did but my favourite was when we went to the Principality Stadium. It was amazing! We got to sit in the seats that important people sit in. Some of these people are artists, presidents, royalty and lots more. Afterwards, we got to see the changing rooms and the VIP rooms, as well as lots more off the stadium. On the same day, we also visited the museum, the castle and a welsh shop. To get from the Urdd Center to these places we got on a boat and it took us around the bay.

On the last day we got ready to go home, took some photos and headed to the train station. After a bit of waiting, the train came. We got onto the train and I was put in the four seat again with my friends. We ate snacks, played games then the trainman came out of nowhere. He was a very nice man. He started guessing our name and got some people right and some people wrong. Then we asked him some questions about his job and we found out interesting information about trains and train stations.

As we got off the train, we said goodbye, thanked him and got our stuff together whilst we waited for our parents to arrive.

For all of the children planning on visiting Cardiff on a residential trip, I hope they enjoy going to this amazing city. I can't wait for them to experience it. When you go, there is nothing to worry about. Just be happy, excited and enjoy it! Ellie-May

**OUR YEAR FIVE COLOMENDY TRIP**

On the 13th of March we went to Colomendy. We all got to school at normal time but we were very excited. We had to wait the whole morning to get on the bus. It was very frustrating. People were talking about it for the entire lunchtime and asking questions like, "Where is it?" and, "Who is going to be in our room?" and, "What is it going to be like?" At the end of lunchtime everybody went to Yr Wyddfa to get ready. That is the name of one of our classes and that is where we had put our suitcases that morning.

We were all getting on the bus happily but as soon as we were about to go one of my friends started getting emotional, because he had never been away from home longer than three days and we were going for three days and two nights. It was nearly an hour before we got there and my friend had forgotten all about being sad over his parents. When we arrived we were all a bit shocked because it was nothing like we imagined it to be - we thought it would be a small dorm with lots of dirt around it but

we were very wrong. It was a huge place.

I was in Group 1 with all of my friends and we went to archery for our first activity. I was very confident holding the bow but when I shot the arrow, I missed and I was very sad. But I did not give up! We did lots of activities like abseiling and the vertical playpen. I did not make it to the top but my friend did. I was very happy for him.

Later, we went to a dorm. I was with some other boys in my class and we all had to make our own beds. I was really annoyed because it was quite hard so I got some help. The bottom bunks were very very uncomfortable but the top bunks were very

very comfortable. Unfortunately, I was on a bottom bunk. We always had to go to bed at 9:00pm sharp and wake up at 7:00am. The food at the centre was tasty. We were all very lucky because the teachers treated us to jam donuts one evening.

My favourite bit of this school trip was the zip line. It was a massive wire going down through the forest and I put my hand up to go first. The teacher said my name and told me to go up to the edge. I was scared and nervous but I did not want to feel like that so when the countdown got to one I jumped and everyone cheered. It was fast and I loved it. Dom



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## YSGOL GWENFFRWD

This term has been a real feast of the Expressive Arts at Ysgol Gwenffrwd. Year 5 and 6 began their CYNEFIN project following a successful grant application from the Arts Council of Wales. The objective of the project is celebrating an Ethnically and Culturally Diverse Wales and we have been fortunate enough to draw on the expertise and experiences of 3 very diverse creative practitioners. Uma O'Neil who has been leading the project with us and originally from India, has given the children a wealth of experiences - from preparing and tasting Indian food, creating Indian scarves, celebrating the birthday of Hanuman (the Monkey God) and choreographing both an Indian and Street Dance performance. We



were also joined by Mfikela Jean Samuel, an artist and motivational speaker whose work is deep rooted in his African heritage. Samuel certainly left his mark on our pupils and staff, particularly with his advice 'If you dream big and work hard, there is no limitation to who you can become.' It was wonderful to hear subsequently that Samuel has been knighted by the representative of his Chief of his village in Cameroon for his contribution to sharing their culture around the world. Llongyfarchiadau mawr! Here are a few quotes that our pupils wanted to send Samuel after his visit.

*'You really inspired me to draw more and be proud of my drawings, even though they're not perfect. Thank you for everything you have done for us.'* ~ Zachary.

*'Samuel made me feel that I could rule the world all by myself and made me feel strong. I think it will make me more confident doing my dream job of being an actress.'* ~ Eirwyn.

We will also be working with Ed Holden, best known as Mr Phormula, a Welsh rapper and Beat Boxer and all of the elements of our project will be culminating in a celebration evening for parents on May 23rd.

Meanwhile, Year 3 and 4 were very fortunate to be invited to a First Experiences and BBC Now Musical Extravaganza at William Aston Hall in Wrexham, where they had the opportunity to play their violins alongside the professional orchestra – what a memorable experience it was!

They have also been enjoying our whole-school topic, 'O Dan y Môr a'i Donnau' (Under the Sea). They have learned about the tragic tale of 'Cantre'r Gwaelod' and studied the life of the famous Welsh pirate, Barti Ddu. We are currently learning all about the Titanic.

As part of the topic Years 1, 2 and 3 went on a school trip to Blue Planet Aquarium. They had a fantastic time, walking around looking at all the different species of fish and were in awe walking through the tunnel looking at the sharks and rays. A picnic outdoors and the park were also a highlight. What a wonderful day!

Year 5 enjoyed a jam packed 3 days in Cardiff in April. Here are a few words from Braye and Luke recounting the trip.

### Ysgol Gwenffrwd's Year 5 trip Cardiff



*As we were waiting for the bus to Cardiff we felt a bit nervous and excited*

*at the same time. The trip was four hours long! It felt that it was never ending. We went to Sain Ffagan which is an outdoor museum with lots of old buildings. Next we went to the Cardiff City stadium where we had the opportunity to see the players dressing room and went to see the pitch. We felt like real football players! It was a very memorable experience.*

*Now we were going to see where we would be sleeping for the next two nights in the Urdd Centre. We were so excited! The second day was amazing. First we went to Cardiff castle (and did you know that Barack Obama has been to Cardiff Castle?) and then we went to the Senedd. Vaughan Gething was there answering questions for the first time as First Minister of Wales. We had a debate in the old chamber about whether animals should be pets for schools. Then we went on a speed boat which was a heart racing experience. On the last day we went to the Royal Mint where money was made. We saw the factory where we learnt step by step how they make money. What an unforgettable trip.*

*~ By Luke and Braye, Year 5*

We look forward to the rest of the term now with trips to Talacre and Llangrannog, sports days and a visit from Hannah Blythin (Member of the Senedd for Delyn). A busy few weeks ahead!



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Meetings start up again in September as there are private garden visits over the summer for members, their family and friends. Membership available.

### **Tuesday 17th September, Late Herbaceous Perennials, Don Whitton**

Don is holder of a Plant Heritage National Collection of Euphorbia; author of the Euphorbia HPS booklet; has featured on BBC Gardener's World and in numerous magazines including RHS The Garden. His talk will be about a sumptuous array of perennials which give of their best from midsummer to October, including numerous examples of the more colourful and fashionable genera. Don will bring plants for sale.

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## THE TV MAST AT MOEL Y PARC (Jonathan Duggan-Keen)



*The main mast*

Having been invited to see what goes on here, Phillip Parry (Clerk to Whitford Community Council as well as to Caerwys Town Council) and myself headed up to the mast on Moel y Parc on Friday 10th May. We checked in at the security gate and were met by Joss (PR) and two engineers, Jon and Dan.



*Our visit*

### **WHERE IS IT?**

The site is situated about 565m above sea level, very near the top of Moel y Parc. After an initial briefing we were shown around the site. It is so much bigger than I remembered having first walked up there 30 years ago and consists of the main mast itself, 230m high, several microwave and satellite dishes and many buildings including power generators and transmission equipment.

### **LOCAL INFORMATION**

Phillip used to live near the bottom of the road in Afonwen and walked it often in his youth and he could remember who had lived in each of the farms along the

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way. He also recollected the massive army camps and tank training areas which were once a feature of the hill and much of the land on the western side of the road is still owned by the Ministry of Defence. The site is protected by high security fences and constant CCTV monitoring as it is classed as vital national infrastructure. Everything we are shown in this visit is duplicated or triplicated so that in the event of any failure or damage then everything keeps on working.



*Signal processors*

#### **WHAT DOES IT DO?**

The site is owned and operated by Arqiva, the sole operator of the UK's critical national TV and radio infrastructure and a leading satellite and global media distributor. After it was first commissioned in 1963, it broadcast television for the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) and IBA (Independent Broadcasting Authority), later on adding colour, BBC2 and other terrestrial channels. Each organisation had its own buildings, staff and equipment on site. There was even a canteen there and many staff were local, including the late Bill Coffee of Park Grove, Caerwys. Now, things are rather different as they are run by a single organisation.

#### **HOW DOES IT DO IT?**



*Signal amplifiers*

The site gathers information from microwave transmissions, satellites, high speed fibre optical connections and data cables. This information consists of the main television signals as before but now includes dozens of Freeview channels and hundreds of DAB (digital audio broadcast) channels as well as FM radio. These are then amplified and broadcast from the main antenna near the top of the mast. Of course there are places which cannot 'see' the main mast as there might be a hill or mountain in the way and so this main station also transmits these signals

to a total of 19 relay masts all around North Wales and Cheshire. This boosts the coverage to as far away as Blackpool, Manchester and Stoke-on-Trent, covering 95,000 homes all together. In addition this mast communicates with Winter Hill mast in Manchester and other main masts throughout Wales.

#### **OTHER INFORMATION**

Everything inside the site is constantly monitored and if a problem occurs then in the first instance the control system switches the affected part or even a whole section over to a back up and calls the company to arrange for engineers to correct the problem.

They have power feeds from both Caerwys and Ruthin and several shipping container sized generators. A recent report pointed out that terrestrial television and radio would remain important for a fair segment of the population for many years to come and so there is a built in resilience far in excess of other communication systems such as the internet and mobile phone networks.



*Output to the transmitters on the mast*

If there were to be a national emergency (like a war) and the internet and other

connections were lost (actually very likely), BBC Radio 4 would be the last to fail as it would be used by the government to communicate with the public.

#### **THE CLEVER STUFF**

Feeding 19 relay stations is clever in itself and the signals fed to these have to be fine tuned as far as timing goes: this is because travelling in a car, for example, you might be listening to Smooth Radio on DAB and as you leave the area served by one relay station and enter the next, there has to be no 'glitch', or sound gap. The timing of the various signals to the various relay stations is thus critical and is a skilled task in itself.

Dealing with so many stations each for television and radio one might suppose they could interfere with each other and indeed they would, so much of their processing takes place after they are multiplexed. This means the different signals are combined in phase and frequency so they can be dealt with together without getting in each others way. It makes a complicated system a little easier to operate.

The mast also enhances the police and ambulance communications systems so that they have a wider distribution and are more reliable. Perhaps unexpectedly the data from smart meters and council recycling bins can also be collected via some of the waste collection vehicles and is forwarded to the relevant bodies. Who knew!?

So there we have it - this beacon which we can all see as we near home in the Five Villages, red aircraft warning lights shining brightly at night - 60 years on and busier and as important as ever.

*(Photos courtesy of Simon Robinson and Phillip Parry)*



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## A DAMP SPRING IN THE FIVE VILLAGES (Robert Moore)

<b>Weather in the Five Villages Spring 2024</b> <b>(2023 figures in brackets)</b>				
	Temperatures °C			Total rainfall mm
	Average	Maximum	Minimum	
March	7.5 (6.9)	15.4 (15.7)	-5.0 (-1.5)	133.7 (158.0)
April	10.3 (10.8)	16.8 (18.0)	2.1 (1.1)	173.7 (167.0)
May	15.3 (15.3)	24.1 (24.0)	4.0 (5.2)	181.4 (6.1)

Spring average 2001 - 2020 and average 2024		
	Average 2001 - 2020	2024
Air Temperature 1800 UTC	10.4	11.0
Maximum Temperature	20.3	18.8
Minimum Temperature	0.7	0.4
Days air frost	2	13
Days ground frost	9	9

We will probably all remember this Spring for the rain. But we should not forget the very warm and sunny days in March and April. For the UK, April was an exceptionally warm month. Nevertheless, overall, wet weather was a major feature of Spring 2024. The pattern of rainfall is as interesting as the total, thus March had seven days without rain and five with a lot of rain, accounting for just over half of the rainfall for the whole month. April showers were frequent, but 79 percent of the rain fell in just five days. In May we had 14 days without any rain at all. On the 12th a storm moved northwards from the south-west bringing thunder and lightning on a northward line through Wales and up into Cumbria. Thunder was overhead at 16.40 and again at 18.00 with a few flashes of lightning. This kind of storm – which gave us 8.2 mm of rain – is relatively rare for our region. On the 22nd it started raining at a quarter to one in the morning and did not stop until an hour before midnight on the 23rd. I believe this to be the longest period of continuous rainfall that I have recorded in Carmel, with 107.2 mm of rain – sixty percent of the month's rain. Locally there was some damage from this rainfall with spectacular 'rivers' in the roads down to Greenfield and Bagillt. At 18.30 on the 22nd there was a burst of extremely heavy rain that sounded like an express train passing, with rain drumming loudly on rooves and windowsills. I believe also that some local residents discovered unexpected and unwelcome damp patches in their houses afterwards.

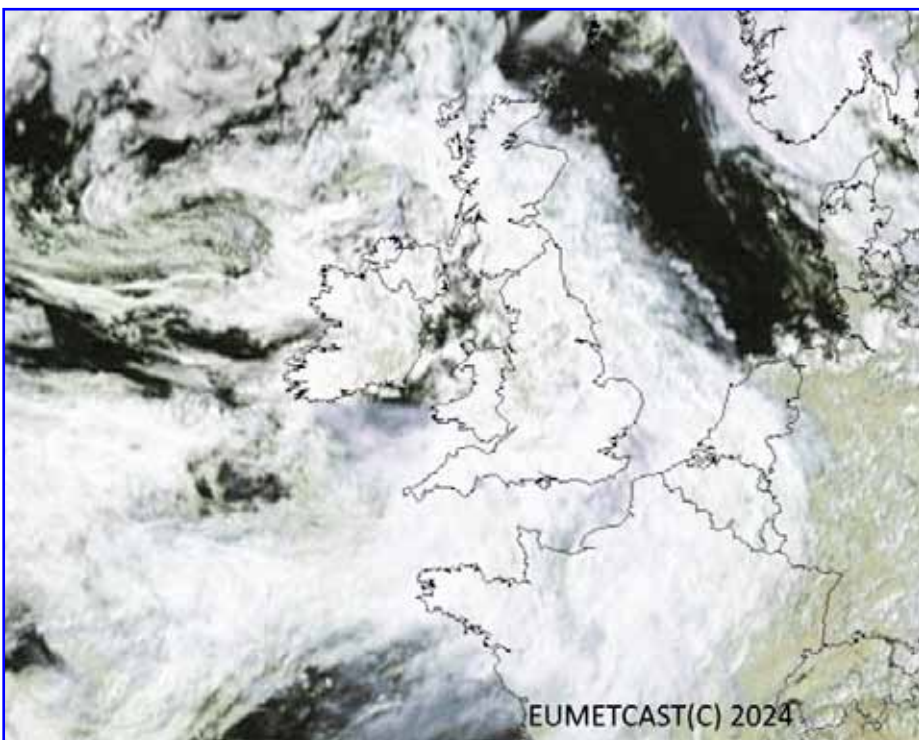
You will see from the table above that April does not look like a record month for temperature. This is a example of local weather variation, in this case the impact of the Snowdonian range. When the rain came from the east in May we felt its full force, but from the south or southwest much of the rain fell in the mountains. Capel Curig has the highest UK rainfall (20 year average 2,691 mm). If you listen to the weather on the radio or TV while looking out of the window you may hear reports of heavy rain in north Wales while admiring the blue skies and sunshine that you have enjoyed all day.

Some better news from the weather station; the website is back in action at <http://www.robertsmoore.co.uk/> I had to use the manufacturer's standard table, which is not as elegant as the original designed by my son. Towards the bottom of the of the page you will see 'grass&ground'; Temp 2 is the temperature just above the grass at the weather station (which may be useful for gardeners when ground frost is a hazard). Temp 1 is the ground temperature 300 mm below ground level – this changes slowly. Best to ignore the wind data, which is very local, but if you live in the five villages area you may use the website for adjusting your barometer.

Two satellite images (see opposite) this quarter, the first is of storm Kathleen wrapped around us on 6th April. Over the next four days, as the storm closed in, we received half the month's rainfall. The second image from 28th May was typical for the end of Spring – the UK totally hidden by a layer of thick cloud.

*If you would like weather information for any particular day or a longer period, please contact me at [rsmoore@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:rsmoore@liverpool.ac.uk) (email only). If you would like satellite images, please let me know immediately because I normally keep them for three days only. These images may only be used for educational purposes (school projects or teaching slides for example).*





## 1ST CARMEL BROWNIES (Sharon Jones)

1st Carmel Brownies have been having a fabulous time the past few months working towards their interest and theme badges.

April saw the girls complete their Aviation badge, an evening of making planes and then going outside to see who's would go the furthest, who's went the highest and who's was king of the skies knocking the other planes out of the way. Much fun was had discussing why some flew further than others, the designs of the planes and the science behind it. A Top tip to anyone trying this...don't believe Amazon when they say their book of paper planes is easy to do!!! I think Airbus would have struggled with some of them lol next time we'll stick with a good old bog standard paper plane.



As well as the usual badges we also try to complete a challenge badge each term, these are designed by other units and approved by Girl Guiding, they all contain activities that support the Girl Guiding program but are based on wildly different themes. This term we've been working on Feathers and Flamingos, the girls had a craft evening of making Flamingo hangers, decorating cakes with Flamingo figures on the top (made by themselves), creating lavender bath salts and using pink food colouring to dye them. There's always that one Brownie who tipped the whole bottle in, causing chaos and involving plenty of washing up liquid and scrubbing afterwards when clearing up. Another one for the memory book 😊

During May we have been working on the Archaeology badge, the girls were given items to then come up with a short story about where they might have come from. We had a Chinese Scroll which apparently belonged to a Chinese Queen many hundreds of years ago.

A Copper Kettle that belonged to an old lady who had 15 children and died by the kettle at 96 years of age.

We had a vase which came from a palace and was bad luck and last but not least a skull which had no teeth and belonged to Rob who was killed by his brother for being mean and nasty!! Their imaginations are brilliant and we love listening to them and how they make up these stories.

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The following week we went up to Carmel Woods with our written stories and buried them. Each group drew a map so that when we go back next week they will be able to find their buried treasure (Letter) Well, that's the theory anyway, you'll just have to wait and see..



Being part of Brownies isn't all about gaining badges it's about forging friendships and making memories that last a life time and hopefully learning skills that the girls can then pass onto sisters, brothers even parents and grandparents.



It's a place where everyone can be silly, enjoy themselves without being self-conscious. When the girls see the leaders joining in the games they know nobody can



look as daft as us.


If you'd like to volunteer to help or have a daughter/granddaughter aged 7-10yrs old who would like to join us then please register via [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk) or any questions email us at [carmelbrownies2024@outlook.com](mailto:carmelbrownies2024@outlook.com)

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## HOLYWELL ART CLUB SUMMER EXHIBITION (Lynda Wilson)

Look out for the Art Club's Summer Exhibition at Afonwen Craft & Antique Centre.

Friday August 30th. Saturday 31st. 10am to 4pm. Why not call in for a chat and maybe get some painting tips? As always there will be a great selection of excellent, high standard work, framed and unframed.

SOME EXAMPLES SHOWN HERE



## HOLYWELL AREA COMMUNITY MUSEUM (Mike Jones)

With the gentle arrival of Summer, the Museum Community Warm Hub has come to an end. We were very fortunate to get funding from Flintshire County Council and through the good offices of our volunteers managed to feed over 200 people in a warm and inviting environment. Thank you to everyone involved.

We now have a Thomas Pennant exhibition detailing his life and works. Thomas Pennant lived at Downing Hall between Mostyn and Whitford, being an antiquarian, traveller, naturalist and writer. His book *The History of the Parishes of Whitford and Holywell* was published in 1796 with many illustrations by Moses Griffith. Our thanks go to Paul Brighton.

Another exhibition being organised reflects the Darwen & Mostyn Iron works which dominated the banks of the River Dee at Mostyn until its closure in 1964 following its takeover by Arusha Industries which culminated in a stock exchange investigation and criminal proceedings.

Our weekly Monday bingo session ably hosted by volunteer Colin goes from strength to strength. Everyone is welcome.

This week we installed a large white porcelain trough at the front of the Museum which will certainly brighten up the High Street. It originates from The Point of Ayr Colliery and was used by the ponies which worked underground. Holywell Garden Centre has planted it up giving a really nice display.

Last Saturday we got involved with the Holywell Car Show which was held in the High Street with cars on show including MGs, Rovers, Fords and a Gilbern, the only car built in Wales.

The 80th anniversary D-Day is upon us. At this time of celebration and reflection we are pleased that local historian Russ Warburton has organised the Museum D-Day display. It is sure to be well worth a visit.

Holywell is once again going for a prize in the Wales in Bloom competition which starts this month. To this end the Museum Knit and Natter Craft Group are organising a floral St. Winefride display to complement the hanging baskets which will soon be going up.

As ever, please call in, have a look around and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee.

As usual our thanks go to Holywell Town Council, Wales & West Housing Association and not forgetting, our band of volunteers who do so much to keep the museum functioning.

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## HEARTFELT ART & CRAFT FAIRS From Concept to reality.

This year, it is 10 years since commencement of the family run, art and craft fairs, held at Halkyn Parish Hall & Library.

The first charity fundraising fair held in April 2014 was in aid of Claire House Children's Hospice, and thereafter over 20 different charities have benefited from donations raised as a result of the local craft fairs.

The inspiration to commence the community non-profit events came just by chance when I attended a craft fair on the Wirral in 2013, soon after retiring. Sat at the event, with my purchases, a coffee and a slice of home baked cake, I started to think about organising craft fairs myself, all it would involve, and how we could make a difference. At that time I was exploring ideas about what to do next. Now retired, I hoped to engage more in my local community and the Parish Hall was on our doorstep, a perfect venue to hold events.

I came home excited about the prospect of organising something and thought it would be wonderful to involve charity volunteers and raise money for the charities through the sale of refreshments, home baked cakes, a raffle and a tombola.

I had the vision of organising a public event, with traditional values such as a craft fair like I'd been to many times in the past with my Mum and Nan, offering table top sales, cake, bunting and all!

As a keen amateur photographer, having more time on my hands, I started to attend many art and craft fairs, art exhibitions and visited art galleries, all of which gave me much pleasure. Having managerial and organisation skills I believed I could bring art and craft to the attention of our local community and fundraise for amazing charities at the same time. That was the concept, to support talented artisans, raise much needed funds for charities and increase public awareness of what the charities could do to help others.

Engaging with so many charities and volunteers, I learnt a huge amount and was surprised, if not alarmed to learn that so many charities depended solely on public donations to provide the amazing service to us all.

I believed that offering an opportunity for extremely talented local artisan crafters and artists to exhibit for sale their bespoke work, whilst at the same time raise much needed funds for charities, the events would be heartfelt. So that was it!

The events would be known as Heartfelt Art & Craft fairs.

Where to start? I had the concept, the ideas, a venue, and bundles of enthusiasm and determination to make the events happen; I had even researched event licensing, public liability and other areas of event management but what about stall holders; more than anything, I needed artists and crafters to attend and showcase their amazing work, available for sale to the public.

I needed to share my idea with others, so I joined the Flintshire Art & Craft Network, which gave me opportunity to present the concept and meet many artists. I also approached artisans in attendance at other craft fairs I visited. In the early stages, I contacted Rosie Robertson, a charity fundraiser and a hugely talented artisan, who I knew well; asking her if she'd be interested in attending a local craft fair and she kindly provided me with details of many other artisans I could contact.

As Rosie had run charity fundraising craft fairs herself she was very informative and supportive.

So there it started. Creating social media Facebook and Twitter pages, engaging with local press and radio, and having the support of local businesses all helped to share the news and raise awareness of the fundraising events. Professionally created Event banners, posters, fliers and direction signs helped and continue to help raise awareness of each event, and direct people to the Parish Hall on Halkyn Mountain. The area is unfamiliar to some but visitors often travel far and wide to attend. Local attendance and support has always been superb and we're very grateful for that. Success is a team effort. Thank you. Diolch.

My husband John and I together with my son Jack, and

my wonderful parents, Maureen and Keith, working together with volunteers and many supporters, were the team behind the scenes. We very much enjoyed organising the craft fairs for 8 years. During this period of time we all experienced the unprecedented difficulties presented by the pandemic, but that's an entirely different story.

Just ahead of our craft fair held in November 2021, due to competing demands and an impending house move, we made the difficult decision to cease organising the craft fairs.

We really hoped that the events would continue in our absence and following approach, we were delighted when Rosie & Neil Robertson agreed to take over the management of Heartfelt Art & Craft Fairs in 2022. Over the last two years, together with their supportive family and friends, they successfully organised and managed the craft fairs adding their personal and creative stamp. They were committed and ensured continued community engagement and close involvement with local charities was maintained, raising over £5,700 for the charities they supported and worked alongside.

So here we are in 2024. Ten years later. Over this period of time, a total of £34,303 has been raised and donated to very worthy charitable causes.

Each and every one of us involved in making the events happen, the supporters, the talented artisans, the charity volunteers and the wonderful general public, should celebrate in the fair's continued success and longevity and long may they continue. We are sincerely grateful.

Our craft fairs this year will be held at Halkyn Parish Hall between 10am and 3pm on Saturday 22nd June and Saturday 16th November. On 22nd June, we will be supporting volunteers fundraising for the wonderful charity, Guide Dogs Cymru (UK) The charity we will be supporting in November is yet to be confirmed.

Thank you all for your continued support.

Diolch i bawb am eich cefnogaeth parhaus.

Sue & John



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#### NEXT EDITION

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#### THE FIVE VILLAGES CHRONICLE ASSOCIATION

Established in 1987, the Five Villages Chronicle Association publishes the *Five Villages Chronicle*, a quarterly community magazine which is delivered to most households in the Flintshire villages of Carmel, Gorsedd, Lloc, Pantasaph and Whitford, with 1,300 copies of each edition currently being printed and distributed by a dedicated team of volunteers.

Chairman - Peter Erasmus (01352 746896); Secretary - Melanie Wallis (01352 712369); Treasurer - Bob Brown (01352 710967); Advertisements - Melanie Wallis (01352 712369); Distribution - Chris Dolphin (01352 713415); Jonathan Duggan-Keen, Terry Ireland, Robert Moore. At present there is an editorial committee.

We do have a web page where previous issues may be downloaded at [www.5villages.org.uk](http://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](mailto:editor@5villages.org.uk) or post: FVC, Bodlondob, Chapel Street, Caerwys, Flintshire, CH7 5AE (01352 720477).**

Please send original prints, not photocopies; all pictures and photographs will be returned. Though contributors can choose to remain anonymous in the publication, we will not publish material without knowing the name and contact details of contributors. Previous editions of the Five Villages Chronicle are available to view at the Flintshire Record Office, Hawarden and at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

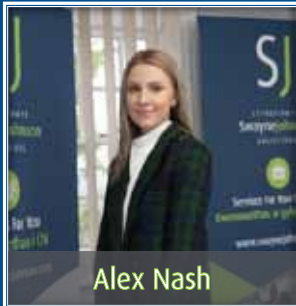
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