

Llais Llandyrnog Voice

✉ llandyrnognews@gmail.com 🐦 @LlaisLlandyrnog

January 2021 – Volume 6 – Edition 4

Happy New Year to all our readers. We have survived a most difficult time yet been able to publish online every month. Thanks to Anwen and the team who never give up.

We are indebted to Dan the Butcher and his team and to Ros the postmistress who have managed to keep some sort of normality in these awkward recent months.

Litter in the community is never a problem thanks to our loyal litter-picker, David Plumb who fills numerous red sacks on his rounds.

The flowers on the roundabout cheer us up – we should surely win an award!

The Cocoa Rooms have been redecorated and newly carpeted whilst not in use. Coffee mornings and meetings have been greatly missed. Hopefully sometime soon we will be able to meet again.

Thanks to a Covid grant and Community Council funds the children will be enjoying new equipment on Cae Nant before long.

There have never been so many walkers and their dogs out in the fresh air and taking in the surroundings. A new seat has been installed at Celynog crossroads, a chance to rest and admire the views. Stiles have been repaired, some replaced with gates thanks to vigilant walkers and the co-operation of land-owners.

The Community Council has held regular meetings on Zoom – strange but productive. Our community remains strong and supportive in spite of everything. Thank you to all who contribute to the *Llais* in any way. We need you – keep on coming. It is you who make a good read.

*Ruth Griffith,
Chair, Llais Llandyrnog Voice committee
and Llandyrnog Community Council*



They came (December 2017)...



...and they left (December 2020).

It's been a very sad sight, seeing the silos and other machinery and equipment being removed from the Arla site. Let's hope that some activity will return to the site in 2021.

**Thank you for your support
throughout the year– it's extremely
pleasing to report that your generous
contributions have enabled us to
print this edition in full colour, to bring
some cheer to the New Year.**

Around the village

Christmas videos: residents and former residents of the village have been recorded singing Christmas songs. Children from the village, along with Elen (Y Berth) and family from Italy recorded the song 'Ti Fan Hyn'. This was a project by the National Eisteddfod and featured 26 choirs from all over the country, and further afield. Elen and family recorded their contribution at home in Italy. Go to youtube.com and search for 'Ti Fan Hyn'.

Daniel Lloyd also recorded a video, 'Hwyl yr Wyl'. This was released to raise money to create Theatr na nÓg projects for young people that will, in turn, employ freelancers. It was recorded at the Stiwt, Rhosllannerchrugog. Search for 'Hwyl yr Wyl' (selecting the Theatr na nÓg option) on youtube.com.

The roundabout: Winter bedding plants have replaced the summer flowers on the roundabout. Thanks once again to Ruth Griffith and Bryn Davies from the Community Council for their hard work. This appreciation can be gauged by the number of people that comment on the colourful roundabout.

Best wishes: to David Owen, Prompt Travel for a speedy recovery.

Thanks: Wendy Grey-Lloyd would like to express her sincere gratitude for all the cards and phone calls that she received during her recent hospital stay.

In particular she would like to thank her immediate neighbours: Bryn and Anwen Davies, Richard and Iona Davies and the children of both families for the outstanding help and support that she has received from them during the last nine months. Words are inadequate for how she feels about their care and concern towards her during these difficult times. Diolch yn fawr.

Welcome: to Karen and Marc Owen to their new home in Nant Glyd. Hopefully there'll be an opportunity to meet more of your fellow villagers later on in the year.

Congratulations to Pentre Mawr Country House Wedding Venue on being awarded a Best

of Britain award from Bridebook, the wedding planning business. It is included in the list of the top wedding venues in Wales on Bridebook's website.

Hearty congratulations also to our butcher, Dan, and Hannah on their engagement, New Year's Eve.

Condolences: we send our sincerest sympathy to Ivan Butler, treasurer of Llais Llandyrnog Voice on his bereavement; his mother has passed away.

A heartfelt appeal

Unfortunately, almost all of us know someone who has caught COVID-19 or died of it. During the recent holiday period, it has been blatantly obvious that people aren't aware of the guidance of Coronavirus Alert Level 4, or are choosing to ignore the rules. If you are uncertain, visit <https://gov.wales/alert-level-4-frequently-asked-questions>.

The NHS is fragile and hospital staff are exhausted. For the sake of your loved ones, please keep to the rules.

Tambo's Total Care Garden Maintenance

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Contact Oli Williams

Mob: 07501022017

Email: ohwilliams75@gmail.com

Llandyrnog oil syndicate

This group aims to allow members in the Llandyrnog area to order oil at a reduced rate through a group booking. The group will benefit everyone if everyone ensures they follow the simple guidelines below.

It works as follows:

1. Anyone interested in joining the group will send in a request on Facebook. Information about the syndicate is only given in this way because of the complexities of GDPR regulations about holding personal information. It is appreciated that not everyone has access to Facebook, therefore if someone wishes to take advantage of the reduced rate, perhaps a relative or friend could join the group on his or her behalf.

The organiser (Jason in the first instance) will accept that request, assuming the person lives in the Llandyrnog area or within a 3 mile radius.

2. On the 20th of each month (excluding June, July, August and December) the organiser will place a post in the group asking for orders. Members must place an order by the 25th of each month at the latest. The ONLY details required are the amount of oil people want (minimum 500 ltrs) and if they just want a FILL or PART FILL of their tank. If they state that they want a FILL, the total order may be over the amount of oil they order (i.e. the tank may take more oil than they have ordered). We DO NOT want people to share their address or any contact details at any time in the group.

3. On the 26th of each active month the organiser will phone a number of oil suppliers and get the best quote for the total number of litres ordered. This information (i.e. the supplier and their contact details) will then be posted on the group and ALL MEMBERS WHO INDICATED THAT THEY WANTED OIL WILL NEED TO CONTACT THE SUPPLIER WITHIN 48 HOURS. ANYONE WHO STATES THAT THEY WANTED OIL AND THEN DOES NOT PLACE AN ORDER

WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE GROUP. This may sound harsh, but the syndicate will only work if we are able to get quotes on amounts of oil that are then followed through. E.g., if we get a quote for a total of 5000 litres, we need to order 5000 litres. That means all who said they wanted to order need to follow through by ordering that amount from the agreed supplier.

4. Members need to accept that if other members do not follow through with their order, this could result in the price per litre of oil rising. The oil suppliers will be giving discounts based on an agreed total order. However, we hope this will not happen!
5. When members place their order with the agreed supplier it will be their responsibility to inform the supplier of any issues such as access to the tank, dogs in the garden, locks on gates, etc. Obviously each member will pay individually for the order after delivery.
6. If some miss the deadline for ordering (i.e. 2 days after the 25th) they are welcome to contact the named supplier and ask if their order can be added. This is likely if the tanker has not started the delivery, but cannot be guaranteed.

Christmas Appeal



The collection at the Village Hall for the homeless in Wrexham had a wonderful response – 50 boxes and 12 large bagfuls of clothing thanks you very much. The donations were distributed the following week and the recipients were extremely grateful.

Readers' gallery



The Church of St Stephen, Bodfari



The 2019 flower and produce show – doesn't the sight of many people gathered together indoors look unfamiliar now?!



A stoat visiting Y Gilfach. (All photographs: Martin Fraser)

James Davies, MP for Vale of Clwyd

james.davies.mp@parliament.uk

Constituency office: 01745 888920

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Wet pastures in the vale



The Arla site, taken 26 November.


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The Christmas pig raising the spirits in Parc Tŷ'n Llan – Chris and Ruth Griffith, and Chris and Arfon Pritchard seem to be enjoying its company immensely! (Photo: Earle Wright)



A cunning fox eyeing the birds' food. (Photo: John Rowlands)



Thanks to the Rev. Michael Williams for decorating the lions once again.

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From the Rector

Happy New Year! As the Christmas period draws to a close, we reflect on a very different Christmas this year. Plans had to be changed and we were unable to gather in the usual way with family and friends, but the message of Christmas remains the same – ‘Joy to the world, the Lord is come.’

We hope and pray 2021 will be a better year for everyone, bringing peace and healing in our world. At the start of every New Year, we express our personal hopes and fears for the year to come, but this year we have a common purpose as we hope and pray the vaccines will be effective and there will be an end to the current restrictions. Our hopes need to be tempered by realism; it won't happen overnight, and we will have to continue to observe government guidelines for quite some time.

New Year brings a time of looking back and a time of looking forward. Who do we need to thank for their support and kindness last year, who can we help and support as we look to all 2021 will bring? We give thanks for NHS workers, for care workers, bus drivers, cleaners, shop staff, and all who have worked tirelessly in these challenging times.

In 2020 we learnt many new words, not least Coronavirus and COVID-19. Most of us had never heard of Zoom or Teams, we didn't know how to mute and unmute, but we have learnt new skills that will carry us into the coming year. Social distancing and lockdown have become bywords and trying hard to recognise and hear someone wearing a face mask is a constant challenge. Wonderful though technology is, we have missed the human contact that is so important to us all.

Yet 2020 has been a year of the generosity and support of people around us. Many people, who had only been on nodding terms before, have shared their experiences and supported one another, socially distanced of course.

As this challenging year ends, we look with hope and healing to a better 2021. We

recognise we won't return to the place we were before, but we have learnt to place greater value on the things that really matter.

The message of Christmas is still a message for the New Year; Emmanuel, God is with us. And God is with us whatever happens. Jesus the Light of the World brings healing and hope to a world in need of love and care.

‘Joy to the world, the Lord is come.’

With every blessing for a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Val Rowlands

Denbighshire County Council

Merfyn Parry



Contact details:

Mobile: 07836 208446

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From our Councillor

It's New Year's Eve 2020 when I'm writing this article; it is probably one of the strangest New Year's Eves since the Millennium one in December 1999 to welcome the 21st century. That was a bit of a flop as well, if I remember.

Looking back over the years, Llandyrnog has had some epic New Year's Eve parties in the White Horse and Golden Lion with various themes for the fancy dress in the Golden Lion, going back to when Ossie and Eva ran the place. The annual meeting on the square of all the villagers who were still awake to bring in the New Year has been a tradition for many a year. 2021 I hope is a year we can say goodbye to COVID-19 with the welcome of the vaccines that offer hope to us all again to get back to some normality, be able to spend time with our loved ones again and hopefully hug the ones we love. Children can return to normal schooling with their friends and perhaps next New Year's Eve we can all gather in the square to welcome 2022 in safety.

Council business is still all online meetings; we had budget briefings in December and as you can imagine, managing some services within the county is going to be challenging with reduced funding. I can say that it's been stressful at times, helping businesses and the self-employed to access grants and talk them through the process. I would like to think that we have done quite well, although it's not over yet. Not everyone has been catered for and that's been the hardest. Even my own business and my family's businesses have been severely impacted by this coronavirus that we will never forget.

I have no new news regarding the creamery, only that it's getting stripped of its equipment – I'll let you know if I hear more.

I thank everyone for your support over the year and I wish you all a happy and healthy New Year. Don't hesitate to contact me if you think I can help.

Cllr Merfyn Parry



With thanks to all who decorated the porch and the church and to Helen Davies for the angels and shepherds outside the porch door – they made it safely to Bethlehem!

New Year's Eve in Llandyrnog 1999

Those of us who were fortunate enough to know the late Peter Wilson, Monfa, are aware that he enjoyed documenting events in Llandyrnog in verse. The following comes from his booklet *Strolling: a look, in rhyme, at village life in Llandyrnog 1992–2003*. This was a selection of his poems which appeared in the magazine of the parish of Llandyrnog and Llangwyfan, *Village Voice*. This, of course was, the predecessor to our *Llais Llandyrnog Voice*. Thanks to Wyn Wilson for permission to feature this poem. Unfortunately some of the characters are no longer with us; however we'll remember them with fondness.

New Year's Eve was dry but cold and the moon was almost full.
The people flocked into the pubs, they were really wonderful.
A lot were wearing fancy dress, they made a pretty sight.
They'd really made an effort, to brighten up the night.

Joe McCool looked regal, as was his better half,
And when I saw my nephew Russ, I really had to laugh.
For him and Nigel Evans, with Geraint and Elfor too
Were dressed in sixties gear as they supped the local brew.

The wigs they wore were massive, they looked like Jason King,
With trousers flared and glasses dark, they hadn't missed a thing.
Then "Mother Christmas" came in view, and as she turned the corner,
I saw it was my niece-in-law, the lovely blonde named Lorna.

Clive her husband, he was there, dressed up as a friar,
They made a lovely couple as he stood there by her.
Rob Dowell was a cowboy, with a Stetson and a gun
And Tony Burge was there as well, joining in the fun.

A number of Scottish exiles were sitting round a table,
Singing songs of home, as loud as they were able.
I joined in the chorus, but my accent wasn't right –
To them, of course, Hogmanay is a very special night.

There were many others in fancy dress, too numerous to mention.
If prizes were being given, they'd all be in contention.
'The Mafia' too were out in force, Kit Doolan and her gang,
And on the stroke of midnight, out of their chairs they sprang.

We gathered in the village square and then we started singing,
The strains of Auld Lang Syne rang out and we were really swinging.
We wished each other 'All the best' for the year to come.
It was a night for happiness, no one there was glum.

Then some went back into the pub and some went home to bed.
I'm afraid I did the former because I am so easily led.
Everyone was happy and very friendly too –
My wish is for that feeling to last the whole year through.

Peter Wilson

Notes from Plas Ashpool

Well, here we are again in lockdown. The shortest day has been and gone and we can only look forward to a brighter year in so many different ways.

Thinking about content for the newsletter this month has made me realise how much our lives are made up of small (sometimes large) events and contact with other people.

I don't know about you, but I find that I am having to turn increasingly inwards to the minute things that are happening around us. However, on further reflection, aren't we so lucky that modern technology can help us keep our eyes open to a wider world and communicate with friends and family in far flung places? I am learning to love my computer at last.

Nothing much to report this month, so I would just like to leave you with these two uplifting posts which appeared in my inbox.

Smile more – Think less – Be present – Give more – Expect less.

We are not all in the same boat
We are in the same storm
Some have yachts
Some, canoes
And some are drowning.
Just be kind
And help whoever you can.

To quote Scottish comedienne Janet Godley “put on your emotional life jacket and look after each other”.

Until the spring,



Fiona Bell

Useful telephone numbers

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Out of hours: 03001 233068

North Wales Police: 101 (Non-emergency)
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Is Mother Nature confused?



Every year, snowdrops first appear in the garden of Myfanwy and Gwilym, Tŷ Newydd around the 11th of November. This year, however, they appeared on November 2nd.

And a daffodil came into bloom at Maes-y-Wern on 13 December, the earliest ever.



A sign of the changing seasons? Has anyone else in the village noted a similar trend?

Llais Llandyrnog Voice Committee:

Ruth Griffith (Chair), Ivan Butler (Treasurer and Composer), Anne Rowley-Williams, Anwen Davies (Composer), Gwen Butler, Jack Crowther, Bryn Davies (subscriptions), Ann and Iestyn Jones-Evans (translators), Rhian Jones, Rod and Margaret Williams, Sian Gwyn-Ifan (translator).

Send all news contributions and articles to llandyrnognews@gmail.com.

The DPJ Foundation tractor run

You may well have been made aware of a Tractor Run that came through the village Saturday, 19th December – if you did not see it, you may well have heard it.

It was organised by the local DPJ Foundation team that provides mental health support for those in agriculture and has a local team of professionally trained counsellors who are available 24/7. It was like a breath of fresh air seeing so many young people getting involved in the Foundation and discussing mental health issues openly and not as a taboo subject – young people who have full time jobs, however willing to help friends that may be in a dark place or struggling mentally.

The sum collected was £1730. If you have contributed, well a massive thank you.

To be honest, I felt very privileged to be asked to join the team. As soon as the request came through, I sought out the usual suspects from my 'contacts'. Even though it was a Saturday before Christmas everyone was willing and able – indeed looking forward since not a lot has happened since March. I know this crowd fairly well: there is no such thing as bad weather – just wrong clothes, as they say!

Coronavirus measures had to be very strict. Unlike our usual events, there were no catering facilities, no raffle, no halfway lunch stop. Just turn up, stay on your tractor, register – via a sanitised clipboard of course and non-returnable pens – put your money in the bucket and as soon as we're sorted, we'll be off.

Anyway, about sixty tractors attended and a few old Land Rovers. The tractors ranged from the 1950's to 2020 and we took this half-mile-long colourful noisy snake on a 25 mile run through various villages, including Llandyrnog of course. We were back in Ruthin by 12:30 – well ready for a comfort break and lunch. Driving at height and at 10mph gives many a chance to rubber-neck,

as it were, and it's surprising what they tell you – they have probably spotted an old tractor or implement in corner of a hedge somewhere – all hush-hush of course!

All went well surprisingly and no-one broke down or got lost – it is not unusual to start with one run and end up with two. However, those stories are for another time

Yes, we did make memories, we did enjoy. However, for our younger friends it was an appropriate time to reflect on their friends that were not with them – but could have been if they had known about The DPJ Foundation – it's as simple as that.

Bryn Davies

If you wish to know more about The DPJ Foundation and its excellent work, visit www.thedpjjfoundation.org.uk.



Tractors and Land Rovers came in all shapes, states and sizes. (Thanks to the following for the photos: top – Amy Weyman; above left and right – Phil McLoughlin)

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Three places

Penycloddiau – the place on our doorstep

I have been lucky enough to get a few stamps on my passport over the years but what we have on our doorstep trumps them all! One corner of the sofa in our living room is ‘reserved for the boss’, as the children say. From that corner, I am ashamed to say that I have looked at Penycloddiau almost every day since 2003, but many years passed by before I actually went up it.

Anyway, over the last few years I have been going up Penycloddiau regularly, whether with family or friends, or on my own. We’ve had a few hot drinks and even Prosecco or a birthday cake on the top.

Within half an hour’s gentle stroll, there are spectacular views in all directions. Snowdonia to the west, the coast to the north, and more industrial views to the east. And then the patchwork of towns, villages and agricultural land, when you look back up the vale.

And there’s always something new or different. During the summer, as the day drew to a close, the sight of the deep and rich sunset light over the lush green fields of the vale was unforgettable. If I were an artist, every picture would definitely be different.

I don’t know how many times we have said how lucky we have been in our area during the past incredible year. It’s perfectly true.

Sorrento – the place that makes me happy

We’ve been to Sorrento a few times. Apart from (or as well as) the fact that we got married there, there’s something very magical about Sorrento that always gives me the feel-good factor. It’s a seaside town on the Amalfi coast, and the most direct way to get there is to fly to Naples. Sorrento is about an hour’s drive from the airport and when driving through the outskirts of Naples I think of the successful (and tragic) period in the eighties when Diego Maradona put this deprived city on the map. It’s the simple things that count here. Here I can forget about everything in a



Rheinallt and family on Penycloddiau

nice hotel surrounded by lemon trees, looking down at the setting sun of the bay of Naples with Vesuvius in the background.

We enjoy a stroll down to the port or through the narrow streets where the bustle of shops, gelaterias and ristoranti bring the place to life. The ice cream is unbeatable and, as one would expect, enjoying the pizzas and pasta is part of the experience. Simple and delicious food at its best.

The historical aspect of this area is fascinating, with the ancient cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum which were buried under volcanic dust when Vesuvius erupted. Hopefully someday we can return.

Berlin — the place that made history come alive

I'm not much of an historian but there is hardly another city that epitomizes so much of Europe’s ‘recent’ history. History in our textbooks has often felt like something from

Three places ... ctd

another age, but it is sobering to think that the horrors of the World War II happened just 25 years before I was born.

Usually, we like taking the 'red bus' around a new city to get to know the place a little. This bus tour certainly brought the textbook to life. The skeletons of bombed churches were still standing. Alongside these old buildings were modern, spacious, plain-looking buildings, witnessing a city that had to be effectively rebuilt.

Then there was the outline of the wall. The wall that triggered the Cold War and was built in 1961...and then featured in every newspaper in the world when it was demolished as recently as 1989. The wall that had caused so much pain. I tried to imagine where the efforts of broken families to get together had happened.

There are also a host of memorials and other museums to remind us of the city's history.

A short paragraph does not do justice to Berlin's recent past, nor does it convey that it is a modern city that looks to the future as much as to the past. This amazing city is well worth a visit if you get the opportunity to do so.

Rheinallt Griffith

Ysgol Bryn Clwyd

The school's term was curtailed again last month, but a joyous Christmas video was recorded before the closure. Visit [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) to see 'Ysgol Bryn Clwyd's Christmas Cracker'.



Recipe

Sri Lankan salmon curry

Something different after the Christmas feasting. Serves 4 – ready in 15 minutes.

4 level tbsps korma curry paste
200ml reduced fat coconut milk
1 tsp cornflour
200g cherry tomatoes
4 skinless and boneless salmon fillets cut into bite-size chunks
small broccoli head broken into small florets.

Put the curry paste and 2 tbsps water into a medium sized saucepan and place over a medium-low heat. Cook gently for 5 minutes stirring often.

Add the cornflour to 1 tablespoon of coconut milk and stir to make paste. Stir this, the rest of the coconut milk, 150ml boiling water and the broccoli into the curry paste, together with a little salt and pepper and simmer for 5 minutes.

Add the tomatoes and salmon, together with the juice of half a lemon and simmer for 5 minutes or until the salmon and broccoli are just cooked through.

Serve hot with boiled white rice.

Rona Aldrich



On behalf of landowners in the area: please ensure that you close all gates when walking across farmland, and keep your dog on a lead

Matters discussed in the December meeting of Llandyrnog Community Council

- ◆ Denbighshire County Council wanted to know how much money the Community Council required to function for 21/22 – it was decided to leave this until a draft budget has been prepared.
- ◆ Although salt bins have been placed on the roads around Llangwyfan, this has been done without consultation with the residents. However, it is hoped that DCC would contact the residents and enter into a dialogue.
- ◆ A letter of thanks has been received from the Denbigh Food Bank who are extremely grateful for the £200 contribution.
- ◆ It has been confirmed that the new Chief Executive Officer of MHC is Mr Niall Kelly who wishes to build and maintain the good relationship MHC has with the community.
- ◆ A Christmas tree has been purchased and erected in the Churchyard. Again this year Glyn, Carol and family have paid for it – an extremely generous annual gesture. Thanks to David Weyman for giving his time and fuel to collect the tree from Llanfair TH.
- ◆ Cllr Butler attended a virtual meeting of the Ruthin Hospital League of Friends on behalf of the Council. The work at the hospital is progressing well, the new build is complete and the physiotherapy department has moved. There is a new Matron in the hospital; however, the wards have been closed until all staff have been inoculated.
- ◆ Cllr Thomas reported that the school has recently had a health and safety meeting – all is in good condition and there are new staff toilets.
- ◆ Cae Nant – the proposal has been out for consultation and it was decided to proceed with ordering new play equipment from Wicksteed – the order to be placed and the work programmed.
- ◆ Cocoa Rooms – a new carpet has been ordered and will be fitted early in the New Year.
- ◆ Concerns have been expressed again about the speed of traffic on the main roads around the Llangwyfan area during shift change times at MHC. This matter to be raised in the next meeting of the Liaison Group.
- ◆ It was reported that the gullies at the bottom of Red Lane were blocked and this matter to be reported to DCC.
- ◆ A new bench at Celynog crossroads has been installed. Thanks to Mike Jones of G L Jones Welding, Ruthin for making it, and to Glyn Williams for installing it.



Veronica Roberts, enjoying a well-earned rest and admiring the view. Veronica, with her husband, Hugh, suggested the installation of a bench at Celynog crossroads.



HANDS



FACE



SPACE



AIR

Dyffryn Chapel

Apart from the normal Zoom services with the Rev Andras Iago on Sundays, a 'normal' service was held at the chapel on Sunday 13th December. It was wonderful to have a service together, whilst adhering to the usual safety precautions. The following Sunday morning, the children and youngsters held a Christmas Service online with members of different families taking part. Thanks to Catrin and Ffiona for co-ordinating the service.

Wednesday evening 23rd December, a carol service was held online for the Circuit Chapels with members choosing their favourite readings or carol – a most uplifting service.

A special service was held online on Christmas Morning

Y Gymdeithas A most entertaining Bingo Night was held online Monday 14th, organized by Bethan, Alys and Leah, with Anna giving a vote of thanks.

Welcome to Ifor Jones, who has retired as an electronic design engineer with Alcatel, Chippenham and has come to live temporarily with his twin brother Arthur at 4 Maes Tyrnog.

Thank you, David



Ruth Griffith presented a hamper of goods on behalf of the community to David Plumb in appreciation of his work on the village roads.

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