
Llais Llandyrnog Voice

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October 2020 – Volume 6 – Edition 1

Clwyd Wynne

The whole village was sad to learn of the death of Clwyd Wynne recently at the age of 93. Clwyd lived his whole life in Llandyrnog and contributed so much to village life. His son Robbie has written the following tribute:

Thomas CLWYD Wynne, born 16 April 1927 to Thomas Charles Wynne and Harriet Wynne.

Clwyd went to Llandyrnog Controlled School then to Denbigh Grammar after passing his 11 plus. He worked in the family business, the Golden Lion Stores, alongside his father, until he was called up to serve in the Royal Marines towards the end of World War 2. His unit was due to go to fight the Japanese but thankfully this never happened, as the Allies dropped the atomic bomb and Japan subsequently surrendered. Clwyd was then posted to Egypt as driver to Admiral McCall, the Commander-in-Chief of the Middle East. He saw Field Marshal Montgomery, King Farouk and Lord Mountbatten (who was on his way to India as Viceroy) but, more importantly, Clwyd met up again with his lifelong friend (and fellow Llandyrnogite) Meirion Parry – ‘Par’.

After his military service, Clwyd returned home to the village and the shop. In 1956, he

married Dorice Davies of Bryneglwys, who was nursing at Llangwyfan Sanatorium and they moved to Dorwyd, Church Square, where Robbie and Dylan were born. When Clwyd’s father Tom died, they all moved to the Golden Lion Stores. However, the 60s and 70s were changing times in the shop. Clwyd stopped selling petrol and doing deliveries and took on the role of sub-postmaster. The shop and post office later moved across the road to the site opposite the Golden Lion, where it stands today.

Sadly, in 1990, Dorice had a stroke and suddenly passed away, but Clwyd continued to run the business, with the help of Gwyneth Roberts of Bodfari and, of course, Llandyrnog’s Sylvia Evans (Pearce).

On retirement, Clwyd started travelling on numerous cruises all around the world, often with ‘Par’, Meirion Parry, for company. As Clwyd's health deteriorated, he was quite clear in his wishes to stay in the village. This was only possible with the wonderful care that he received from Vale Senior Care of Denbigh, sister Nerys and nephew Tony.

There are not many people who can say that they were born, lived (for most of their lives) and ended their lives in a village they loved.

Thanks to all who have contributed articles to this edition and to those who have given Financial contributions towards the upkeep of our magazine – it’s greatly appreciated

Wedding bells

Congratulations to John and Olwen Rowlands, Maes y Wern, who will be celebrating their golden wedding anniversary on 17 October. Olwen must be very proud when she looks at photographs of their wedding day, since she made her dress herself.

Congratulations also to Danny and Vicky Owen, Craiglea, who were married at the Church of St Tyrnog on 12 September.

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Recipe of the month

Mississippi mud pie

An easy and delicious pudding. A firm favourite!

You will need a baking tin 25cm diameter and 3cm deep, lined with foil.

Ingredients

Base

80g digestive biscuits

80g ginger biscuits

70g butter

Filling

200g pink and white marshmallows

300ml double cream

45ml milk

Half teaspoon cinnamon

50ml Tia Maria

200g dark chocolate

2 tablespoons strong instant coffee

Method

To make the base, melt the butter and add the crushed biscuits. Spread the mixture in the tin using the back of a spoon to firm. Put in the fridge to set.

Put marshmallows, milk and cinnamon in a small saucepan. Heat and stir constantly until melted. Cool a little.

Melt the chocolate in a bowl over a pan of simmering water. Cool a little.

Whip the cream until it just holds its shape.

Mix the Tia Maria and coffee into the marshmallow mixture.

Fold the chocolate and cream into the marshmallows and pour the mixture over the base. Place in the fridge for a few hours to set.

Before serving, finely grate some chocolate on the top.

Iona Davies

James Davies, MP for Vale of Clwyd

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Staycations – Cymrucations

What's all this fuss about holidays in one's home country – the staycation? That's what we Davies's have been doing for a long time, since we started a family almost 30 years ago.

When the children were young, I must admit I couldn't even think about the hassle of travelling abroad with them (sorry Lisa, Manon and Ifan – and Bryn), therefore we'd choose a destination with plenty of activities for children, such as Torquay, Scarborough, Devon (although not strictly speaking our home country!), Pembrokeshire and Gower.

We crossed the seas once, to Tramore, County Waterford in Ireland. Our flat was right on the seashore – we only had to cross the road to reach the world's biggest sandpit (a three-mile long beach). We quickly found that Ireland at that time was definitely not family-friendly – a park there was a grassy area. Fortunately, the weather was excellent and we had a marvellous week, going from beach to beach mostly.

But as the children became older, they started to say they wanted to go abroad. Bryn had recently been to Brittany with Ruthin Choir and said one night that he would like to take us there for a caravanning holiday.

So off we went to Brittany in the summer of 2004. I remember a well-known Welsh broadcaster saying on the radio that he had a week's holiday in Brittany and a fortnight's worth of rain. Such was our experience as well. Do you remember the devastation that Boscastle in Cornwall suffered because of floods? That's the rain we had as well, as Brittany isn't very far from Cornwall as the seagull flies. Strangely enough, there was no mention of going abroad after that.

The following summer we went to Broadhaven, Pembrokeshire. A lovely holiday

– a modern, clean and tidy house, within a five minutes' walk of the seashore, and good weather. And for quite a few summers after that we went to Pembrokeshire, to Broadhaven and Tenby, on our holidays and thoroughly enjoyed them.

After starting to feel that we had seen everything we wanted to see in Pembrokeshire, we decided to venture further east and took a holiday in Mumbles, near Swansea. An excellent holiday destination – you have the city, the seaside and the countryside all within a few miles of each other. It's a very busy place – heavy traffic on Oystermouth Road, which is the main road into Mumbles – and is often mentioned in Welsh road traffic reports on the radio. So, it was great being able to walk into the lovely village without worrying about parking, and visiting the small, independent shops and cafes, in between taking long walks on the beach. Although, by now M&S had arrived and many other chain stores – which has not pleased the local residents.

But what about the weather when you go on holidays in Wales, I hear you say? Well, we never had such heavy rain as we did in Brittany after that and I don't really remember a total washout of a holiday. But since we stayed in comfortable houses, it didn't really matter if it did rain – it was still an opportunity to relax (although Bryn had itchy feet, of course) and find other activities indoors. What's the saying? – there's no such thing as bad weather, only the wrong clothes. So as long as we packed warm clothes, raincoats and sun protection cream, we were prepared for everything Derek Brockway and his ilk could predict.

And there are many advantages to taking holidays in Wales: there's no need to be in an airport hours ahead of the flight or to have to

Staycations – Cymrucations ... ctd.

remember passports and tickets and other such important things; a full tank of fuel is much cheaper than airline tickets for a family of five; you can take your time to travel and set off when it's convenient for you; no problems arise because you can't speak the language; you're contributing to the local economy, etc., etc. Being able to speak Welsh can occasionally save you money – once we were admitted to a National Trust car park without having to pay because the young man at the gate realised we were Welsh!

Last year, for a change, we went to the Lake District in June. We tend to think that it often rains there, but we were extremely lucky. The

Vale of Clwyd had a dreadful downpour at the beginning of that week, but we enjoyed blue skies and sunshine. For a few days, whatever. The weather changed but it remained dry.

I decided that I didn't really want to go back there – apart from the lakes it's quite similar to our area (not that that's a bad thing, I hasten to add).

But I really missed the sea and the pleasure of watching the waves. Nothing can beat a cup of coffee or an ice cream in Verdi's restaurant in Mumbles! I really hope I can return there before long.

Anwen Davies

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From the Rector

At the start of lockdown, I set up a coronavirus file. I thought it would be interesting to keep a record of everything that I sent out during lockdown. Although of no great significance at the present time, it will eventually be an interesting part of the history of the church in 2020. It includes letters from the Bishop, regular updates from me, the weekly Bible readings, and coronavirus notices and guidance received from the Church in Wales. Most of it is on computer, but computer files can get damaged and in 50 years' time the average person will probably have technology that is far too advanced to read Windows 10.

We are very blessed in Llandyrnog and Llangwyfan to have a local history society, which documents and records past events, all of which are an excellent reflection of how we used to live. Looking back is always interesting and often helpful. We learn lessons, we remember both good times and challenging times, and realise that what we are facing today has been faced in different circumstances in the past. No matter how hard times seem at the moment, at least we are able to be at home, have warmth and food, and enjoy luxuries our forefathers could never have dreamt of.

When we watch the news, it's not good, the virus numbers are rising again, and the future is uncertain. But love will always overcome. Even in these uncertain times, people will get married, raise a family and prepare for better times – that is what love is all about. Whatever the next few months may bring, we continue to look for the positive in every situation. There will always be those who have faith in better days to come.

A village had not seen rain for several months. The land was parched, the rivers dry and the need for rain was great. The people

decided to gather on the village green to pray for the rain that was so desperately needed. It was a sunny day and people turned up in their summer clothes and sandals – after all, the weather was dry. Just one person turned up in wellies with an umbrella. That is faith.

We have faith that better times will come. We give thanks for all who are working to find a vaccine, all who care for others, and we pray for our schools as the new school year settles in. Life had started to open up once more and we were feeling more positive, but the past few weeks have shown that we cannot be complacent. The virus has not gone away, and we still need to be vigilant.

It seems likely that my coronavirus file will continue to grow over the next few months. I started out by writing March/April on the front, then added May/June, July/August and now September/October. But we remain full of hope as we look to better times. May we always be 'welly and umbrella' people. People of faith.

'This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.' Psalm 118:24

With every blessing, Val

Denbighshire County Council

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Notes from Plas Ashpool

Haven't we had some glorious mornings and sunsets recently. I love this time of year when, as dawn is breaking, the whole valley is filled with soft mist and for all the world looks like a huge bowl of milk. Early this morning as I let lazy cats out and night hunters in, the smell from a recently cut field of clover was intoxicating. Somehow, these shortening autumnal days seem to provide our senses with a bonus of treats, from the changing colour of the foliage, the wonderful damp, earthy smells of the land, the cobwebbed patterns along the grass, to the reassuring hooting of the owls as dusk falls. Drink in as much as you can. I'm sure it will act as a tonic for the winter months ahead. A few days ago, on one of those balmy days of September, I was lucky enough to take a trip across to Bardsey Island. Why on earth have I never visited there before?

It's a magical place. Of course, I knew that it had been a place of pilgrimage for centuries and that in times past had sustained a population far greater than the few who live on it today. What I didn't know was that it could induce such a feeling of peace.

From the moment I stepped off the boat I felt lulled by the complete tranquility of the surroundings. The birdsong, so heightened by the fact that there is no traffic noise, was amazing, and in the bay the song of the seals, as they basked in the late summer sun, was almost unworldly. The last time I heard the seal song was on Holy Island in Northumberland a few years ago now. There too, you could feel a special quality, an intensity of calm. Today, Bardsey Island attracts many visitors over the summer months yet still manages to retain the feeling that you have stepped back in time. A perfect day out.

Back at home, I've been busy trying to 'put the garden to bed'. In some areas things are

looking hopeful, in others, not so good. A major overhaul is, without doubt, going to be necessary this winter. As time goes by, I see the sense in reducing the number of borders in the garden and making the ones that will remain more manageable. This idea, however, does not stop the dreaming! The bulb and seed catalogues are on the table and a few mail order plants are winging their way to Llandyrnog.

There may be several more days of autumn sunshine ahead of us, so I hope that it will shine your way and lead us all, softly, into the colder darker months ahead. Until next time, happy gardening.

Fiona Bell



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What is the difference between colds and flu?

Leaving COVID-19 aside, as winter approaches, colds and flu are going to be more prevalent. Here's a handy guide to help you decide whether you have a cold or flu.

| | Colds | Flu |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Onset of symptoms | Gradual | Sudden and rapidly worsening |
| Sore throat | Scratchy | Extremely sore |
| Temperature | Small increase | High – up to 104°F / 40°C |
| Headache | Minor | Severe |
| Aches and pains | Mild, usually legs | Sudden, whole body |
| Coughing/sneezing | Nasal congestion | Coughing usual, sneezing rare |
| Course of illness | Rapid recovery | Unwell for one or two weeks |

The average person catches 200 colds in a lifetime – that is two to four years of being a snivelling wreck!

Chicken soup, high in protein and vitamins, helps ease the symptoms. But any hot drink will raise the temperature in the nose and mouth and thus help to kill off viruses, which like steady temperatures.

Just in case a reminder is needed, the main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

- ♦ **a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)**
- ♦ **a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)**
- ♦ **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.**

Before you catch anything this winter, take as much exercise as you can, of the sort that makes you breathe deeply. It stimulates the lymphatic system, which is the body's 'highway' for immune cells. Every little helps!

Looking back – 21 October 1966

The silent slipping of a man-made mountain into a school, which was until 21 October 1966 the heart of a little-known village called Aberfan in South Wales, was a tragedy that eventually touched nations.

I was first told of the news by a friend who had heard a special radio news flash broadcast about 11am of a disaster at Aberfan, South Wales, where a school had lain directly in the path of a massive landslide of coal waste that had towered above the village.

My first thought was that I must return to my childhood home where I had lived until I had come to teach in North Wales. I knew the village well. My parents still lived in Aberfan. I had been educated at the school and my mother had only retired from teaching there two years previously.

At the time of the subsequent radio broadcasts I thought a mistake had been made. Surely it was the senior school that lay in the dark shadow of the tip that had been enveloped. I was wrong. The towering pyramid of slurry had slid silently like a snake to spit out its deadly venom over Pantglas Junior School.

We began the car journey to South Wales on the fatal Friday afternoon and, as radio frequency failed in mountainous mid-Wales, we were unable to hear any update reports and could only imagine the crushed community.

We arrived finally at Merthyr Vale, the village that lay on the opposite bank of the River Taff from Aberfan. The colliery lay in the basin that is Merthyr Vale, and a footbridge, together with a road bridge, links the two communities. Each village had its own school, but the mine, the chapels and churches were communal places where the local people worked and socialised.

No vehicles were allowed to cross the river into Aberfan, so we left the car in a lay-

by. I looked across the valley. The time was about 7pm and the air was strangely warm. Aberfan was in darkness except for arc lights that had been erected over the site of the school. The area was covered by clouds of steam that rose out of the ground as the heat from the lights warmed the wet slurry.

Soon, we joined my parents to walk to the shattered school. A solitary policeman stood at the entrance to the school gates, allowing only rescuers to pass through the cordon and stopping those who had merely come to gaze. His was a difficult task as he tried to offer words of comfort to the stunned parents who could not comprehend the magnitude of the disaster.

The doors of a waiting ambulance slammed and it drove away silently. More ambulances arrived, stopped and quietly drove away. The night had now become cold and the breath of the bystanders rose like incense, sending our prayers to heaven. No one spoke.

It was the first time I heard 'silence' speak.

I watched as tear-streaked miners used their bare hands to reach the buried bodies. No one slept that night. No one talked that night. We seemed to be part of a dumb show.

Everyone knew what the other was thinking or praying, so there was no need for words. We stood as sentinels until the first streak of light heralded the dawn that ended our watch.

My heart broke for the village of my birth, for the grieving parents, for the guilt that would be felt by innocent miners whose industry had built tips into mountains.

The following days, I found myself confined with other women in Smyrna Chapel providing refreshments for the many people who had come from all over the country to help after hearing the news of the disaster. Firemen arrived, policemen ended their shifts and came, and strangers who felt the need to

Looking back – 21 October 1966 ... ctd.

help appeared in the village. The windows of Smyrna Chapel were narrow, arched and there was little natural light. We were tightly packed together but no one spoke to each other. Strangers looked into each other's eyes and then glanced away, thoughts unable to be put into words.

The atmosphere in this hastily conceived canteen was subdued. Bread and various fillings were provided by generous bakers and grocers, so we spent the days quietly making sandwiches for the rescuers. When the tea was poured, the only words spoken were 'milk?', 'sugar?'. The uncomfortable wooden pews provided sleeping accommodation for the exhausted crews of helpers who snatched a few hours' sleep before returning to help at the devastated school.

Another chapel in Aberfan, called Bethania, was being used as the mortuary. On each pew the children had been gently placed until the patient and silent parents were called one by one to identify their child or sometimes children. At the end of the day we left our chapel and a new group of women arrived, preparing refreshments throughout the night.

We returned next morning to Smyrna to start another shift. As we walked along the main street in Aberfan the faces of the miners and rescuers were indistinguishable. It was as if they were all coming out of the mine after their work shift because their faces were pale and streaked with coal dust. Their hands were red and torn and their eyes sad and uncomprehending at the enormity of what they had witnessed.

Suddenly, daylight disappeared again and darkness in all its aspects had fallen. In my home I comforted my mother, who had been told that her last teaching class before her retirement had all lost their lives. Together with her colleagues with whom she had

spent many years, her world broke into fragments that could never be repaired. Two years later she was laid to rest overlooking the memorial garden, still watching over her pupils.

Wendy Grey-Lloyd

Events in October through the years

- ◇ Welsh translation of New Testament published, 1567
- ◇ Rowland Ellis and the Quakers left for Pennsylvania, 1686
- ◇ Royal Charter shipwreck off Moelfre, Anglesey – 459 died, 1859
- ◇ W.E. Gladstone sent first postcard, 1870
- ◇ Keir Hardie elected first Labour Party MP in Wales, representing Merthyr Tydfil, 1900
- ◇ Cardiff made a city, 1905
- ◇ Senghennydd coal mine disaster – 439 killed – worst-ever mining accident in Britain, 1913
- ◇ First meeting of Welsh Tourist Board in Shrewsbury, 1948
- ◇ Commercial Bank of Wales opened, 1972
- ◇ S4C created, owing to Gwynfor Evans MP's threat to fast unless the government agreed to it, 1982

Vale Vineyard

The Solaris grapes from the local Vale Vineyard are on their way to being crafted into wine! A hugely exciting day when the first harvest of 60kg of Solaris were sent to be processed. We look forward to being able to sample the finished product!

A trip to Bermuda

My suntan is fading (what little there was of it) and the cold wind is blowing, so I'm reflecting on my recent trip to Bermuda.

Bermuda is a small volcanic island in the Atlantic Ocean, a long way away from all the other Caribbean Islands. It's actually closer to Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, which is just over 600 miles away. I tell you this because most people mix up Bermuda and Bahamas.

Bermuda has those tropical white sands (some are even pink), the sea is warm and inviting and even in the depths of winter it's like your average Welsh summer's day. Normally you will see cruise ships off shore but on this occasion the seas only had the small craft that the locals use for pleasure. As a result, the turtles were much more plentiful than usual, and I made several valiant efforts to get a photo of them. However, they were quicker than me and disappeared once more beneath the waves.

I am, however, not here visiting the turtles but my family, as my son James and his partner Sally live here, along with my two grandchildren, Leo and Frankie. Leo is four and Frankie is two, great ages for grandchildren. At this age they still think that their nana is fun and that she makes a great playmate. They are both starting to swim, and you need to be very alert when they are in the water, especially Frankie, who seems to think that swimming is something you do under the water.

So, we walk past the beaches that have the surf, and where children are playing on body boards, and around the corner to a nice sheltered cove where the waves have been broken up by a ring of rocks, creating a lovely pool, just right for little ones and nanas. Here among the rocks are lots of little crabs to look out for, and swimming at our feet are parrot fish. I guess they are called parrot fish because they are so brightly coloured, just like their namesakes. This time I also saw some sergeant major fish, which are black-and-white-striped small fish.

Then it's time to head back to shore and build some sandcastles. There are very few pebbles or shells on the beach so there's nothing to decorate them with. There are a couple of beaches that are renowned for their sea glass, but you must leave it where you found it and, on this occasion, we didn't visit those beaches.

On most visits there's a lot of socialising taking place but this time we were keeping to ourselves. There's very little coronavirus actively being transmitted on the island, mainly because of the stringent regulations that were put in force at the beginning of the outbreak. No one was allowed to travel more than half a mile from home and there was a 7pm curfew. Plus, there's the stringent way that everyone coming to the island is tested four times: on arrival, day 3, day 8, and day 14.

I also had to have a negative coronavirus test to be able to get on the plane. After day 14 we did socialise a little more and friends took us all out for the day on their boat. I was supposed to have been there for 20 days but my flight back with British Airways was cancelled, then the subsequent flight was cancelled, so I ended up coming home a little earlier than anticipated.

My son is still working from home other than two days when he uses the office and they only allow six people in on any day. The buses are running (there is a great bus service in Bermuda) but only 17 people are allowed on the bus at any one time. This does mean that your bus may drive past you, as it already has that number of people aboard. No household is allowed more than one car, so buses are in great demand. The island has a population of 63,000 and there are just two main roads, aptly named middle road, which does what it says, runs down the middle of the island, and south road, which runs in the south of the island.

Most roads are like driving around here on country lanes. There are few signposts and if

A trip to Bermuda ... ctd.

you don't want to end up in a dead end or a housing estate you need a road that uses capital letters for its name – so Maes Clwyd would be a dead end but MAES CLWYD would give you access on to another road. They were laying some pipes down one of the roads that we drove along and that evening a car drove into the hole, which was very deep. Luckily everyone was okay. They shut that road the next day and everyone had an interesting diversion.

I'm sure that you can see the beauty of the island from the photos, but the quirkiness is something you have to experience to appreciate. One thing is sure – it won't be long before I'm once more stressing out over packing my bags and preparing for the seven-hour flight (3,000-plus miles) to see what delights are once more in store.

Margaret Roberts

Paige Tynan

Paige starts her PhD in Forensic Science later this month and we wish her well, but as there is very little funding available for this subject, Paige is having to self-fund her studies. She has set up a crowdfunding page (with Crowd.Science) to help towards the cost of her research. I'm sure any contribution will be gratefully received. crowd.science/campaigns/developing-and-reviewing-a-more-reliable-system-for-the-recording-of-cadaver-decomposition

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Matters discussed in the September meeting of Llandyrnog Community Council

The meeting was held virtually, with all Councillors present and one member of the public.

Matters discussed:

Community Policeman to be invited to join the next virtual meeting to discuss the situation in Llandyrnog in general and present any crime statistics.

Clerk had received various e-mails about the condition of the gates across the bridle path between Bron Dyffryn and Moel Famau – the situation to be reported and monitored.

Footpath 26 from Llandyrnog to Pentrefelin – despite numerous reminders to DCC, the stiles have not been repaired, which is disappointing.

Two quotes received for new carpet at Cocoa Rooms and CC will request a third quotation.

Mr Lee, the painter, hopes to start the decorating of the Cocoa Rooms in October.

Additional waymarks have been fixed in Llangwyfan around the White House to differentiate between path 5 and Llwybr Tyrnog.

The footbridge over Nant Simon near the Old Rectory has been repaired.

Complaint received about the condition of part of the fence between Gladstone Terrace and Cae Nant – uncertainty about ownership.

A trellis has been added to the butterfly garden in Cae Nant, and it was requested that a plaque be sourced to explain the initiative.

Complaint about irresponsible dog owners letting their dogs foul Cae Nant – it was reported that maybe highlighting the matter on social media had improved matters but the situation will be monitored and discussed with Llandyrnog Sport and Football Association, who are most affected by this

irresponsible behaviour.

Planning – three applications had been circulated between meetings:

- ◆ Details of phasing of the new development to the side of Maes Llan (18/2020/0634)
- ◆ Details of appearance, landscaping and layout of new development to the side of Maes Llan (18/2020/0594)
- ◆ Details of car port at Fron Fanadl (18/2020/0607)

Concerns were raised that there was no cover in the post office while the owners were on holiday, and hopefully the lack of footfall during the week would not affect any future decision – Clerk to write to Post Office Customer Services.

Concerns about the somewhat irregular bus service – timetable information available online but not all had access to that information.

One door closes ...

We are sad to hear that Hilary Wilcox is not going to be opening the White Horse again following the restrictions that COVID-19 has placed on such establishments. We appreciate the hard work and dedication of all the staff there and wish Hilary a happy retirement.

Another door opens ...

Meanwhile, Merfyn Parry has decided to reopen the Golden Lion with help from Mark Roberts. This is welcome news for the village, and we hope this is a successful partnership.