

Llais Llandyrnog Voice

✉ llandyrnognews@gmail.com 🐦 @LlaisLlandyrnog

July 2021 – Volume 6 – Edition 10

From the horse's mouth



Here are a few comments that praise our close relationship with horses:

"I call my horses 'divine mirrors'—they reflect back the emotions you put in. If you put in love and respect and kindness and curiosity, the horse will return that." – Allan Hamilton

"Horses change lives. They give our young people confidence and self-esteem. They provide peace and tranquillity to troubled souls, they give us hope". – Toni Robinson

'If you are fearful, a horse will back off. If you are calm and confident, it will come forward. The horse can be a welcome mirror of the best in human nature' – Claire Balding

Read more about the bond between humans and horses on pages 12 and 13, and the experiences of Beca Parry Jones (left, top) and Rosamund Johnson (left, bottom).



Llandyrnog Virtual Show 2021

The schedule is available online on the Community Council's website:

www.llandyrnogcommunitycouncil.co.uk, along with the template for the mask decorating competition. It is also available from the Post Office and Daniel Jones, Family Butchers.

Remember that those without facilities for uploading photographs can contact show secretary, Roger Warner, Cross Keys, on 07879 771461 to make arrangements for taking photographs, from now until 1 September.

Those who wish to enter a garden for judging need to fill the registration form in the schedule.

Thanks to Llandyrnog Community Council for sponsoring this edition

Around the village

Best wishes...

to Julia Hughes on a special birthday;
to Iona Davies, Hafod y Bryn on her retirement from Ysgol Glanrafon, Mold; and
to Dafydd Elis Jones, Rhiwbebyll Bella who has been appointed a full-time fireman with the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

Congratulations...

to Jack and Fran, Helenfa on their engagement;
to Jonathan and Siwan Hulme, Pentrefelin Ucha on the birth of Elgan Ynyr on June 11th, little brother to Luned Alaw;
to Hywel Davies, Hafod y Bryn, on his promotion to associate partner with Jones Peckover, Denbigh; and
to everyone who has been successful in the examinations this year.

Condolences to Graham Carrington-Sykes and family, Pentre Mawr, on the death of his mother, Rosamund.



Another sports-themed scarecrow that appeared at Sŵn y Nant – well done!

Llandyrnog FC



Scores of pre-season fixtures

Saturday 5 June:

Llandyrnog 4 Llangollen Town FC 2

Wednesday 9 June:

Llandyrnog 4 Denbigh Town Reserves 0

Tuesday 15 June:

Llandyrnog 0 CPD Llanrwst Utd 0

Saturday 19 June:

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July services

11	9.45	Rev Andras Iago
18	11.00	Rev Anna Jane Evans
25	9.45	Rev Robert Parry

No services in August

If anyone has about an hour a week spare to weed and water a flower bed in Cae Nant please contact rbrynd1@gmail.com

James Davies, MP for Vale of Clwyd

james.davies.mp@parliament.uk

Constituency office: 01745 888920

Westminster office: 0207 2194606

Mike Roberts, Wheel Building UK

I spent my first 8 years living in Denbigh before moving to Llandyrnog. I attended Llandyrnog school, then on to Brynhyfryd. Aged 14, I bought my first motorcycle, Yamaha Ty 250, with money that I earned from pot-washing in the White Horse!

I competed in motorcycle trials and was fortunate to win the championship in my age group on a Gas Gas 125 which I had imported from Garcia in Spain.

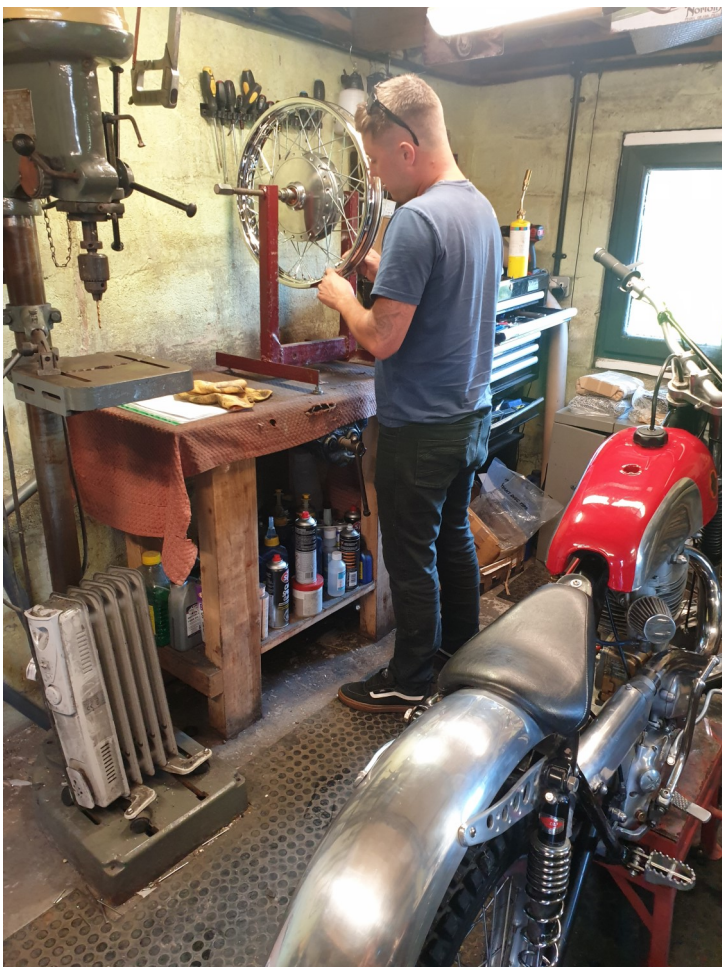
Up until Covid-19, I worked in an engineering company in Chester that manufactured the cylinders that are part of the process for printing money in various countries. Once furloughed, I decided to grow my motorcycle wheel building business in which I import and export motorcycle rims. I make the spokes in-house and custom-build wheels which have been ridden to Mongolia and back. I've sold a lot of my wheels to countries such as USA, Australia, Canada and most of Europe – even after Brexit!

In my early 20s I decided to purchase a 50ft

traditional narrow boat called Wand to live on near Chester. Many a night out I had with a friend when we would cruise it into Chester, get smashed then drive home the following morning – only falling into the canal once after a few too many!

I sold the boat to fund the business and returned home, much to my mother's despair. I hope it won't be for much longer before my son, Oliver, and I will have our own home. My hobbies and interests are bikes and travelling, and one journey in particular took me through ten countries to reach Italy to watch Moto Gp on my trusty BMW Gs (the same bike that Ewan McGregor and Charlie Boorman used to ride around the world). I am currently competing on my 1958 Ariel 500 trials bike, and my intentions are to compete in the Scottish 2-day International Trial. My other bikes are a 1966 Triumph Bonneville 650 and Honda Fireblade 1000 but I'm going to move to the older bikes that have more character!

Thanks, Mike, for sharing your experiences, and best of luck for the future!



Mike in his workshop



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Our school Council members had an online meeting this week with our Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body to discuss how the last academic year has

been. The children also had some questions of their own to ask on budgets and the curriculum.

A huge thank you to our former pupil, Elis Morris, and his friend, Steffan who raised £120 for the school. They sold fruit and vegetables around the village last week and donated the proceeds. Many thanks also to Daniel Morris, Butchers, of Denbigh who donated the fruit and vegetables to be sold. We are very proud our former pupil is still so community-minded and very grateful for the donation.

Thank you to the friends of the school and everyone who supported the school's treasure hunt. Just over £300 was raised! The hunt had joint winners – Emma (Dan's mum) and Mel (Errin's mum). The paper aeroplane competition was won by Nigel (Scarlett's taid) and the number of balloons in the car was correctly guessed as 68 by Kate (Dan's auntie).

The school now has nineteen new Chrome-Books in school which the children have started using in class. We are now waiting on some extra iPads to help us keep our devices up to date.



The infants

The children have been working really hard in their Big Maths sessions, this week focusing on their 5x table.

Our new topic is learning through nature. We have been making outdoor art, finding ways to make music using objects in our environment, and building animal homes.

Before the half-term holiday, we enjoyed the story Hananda's Surprise which is set in Africa.

The juniors

Our new topic is *James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl. We have been learning about how to grow edible plants. So far we have planted a range of herbs and two different types of strawberry plants and learned how to cook healthy balanced meals.

We have begun looking closely at the shape, form and colour of different insects, ready for our trip to Chester Zoo.

Thanks to Mrs Emberton who brought in a collection of rocks and crystals for us to investigate.

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From the Rector

We finally have a real sense of things getting back to normal. We can once again meet up with family and friends, our schools are open, our churches are open, and life is regaining some semblance of normality. Some of the restrictions are still in place, social distancing and wearing a mask are accepted as the norm, but we can enjoy greater freedom. However, the Delta variant has slowed down the lifting of some restrictions and we continue to pray for all who are ill at this time.

We are still not permitted to sing in Church, but worship is much more than singing and we have taken great delight in worshipping together once more. Things are different, and there is a lot of planning and preparation that will need to take place over the coming months as we look to the future. We recognise that we have lost some of the things that we used to hold dear, and accept it is not possible for life to be exactly the same as it was before Covid. We have a new normal and we are learning to make it our own.

For the past month, the Diocese of St Asaph has been celebrating its volunteers, giving thanks for the work that takes place in our Churches, much of it unseen. We are very grateful to those who work in our Churches and our Churchyards. What is true of the Church is also true of our village what it is. In a special service celebrating volunteers, Archdeacon John Lomas said: 'The Diocese

wants to say thank you to all who serve in the Church and serve the Kingdom of God. To the many of you who give graciously of your time and energy in many different circumstances.

'Please take this as official notice that you are amazing and Church wouldn't be Church without you. Without you turning up early to make sure everyone is looked after, without you doing the little things that take ages but no one notices, without your dedication, we would grind to a messy halt.....so thank you!'

Volunteers are the life blood of so many organisations, we simply couldn't function without them. Their contribution is beyond measure and as the saying goes, 'Volunteers are unpaid – not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless.' To all who volunteer in so many ways, in our village, in our church, in our chapel, and in the wider community...thank you...you are amazing. With every blessing,
Val Rowlands



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Vale of Clwyd Tractor Run



Just a note to thank everyone in Llandyrnog from the bottom of my heart for their patience on Sunday 6th June, when the tractor run passed through the village, disturbing the peace of a normal Sunday afternoon.

This is a yearly run which is organised by a group of us raising funds for a different charity every year. This year the charity supported was The DPJ Foundation. This was set up in July 2016 following the death of farmer Daniel Picton-Jones. It aims to support those in the agricultural sector suffering from poor mental health. Their members helped to organise the event – it was a pleasure to work with such a lively and efficient crew!

Eighty of the more organised drivers had secured a place in advance, whilst another twenty turned up on the day. That was a headache in itself – trying to find space for everyone – but it's rather difficult to say no to friends! Some had come as far as the Llŷn Peninsula, Anglesey, Warrington and Shropshire!

After welcoming everyone to the Vale of Clwyd with a new hand loudspeaker – now that is a handy toy – and talking about the all-important health and safety issues, everyone revved up together, and I can assure you, such noise and smoke!

I cannot say that we trudged quietly through the villages of Henllan, Trefnant, Tremeirchion, Bodfari, Aberwheeler and Llandyrnog, but we did trudge slowly so that everyone had the opportunity to enjoy the

splendid Vale of Clwyd scenery. We made a point of stopping on Sodom mountain – have you ever been there? The scenery from here is stunning, and not many can say that they have been to Sodom on a tractor!

With the kindness of every individual and commercial businesses that sponsored the event, over £2600 was raised towards The DPJ Foundation.

The organising team wishes to thank enormously the additional crew, including Anwen my wife, that turned up on the day to help with registration and deal with social distancing – without you, we could not have gone at all! I must close at this point by again referring to everyone's generosity – especially the anonymous individual that slipped an envelope into the bucket containing £100!

Bryn Davies



*David Weyman, one of the local participants
(Photographs: Phil O'Loughlin)*

Denbighshire County Council

Merfyn Parry



Contact details

Mobile: 07836 208446

E-mail: merfyn.parry@denbighshire.gov.uk

Or leave a message on **Facebook**

Notes from Plas Ashpool

Some of you may remember that Mr McGregor had a dreadful time with Peter Rabbit and all his friends in the wonderful garden so beautifully illustrated in the stories written by Beatrix Potter, which incidentally was inspired by the delightful walled garden at Gwaenynog, just outside Denbigh.

Well, I have an equally troublesome, mischievous crowd of marauding vagabonds in my newly planted 'wall-less garden'. The leader of the gang has to be Peter Partridge ably abetted by his wife, Pauline. Accomplices include Percy the pheasant who has a number of followers and Pesky Pigeon who, on a good day for him (not so good for me), will have an entire flock of slightly less bold pigeons, ready and waiting as back-up crew. The target in question has been the entire bed of delicious brassicas! All reduced to something like lace curtains or worse. All too late, I have now netted the entire bed (hoping against all hope that they might make some recovery) but I have to admit it is looking doubtful. There is a lesson to learn every year in gardening. On a more positive note – despite the recent dry spell, the flowers in the garden are looking lovely, especially the roses.

I am always on the look out for plants which attract the bees, and this year have been delighted with the spreading cotoneaster on a garden wall which has been smothered in honey bees for days. So too has a little annual flower known as the poached egg plant. This appeared in abundance when we left one of the veg patch beds unattended. The pretty white and yellow flower has flowered its heart out on these sun-filled days and the bees have feasted merrily. Despite providing delicious forage in the garden, the bees have swarmed again, they always seem to be one step ahead of me!

Another good show has been given by all the elderflowers dotted around. At this time of year I usually make masses of elderflower syrup to enjoy on lazy summer days. However, we are trying to be more conscious about

reducing the sugar in our diets and so decided to try other recipes using the magnificent heads of frothy, scented gorgeousness! Our favourite so far has been 'elderflower fritters' – sounds awful but below is the recipe, so do try them (that is, if they are still flowering by the time you read this).

Ingredients:

15 elderflower heads (picked on a warm sunny day)

100g self-raising flour

Oil (for frying) – suggest sunflower

2 tsps cornflour

1 egg

150 ml sparkling water (this helps lighten the batter)

2 tsps caster sugar

Pinch of salt

Icing sugar (for dusting)

Heat oil in pan until very hot.

Whisk egg, flours and sugar together then add sparkling water.

Dip each flower head into batter (let drip a little) then fry for 30 seconds till just golden

Remove with slotted spoon, dry on kitchen paper.

Dust with icing sugar and eat whilst crunchy

Lovely served with a fruit compote

Today is glorious, so mustn't waste another minute. I am off to surprise my feathered foe. But another little saying to add to our list of cheerful notes: 'More green fingers – less blue days'.

Happy gardening,

Fiona Bell

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Three places

We have been fortunate to have visited some very special places together – here are the three we have chosen that stand out in our memories.

Millennium Stadium, Cardiff, Wales



The year was 2008, the best tickets we could have hoped for.... seven rows from the pitch just ahead of the ‘pyst’. The feeling you get when you enter the stadium and crowds are singing Delilah, Cwm Rhondda or Sosban Fach tugs at your heart, you swell with pride and join in; all those voices singing in unison and all with the hope and belief that maybe just maybe win the grand slam again. France was a strong team but we had Tom Shanklin, Shane Williams, Martyn Williams, James Hook and a young Alun-Wyn Jones.

It doesn't matter that the beer is overpriced and certainly not the best pint you will ever have or that the pies or burgers are not quite what you really wanted because the real rugby fans are not there for that.

Five o'clock and the whistle blew – game on! An early 9-3 lead was whittled away by France after Gavin Henson's sin-binning on the stroke of half-time. But Shane Williams got the crucial score on 60 minutes, becoming Wales' all-time top try scorer in the process. It was left to Martyn Williams to crown the day, the flanker picking up from a ruck 25-yards out and dashing home through a ragged defence. Wales' 10th Grand Slam was secured 100 years after they won their first, and home fans left the electrifying atmosphere to carry on the

party of the century with a 29 – 12 score to Wales. Our nation and on a day like that there is no better place to be knowing that you are Welsh!

Sun Island, Lake Titicaca, Bolivia

South America, its land, culture and people hold a special place in our heart, on one of our trips travelling to La Paz with our three-week itinerary taking us through Bolivia and ending with a stopover in the Atacama desert of Chile.

We were met at the airport by our local guide, Hector, who would look after us over the next six days. On the short journey to our first hotel he pointed out various landmarks. With one clear message, if we went out exploring, “we could go here, go there but those streets up there are not for you; don't go there”. La Paz has its own way of handling criminals and in some streets the vigilantes had displayed dummy corpses (scarecrows) hanging from the street lights to inform those would be criminals as to how they would be dealt with if they were caught there!!

After two days experiencing the highlights of La Paz and Tiwanaku, we had managed to catch up on our jet lag and adjust somewhat to our altitude (3660m). Now it was time for us to take a trip to Copacabana which would be where our boat journey to Sun Island on Lake Titicaca would start. Lake Titicaca shares borders with Peru and Bolivia and is the world's highest navigable lake. Being the only passengers, we felt like royalty as we travelled there in our very own motor cruiser. Sun Island or Isla del Sol is considered to be the birthplace of Andean culture and every visitor can sense the mystic aura of this area. Our journey there was by thoroughly modern transport but once on the island we walked the route to our overnight place of stay over the dusty Inca paths serving several indigenous communities. (There are no roads on Sun Island). Just the hike alone was worth the trip with views of the Inca terraces and

Three places: ctd

across the lake to the towering Andean peaks.

But as we continued our walk with rucksacks on our back, Steve asked Hector what was the strange noise he could hear. It sounded as if a village brass band was playing very, very, badly. Hector explained that the communities on Sun Island liked to 'party' and celebrate their life giver, 'the sun', whenever possible. On that weekend (3 days and nights!), with the solstice approaching, there was a village party taking place for all to attend, along with every local band and dance group there to compete for a prize. The 'noise' was the combination of all the bands playing (different tunes!) against each other whilst the villagers dressed in best bowlers and full-skirted dresses were twirling around to the music in the village churchyard.



Everyone on the Island was invited to Yumani with one stipulation – to bring a crate of beer, but it was deemed unlucky to ever bring single items and only multiples of two were accepted. Local children were clambering when the sweetshop opened as they too were enjoying the festivities.

Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in South America despite great mineral wealth potential and once being one of the richest centuries ago due to its silver mines, but the people certainly knew how to throw a party. We sat and looked on as the music and dancing, laughter and chatter filled the air as we enjoyed a local cerveza. As the sun set over the Andes, this was one of those

totally unplanned moments that would be etched as part of our happy place forever.

Punta Secca, Ragusa, Sicily



A little way from the less-visited tourist location of Marina del Ragusa, Southern Sicily, you will find the quaint village of Punta Secca, a local fishing area with a beautiful beach and lighthouse. To some, this village is also known as Vigata – the home of the late Andrea Camilleri's protagonist, Inspector Salvo Montalbano. Being fans of this series, when we discovered that we could stay at the commissario's home we jumped at the chance.

As a couple who find it difficult to stop and just relax, it is hard to describe the tranquil peace that we felt for the few days we were there. The wide Sicilian sky provides a light that cannot be compared. A swim each day in the sea, a bike ride, espresso, cannoli and the occasional arancini completed each day, not to mention a negroni or vino rosso too. Sicilians have been through some tumultuous times but they are a people who are happy to share their last with a new-found friend and believe in good times being shared. They have a long history of needing to adapt and as a result are known for their tolerance of change and their welcome to those in need who land on their shores. Steve got to play the piano (well, sort of!) at Inspector Montalbano's home and we saw Luca Zingretti and the team film in Ragusa Ibla whilst we were there. We look forward to revisiting this beautiful untouched village again, when circumstances allow, for another few 'lazy' Sicilian days once again.

Steve and Helen Jukes Hughes

From the horse's mouth

As human beings, we experience a wide range of different feelings and emotions which affect our daily lives. Between the two extreme emotions of pure happiness and total sadness, we experience a multitude of other emotions such as fear, anger, sadness, wonder etc. There is plenty of evidence that animals have similar emotions to human beings. No doubt, people who have pets, for instance, have experienced this time and time again. There are many heartwarming stories about animals showing different emotions. One unique example is about a 14 year old boy who fell into the sea whilst on a pleasure boat with his parents off the Malfredonia coast of Italy. He could not swim and was sinking fast. Nearby, there was a 61 tonne dolphin, named Filippo, a favourite with tourists, swimming in the sea. He saw that the boy was in great danger. He swam under the boy, lifted him to the surface, and pushed him towards the boat, where his father managed to lift him out of the water. *'He's a hero', his mother said. 'It was an unbelievable sight, it seems impossible that an animal could feel the instinct to save a human life!'*

Over the centuries, the connection between man and animal has proven to be effective in creating a strong, emotional, healing bond. For thousands of years, a particularly close relationship has developed between them. Earliest evidence of the domestication of wild horses and learning to ride occurs around 3,500 BC. Later on, the horses were taught to carry provisions, respond to instructions, pull wagons and buggies. Who can forget the bravery of the thousands of horses that carried essential provisions during the wars, fighting side by side with the soldiers?

Why this close relationship between horses and humans? According to the specialists, the answer lies within the limbic system of the brain – one of the main evolutionary developments of certain reptiles evolving into mammals. Located right under the cerebrum, it is a complex set of brain structures on both sides of the thalamus. The limbic system,

which is often classified as a 'cerebral structure', is the part of our brain that is closely linked to feeling of emotions. It supports a variety of bodily functions which includes adrenaline flow, behaviour, motivation, long-term memory and olfaction.

Scientific research has shown that when humans have a social interaction, measurable changes occur in our brains and nervous systems – known as *interpersonal neurobiology* (IN). It is thought that the same neurobiological effects that people experience also happen when interacting with other social animals. According to this theory, all animals, including humans, have millions of neuron cells known as *mirror neurons* as part of the limbic system. These are the cells that are 'fired' when humans (and animals) perform and observe other actions e.g. when we observe someone in pain, our mirror neurons are 'fired' and we sympathise with them in their pain and show 'empathy'. They enable us to feel sad when we see someone cry, embarrassed when we see someone humiliated, or happy when we see someone smile and laugh. In interpersonal neurobiology this is known as *resonance*. The limbic system is one of the most important parts of the horse's brain. The limbic systems of humans and horses are very similar – closer than any other domesticated animals. Scientists believe that the horse has billions more mirror neurons than a human being, therefore making them experts at understanding non-verbal interactions with humans – thus showing true empathy!

Psychologists have shown that horses can recognize a person's mood from appearance, and differentiate between good and bad temper! They 'talk' with their eyes and ears, and show emotions through snuffing and neighing.

A horse and human being can affect each other's heartbeat. In one study to measure the changes in a person and horse's heartbeat, a very nervous girl, who had had no

From the horse's mouth: ctd

previous contact with horses, slowly approached the horse. Initially, the girl and the horse's heart beat increased, presumably because of fear on both sides. But as the girl slowly stroked the horse for a short period, both the heartbeats returned to normal – petting helped to decrease the tension between them. An unexplained bond had immediately formed between them!

This empathy shown by a horse is widely used to improve or alleviate certain physical and mental health conditions. According to occupational therapists, going for a ride on a 'therapy' horse for instance (e.g. hippo-therapy), helps patients who have suffered trauma or disabilities e.g. cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, traumatic brain damage etc. In some cases, the 'therapy' horse is taken to the patient in a hospital for treatment. Children with autism for instance, benefit from riding a 'therapy' horse as it helps develop sensory, motor and emotional skills. Of course, horseback riding in its own right, is a beneficial form of physical exercise, as it strengthens specific muscles that ordinary sports or exercises cannot do – you can lose 200 calories in 45 minutes of riding!

Perhaps you've had similar experiences with horses. If so, you are most welcome to share them with the Llais Llandyrnog Voice readers!

Beca's story

My passion for horses started at a young age. I was lucky enough to have owned a few whilst I was growing up. But, as I grew older my passion dwindled and left home for college and work. Whilst I was working as an Animal Health Officer, my passion was re-ignited. I left the job to start my family and I now have three young girls. All three would hound me on a day-to-day basis asking for a pony, where the answer would always be a no, due to work and a busy lifestyle.

However, in the Summer of 2020 I took the plunge and bought a pony for the three of them. The look on their faces said it all. We

moved to stables close to home and the girls have gone from shy and quiet to independent and strong little ladies. I have seen them grow with immense confidence,

their work ethics are second to none when it comes to the ponies (yes, I caved in and bought a second – possibly a third will arrive one day, too). They thoroughly enjoy 'stable life' – the mucking out, the hacks, the lessons and more importantly, the new friends they have made.

I am quietly so proud of what these once quiet and shy girls have become. I see the potential they have to go far with something they too have a great passion for.

Beca Parry-Jones

Fletch and me

From a very early age, I've always dreamt of having my own horse and after 40 years, that was made possible when I moved to Llandyrnog. I went to see Fletch at the local racing yard and instantly fell in love. Although having a thoroughbred as a first horse sounds crazy, I have had him for 7 years now and our bond is stronger than ever. He's a sensitive soul and has lots of love to give. Like most animals, horses can feel empathy towards their human friends and vice versa. Whether leading them or riding them, we have to remain calm and confident at all times and always expect the unexpected!

When a horse/pony gets scared, its first reactions are flight, but whilst we on their backs that is not an option. Keeping our hands soft on the reins and with a confident and gentle voice, we encourage them to move forward, informing them that the flappy plastic bag or the blade of grass which is moving differently to the others is not going to kill them.

Rosamund Johnson



Noted fisherman!

Hywel, Hafod y Bryn recently spent a very successful week fishing on the river Gruinard, Western Ross, west of Ullapool. The 28,000 acre Gruinard estate owns the river Gruinard. The estate is on the North Coast 500, a route of just over 500 miles of stunning coastal scenery in the far north of Scotland, and is considered one of the world's most beautiful road trips.

The sun shone brightly, but this was not good weather for fishing! Towards the middle of the week, the river water level became low, and the trout could not go upstream. However, after fishing the main loch, Loch na Sealga, which is 4¾ miles long, and other lochs in the mountains, Hywel and friends managed to catch over 60 trout during the week.



Hywel with his 8-pound trout

A huge thank you to all who have contributed articles to this edition – they're greatly appreciated

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Recipe



Hummus

Ingredients:

- 1 can (15 ounce) chickpeas
- 1 large lemon
- ¼ cup (60 ml) well-stirred tahini
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- Salt to taste
- 2 to 3 tablespoons (30–45 ml) water
- Dash of ground paprika or sumac, for serving

Method :

1. Place the tahini and lemon juice in a food processor and process for 1 minute, scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl then process for 30 seconds more. This extra time helps 'whip' or 'cream' the tahini, making the hummus smooth and creamy.
2. Add the olive oil, minced garlic, cumin, and a ½ teaspoon of salt to the whipped tahini and lemon juice. Process for 30 seconds, scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl then process for another 30 seconds or until well blended.
3. Open, drain and rinse the chickpeas. Add half of the chickpeas to the food processor and process for 1 minute. Scrape sides and bottom of the bowl, then add remaining chickpeas and process until thick and quite smooth: 1 to 2 minutes
4. If the hummus is too thick or still has tiny bits of chickpea, slowly add 2 to 3 tablespoons of water with the food processor turned on, until you reach the perfect consistency
5. Taste for salt and adjust as needed. Serve hummus with a drizzle of olive oil and dash of paprika. Store the hummus in an airtight container and refrigerate up to one week, or can be placed in a freezer for up to a month.

Matters discussed at the on-line June meeting of Llandyrnog Community Council

- ◆ It was reported that Wicksteed has started on the work of installing new play equipment in Cae Nant – there will be an accessible roundabout, a new springie and a climbing frame.
- ◆ There were three planning applications:
 - ◇ Two agricultural buildings for housing live-stock at Glan y Wern Farm
 - ◇ Extension to 2 Bro Fammau
 - ◇ Replacement garage at 2 Fron Yw Cottages.
- ◆ Notification of a vacancy for a Clerk for Bodfari Council.
- ◆ The council was disappointed that Denbighshire County Council did not intend to pursue the planning infringement at The Old Coach House, Plas Bennett – it felt that the breach did not unacceptably harm the public amenity.
- ◆ The Council accepted the report from the finance group and confirmed that it was in order for the Chair to sign the Audit for submission.
- ◆ It was decided to allocate £1000 towards a trim trail for Ysgol Bryn Clwyd.
- ◆ The Council had been represented at an MHC (Llangwyfan) Liaison meeting and the matters of concern were parcels being delivered to the nearest property with the same post code, as opposed to the proper address; the intention to carry out a litter pick in the area; some instances of residents and carers straying off public footpaths; and inconsiderate driving in the immediate area of the MHC complex at certain times of the day.
- ◆ There was an incident 14th June where a car had gone into the ditch running parallel with the road from Llangwyfan to London Bridge. It was decided to see if DCC would erect some form of reflective bollards on the wall to warn people not to pull in too close if there was oncoming traffic.
- ◆ Assistance is needed with weeding and watering duties in Cae Nant – enquiries to be made to see whether MHC would be interested. Failing that, volunteers to be sought.
- ◆ It is disappointing that the white lines in the Llangwyfan junction have not been re-laid, despite a request being made in December 2020.
- ◆ To date the Give Way sign at Capel Isa has still not been repaired despite being reported in April.
- ◆ Again there were concerns about inconsiderate driving around the Llangwyfan area and it was decided to approach North Wales Police to see if they could assist.



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HERstory

The May meeting of the Llandyrnog and Llangwyfan Local History Society via Zoom was held with Dr Erin Lloyd Jones once again as the guest speaker. Her topic was the 'HERstory' of wonderful women in Wales's past – an account of some of the important women who made a big difference in Welsh history.



Dr Erin at Beaumaris Castle

Dr Erin started with Beaumaris Castle and she talked about history's secondary sources and how no women were mentioned at all, only men – the masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, glaziers and soldiers. She explained how she started to consider whether wives and families of the masons were left behind when they were 'away on work' or did they take their family with them? Did the wives and families become camp followers?

Dr Erin went back to the original Latin accounts for the castle and found that she was completely wrong because women were doing exactly the same jobs as men and getting paid the same too.

She found a 'Cecilia of Kent' and a woman helping her and she was working on 'pilum' (balls/spears or twine) for 'springalds and other engines' (like a giant mechanical catapult) at Beaumaris Castle. These two women were actually crafting weapons. 'Cecilia of Kent' was paid 3 shillings for this and a weekly wage of 18d (the same amount as a male carpenter). They were certainly not camp

followers.

Dr Erin also found women working in other castles for example Caernarfon where there was a *Juliana filia fabri* (*filia fabri* is the daughter of a carpenter), *Emmota filia fabri*, *Eleanor de Engelond* and *Julia uxor Ade* working as *hottarri* (hod carriers) and *fauconarii* (mortar carriers).

In Cricieth, a llys/court has been recreated by Cadw inside the visitor centre including an interactive table which shows how the laws of (King) Hywel Dda of Wales ensured that Wales was at the forefront of women's rights and equality for hundreds of years. He was so forward-thinking in terms of rights and equality before the English invaded the country.

A marriage was an agreement and if a man cheated on his wife he was punished. If he did it three times it was grounds for divorce.

Also, the dowry was the women's right although if they had been married for over seven years then they had to split it 50/50. Illegitimate children were given the same rights of inheritance as their legitimate siblings.



The court at the visitor centre, Cricieth Castle

Saint Winefride's main link was with Holywell but she also visited St Deifr and his holy well of Bodfari. She wanted to dedicate her life to faith but there was a sinister prince who gave her unwanted attention and she made it quite clear and said no to marriage. He

HERstory: ctd

was extremely upset about this and decapitated her. Legend has it that where her head landed, a spring came forth and following her brutal end, her uncle, St Beuno, brought her back to life and she lived out her days as an Abbess in Gwytherin. The place where the head fell is the popular visitor attraction, St Winefride's Well in Holywell (below), known as The Lourdes of Wales.



Members heard about warrior princess Gwenllian, originally from Aberffraw in Anglesey, who moved to Kidwelly after her marriage to Gruffydd ap Rhys, Lord of Deheubarth in South Wales. She was the sister of the King of Gwynedd – Owain Gwynedd.

This was at a time when England and Wales were being invaded by the Normans following the Battle of Hastings in 1066, and civil war during the time of Empress Matilda and King Stephen. Norman lords were encroaching onto Welsh land and stealing it, particularly in the borders known as The Marches.

At this time, Gruffydd (Gwenllian's husband), went to visit his wife's family in North Wales to gather support and help to fight and take back his lost lands.

However, while he was away, the Normans attacked and Gwenllian could not wait for him to return and so she took up her own sword and raised an army to lead and fight the battle herself. Unfortunately, she was eventually captured by the Normans and beheaded and two of her sons were also killed. Her actions were not in vain as it inspired other Welsh Lords to fight the Normans and regain their lands. For centuries to come, the Welsh would cry 'Revenge for Gwenllian' when charging into battle.

Her son, Rhys of Deheubarth, The Lord Rhys, was one of the most successful lords in Welsh history, who built wonderful castles including Cardigan, Dynevor and Carreg Cennen and founded Talley Abbey. In 1176, he began a tradition of holding a Welsh festival to celebrate Welsh poetry and song which we now know as the Eisteddfod, a tradition which is still going strong.

The Ladies of Llangollen were from Ireland and expected to marry suitable husbands. They, however, eloped together and bought a little cottage which is now Plas Newydd which they built up themselves or with gifts from visiting friends. They kept diaries which seemed to show they lived a very ordinary life, just like a conventional couple. They became a tourist attraction in their own rights. The poet John Keats visited them, as did Queen Charlotte, the consort of King George III, who persuaded her husband to grant them a pension. Gentleman Jack, of TV series fame was also a visitor.

Dr Erin was also delighted to find that there were women stonemasons working on the restoration of Conwy Castle in 2018, showing we are reaching an age of equality comparable with the women who worked on the original castle 800 years ago.

To celebrate International Women's Day, Erin worked on a book for children called *Welsh women making history*, published by Cadw, in which the women are portrayed as

HERstory: ctd

they would look in 2020.

The book tells the stories of 12 women from Wales's past and present — from St Elen, the 4th-century founder of churches in Wales to Cranogwen, the female bard born in 1839, to Hayley Gomez MBE, a current Professor of Astrophysics at Cardiff University. It is illustrated by up-and-coming Welsh artist, Efa Lois and the book also features portraits of Wales's favourite historical figures, reimagined as they might have been in the 21st century — from Gwenllïan as a women's rights activist to Siwan as a Welsh politician.

Dr Erin also fielded a number of questions from Society members, discussing Dr Kate Roberts known as the Queen of Welsh literature, who came from Rhosgadfan and moved to Denbigh, and Queen Eleanor, the wife of King Edward I who was interested in gardens, many of which can be found in castles, including Rhuddlan.

Also discussed was Gop Hill Cairn, the third largest prehistoric human-built mound in Great Britain. It was built sometime during the Neolithic period, on a high hill overlooking Trelawnyd, Flintshire, and Flint Castle. This was the first English castle in Wales where Richard II gave up his crown to rival Henry Bolingbroke, Henry IV, famously immortalised in Shakespeare's play, *The Life and Death of King Richard the Second*.

She also explained how difficult it is in a castle to recreate the smells, sounds, the animals, the children and the scraping of tools today for visitors to really experience what living in a castle was like. Those are the elements often missing from interpretation. The use of Cadw's digital interpretation available at many of their staffed sites helps with recreation of the noises and atmosphere.

Llandyrnog and Llangwyfan Local History Society will be arranging further meetings in the future. To join in and join the Society please e mail

llangwyfanhistory@hotmail.com.

The Building Creatively Project at the Carriageworks presents a FREE 3-WEEK ARTS AND CRAFTS COURSE



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Places are limited to four people per group and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Priority will be given to newcomers to the Building Creatively Project.

We will be following Covid 19 safety protocols as per Welsh Government guidelines.

For further details and to book your free place, please contact us on

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