

Llais Llandyrnog Voice

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November 2020 – Volume 6 – Edition 2

How to enjoy school



Thanks to Mr Monteiro and all the staff for their hard work during very difficult times.

Thanks to all who have contributed to this edition and to those who have given generous financial contributions for the upkeep of your magazine – it's greatly appreciated

Christmas appeal

A very busy group in Denbigh has been working hard to provide goods for homeless people in Wrexham and have set up an appeal for Christmas shoeboxes for men, women and young adults. It's certain that the generous people of Llandyrnog will pull out the stops again and support this excellent cause.

Boxes can be left in the downstairs room of the Village Hall, Saturday 5 December, 10am–1pm. All COVID-19 guidelines will be strictly adhered to and it is requested that the boxes are delivered wrapped in plastic bags so that they can be sanitised.

Here are suggestions for what could be included in the boxes (boxes containing only food will also be greatly appreciated).

- ◆ Toiletries: toothbrush and toothpaste, deodorant and body spray, shower gel and shampoo, shaving foam and razors, baby wipes/face wipes, hairbrush or comb, moisturiser, sanitary products for female boxes.
- ◆ Clothing: hat, scarf, gloves, warm socks, belt, raincoat/poncho, underwear.
- ◆ Food items: small bars of chocolate, sweets, biscuits, tinned food (ring-pull only), cans of pop. Drink sachets (coffee, hot chocolate). Food sachets (instant soup, mugshots).
- ◆ Other items: ziplock bags; notepad, pen and pencil, wind-up torch, cutlery.

No alcohol or money, please.

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 and advertisements), 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.

Another appeal

Although the support for our local businesses is greatly appreciated, the appreciation would be greater if more consideration was used when parking. Recently, a driver (perfectly able to walk) chose to park near a bend, partly on the double yellow lines, although there was ample space on the road to park further away from the bend. Consequently, cars passing this inconsiderate driver's vehicle, had to go round a bend by the church on the wrong side of the road.

Four cars had to pass that particular in a matter of moments, four cars that could have been involved in an accident through no fault of their own.

Therefore, please think before you park!

Joe's petition

It's certain you will be pleased to know that Joe Hinchcliffe's petition has had over 10,000 signatures. 18-year-old Joe set up the petition in memory of his best friend, Olivia Alkir, who was killed in a car accident last year. It calls for a 'black box' to be fitted in the cars of young drivers and for them to take an experienced driver as a passenger in all journeys for the first. With this support, the hope is for these proposals to become law.

Joe said, 'I have been overwhelmed by all the support I have received from people in the local area. It has been amazing to see how many people support what I am doing – they have inspired me to keep pushing so that we can hopefully create a change in the law in Olivia's memory. Thank you.'

The petition can be seen and signed at petition.parliament.uk/petitions/333041.

James Davies, MP for Vale of Clwyd

james.davies.mp@parliament.uk

Constituency office: 01745 888920

Westminster office: 0207 2194606

A boy and a big toy

This is somewhat of a confession but I am, sadly, a big fan of the television series, *Outback Truckers*. Many a time have I shared a cab (in my imagination, of course) with Joanna Atkins on her numerous epic 3000km, 34-hour journeys across the outback of Australia, dodging kangaroos, inching past other road trains, crossed swollen rivers avoiding the crocs. It's all blood, sweat and tears – after an episode I am shattered.

Anyway, I must have let slip during frivolous talk that I would do anything to have a go at driving a massive lorry. My jaw dropped when Lisa, our elder daughter, gave me a very tidy red box as a Christmas present – a ticket to my very own lorry-driving experience. Well, that was it!

Sadly, we were locked down from March – all shows cancelled, no tractor runs, no steam fair, no auctions, no anything – only work. However, the little red box was my glimmer of hope – my ticket to ride. As soon as that lockdown would be over, I would be off.

And off I went, early one September morning. The destination was Tockwith Airfield, not far from York – a good two-and-a-half-hour's drive.

The registration process was very straightforward. 'Could we see your driving licence, Mr Davies?' a young girl asked. 'Yes, of course,' I replied. Unfolding my old-school driving licence like an OS map, a licence that had points on it dated before she was born, was a bit embarrassing, though.

Sensing she was dealing with someone who had been around longer than a DFS sale, she asked me whether I'd driven a lorry before. 'Yes,' I said, 'a steam one.' She did not bat an eyelid – very professional, I thought.

I was introduced to my instructor, Josh, and we instantly hit it off. He was from Newport and a bubbly larger-than-life character. Sensing my nerves, I guess he was just bantering away.

'Have you ever reversed a trailer before?' he asked. I told him that I was born in reverse and that I was wearing my Ifor Williams cap. Could I reverse? Has the Pope got a balcony, I thought to myself until we turned the corner and saw my wheels for the next few hours. Have you ever had that feeling that you should have just kept quiet?

I was well impressed – a 30-ton 16-wheel Renault articulated vehicle transporter was waiting for me (luckily no vehicles on board) and a whole airfield to mess around in for a while.

I was introduced to the cab and it took all of a minute to explain. It was automatic, so two pedals (you could drive it with one leg, if that's any consolation) and just two stalks – one with F and R (forward and reverse, of course) and the other one D and N – (drive and neutral) so I quickly worked that one out.

The handbrake was no more than 3" and so ergonomic it was a joy to hold – it was a work of art (how can you fall in love with a handbrake?). Anyway, on releasing it, sixteen wheels hissed like a snake – I was ready to go.

Just very gentle pressure on the throttle and we were off – the lorry gliding effortlessly through the automatic gearbox until I guess we reached a fair speed. I was really enjoying it. However, ahead there were cones set out at fairly regular intervals and to my horror I was told that I had to snake my way around them and not squash them. I think the purpose of the exercise was to test one's spatial awareness – there are mirrors everywhere on these wagons and believe you me, you need them!

Having completed that manoeuvre without Josh feeling the need to abandon ship, as it were, I was told to turn around, head back, then stop. A mock-up unloading bay had been prepared and I was told to reverse into it. 'See those cones? They are wagons – you have to park equidistant between them.' No pressure there, then.

A boy and a big toy: ctd

The only thing I have mastered – not very well, I may add – is reversing my Ifor Williams trailer behind the Landy into the unloading bay in Ruthin Auction. That can be very embarrassing especially when you have an audience, but this took my reversing skills to a different level. Anyway, a few deep breaths, remembered the drill – button on R, button on D, handbrake off (another long hiss), check all the mirrors, and away. Though I say so myself, it was a perfect manoeuvre – the wagon was bang on in the middle of the unloading bay. My instructor was amazed: ‘You’ve done this before, Bryn!’ I just smiled and pointed to my Ifor Williams cap. He actually said that if it was a driving test, I would have passed. Mind you, I think he was being very kind to me because there were no other cars on the airfield, were there?!

Following that it was just a case of flooring the lorry down the runway. These wagons are obviously restricted, but it’s a joy to listen to a 400hp 12-litre engine roaring like a lion, going through its paces. The runway is next to a racing track and there were guys there whizzing around in Lamborghinis and Porsches, well over 150mph on the straight. But you know what? I was quite happy in my truck – in my mind I was on my way to Kununurra – me and Joanna – dodging the kangaroos.

What did I learn from this experience? – ‘Not very green or environmentally friendly, was it?’ I can hear some say. ‘Was it an essential journey?’ others will ask. Sorry, I offer no explanation or apologies other than – in my mind, it had to be done. Remember that virtually everything we touch, drink or eat has been in a lorry. Now I respect that these guys do not need cars cutting them up, making them brake suddenly. If it’s one thing I’ve learnt – give them room and a friendly thumbs up – they’re heroes!

Happy trucking,
Bryn Davies

P.S. Went to Llandudno (pre-lockdown) and tried to parallel park our little Corsa along the front in a space big enough for a bus. Told Anwen to look and learn. Guess what? I made a pig’s ear of it. At least it made Anwen’s day.

Around the Village

Welcome, although a rather belated one, to Gina Johnson who has come to live in Maes Tyrnog. Hope you have settled in our midst!

We send our condolences to Clwyd Hughes, Llangwyfan Farm – his brother, Gwynn Hughes of Brookhouse Farm, Denbigh passed away recently.

Also, we sympathise with the family of Brian Locking, Aberchwiler, former bassist with the popular 1960s band, *The Shadows*. Following his retirement, he moved to Llandyrnog at first. He stayed for a while in Clwyd Bank and would play his guitar in the old wooden garage with Den George, the owner, drumming along. Oh, to be a fly on the wall of that garage!

Congratulations to Tomos Davies, formerly of Hafod y Bryn and best wishes in his new post as a chartered surveyor with Cooke & Arkwright. He will be working both Cardiff and Bridgend offices.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery go to Willy Plumb and to Wendy Grey-Lloyd, after a stay in hospital.

Aeron and Menna Ellis, Gader Goch, thank all who sent cards and gifts on the recent occasion of their golden wedding anniversary. They were greatly appreciated.

A well-known face was spotted in Llangwyfan recently – Sean Fletcher was recording a new six-part television series called *Wonders of the Border*. This is a follow-up to the series *Wonders of the Coast*.

From the Rector

Once again, Wales is in national lockdown; we must stay at home and only make essential journeys. All places of worship must remain closed at this time. For many this 'Fire Break' lockdown feels harder than last time. Yet we know we must play our part and help to protect the NHS and those around us.

Plans have had to be changed and events we normally take for granted have been cancelled. Sadly, this includes our usual Remembrance Sunday Service, we regret there will be no Remembrance Service this year. This does not mean the fallen will be forgotten, we are not able to gather, but we can mark the 2 minutes silence at home, you may wish to stand on your doorstep at 11am to show your respect.

As we remember and honour all who have given their lives for peace and freedom, we live in the hope of a world where war will be no more. Blessed are the peacemakers, says Jesus. Peacemakers are strong and wise, willing to step out bravely and speak out for peace. They seek to keep negotiations open, and endeavour to bring lasting peace. And in

God we place our hope and trust, believing in a time when: *Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Micah 4 verse 3.*

There is a story told of a young man who lay dying in the trenches. His friend stayed with him till the end. As he lay dying the friend asked, 'Is there a message you would like me to take to the folks at home for you?' The young man answered, 'When you go home find my old Sunday School teacher and tell him that what he taught me about Jesus is helping me to die today.'

At the end of the war the young man honoured his friend's request and went to his home village and found the Sunday School teacher. The young man told the teacher the message he had been given. With tears in his eyes the older man mourned the young soldier, then he replied, 'May God forgive me, for I gave up teaching Sunday School long ago for I didn't feel I was making any difference.'

Almighty and eternal God, from whose love in Christ we cannot be parted, either by death or life: hear our prayers and thanksgivings for all whom we remember this day; fulfil in them the purpose of your love; and bring us all with them, to your eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our lord. Amen.

Lest We Forget

Rhag i ni Anghofio

A huge Thank You to everyone who has worked so hard to keep our churchyards looking neat and tidy. This has been a very difficult year and during lockdown our volunteers were unable to carry out their usual grasscutting due to Government restrictions. But thanks to an initial cut after lockdown by David Weyman and team we were soon back to our usual tidy state. We won't be able to hold the 'Grasscutters Ball' this November, i.e. a thank you dinner at the White Horse, but we are truly grateful for all their hard work. Thank You!

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Ysgol Bryn Clwyd

The pupil school groups have been voted in. The school council, the healthy schools committee, the eco schools committee and the Criw Cymraeg will be meeting to discuss ways to make positive changes in these areas.

There are clubs after school as well – art club with Mrs Lyon, yoga with Miss Birkett, and football with Mr Jones.

Dosbarth Iau: All children in Dosbarth Iau have weekly maths homework – a Champions League football challenge being run by Rio Ferdinand. When children complete the challenge, they will earn a new player for their collection of cards to form a team. The aim is to collect them all.

The pupils have been learning different techniques for measuring a tree. Their current topic is plants around the world. They have been solving the mystery of how the Koa tree travelled from Hawaii to Reunion Island and learning why trees grow so tall in the forest.

In their mindfulness lesson the children have been reading the story *Bloom* and learning to give thanks for plants that grow.

Dosbarth Babanod: The children have been using autumn's natural materials to practise their sounds outside.

The have also been asking the question 'Why don't spiders stick to their own webs?' and been making great use of the great new outdoor area which Mr Jones has built over the summer.

As the children weren't able to celebrate Halloween this year, on the Friday before breaking for half-term the children wore their Halloween costumes to school and went 'trick or treating' around the classrooms.

A pumpkin patch evening, organised by the Friends of the School, came together to enjoy a lot of fun. Just over £190 was raised, a huge amount which means a lot to a small school. Thanks to Tesco for their donations and Miss Ruth and all the Friends of the School for organising such a fun event.

A word from the Chair of Governors, Mr Owen Conry:

'The teaching and support staff at Ysgol Bryn Clwyd...have done a great job in bringing normality to the school day and providing reassurance to our school kids in these unprecedented times'.

If you would like to contribute to the British Legion's Poppy Appeal, poppies are available at the Post Office with a collection box for your donations.



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Notes from Plas Ashpool

Another 'lockdown', clocks changing and weather becoming more dreary – it's no wonder we begin to feel less than cheerful at this time. So I started thinking the other day about how to remain in a positive frame of mind. First question to myself – what do you like doing when your life feels a little out of control? Answer – make a list. Of course!

So here follows my 'happiness list' for the months ahead (no particular order, just things that popped into my head). I am sure I might have included a few of these in an earlier edition, so forgive me if I am repeating myself.

1. On waking and before going to bed (or indeed, any time at all) think of all the things that you are grateful for.
2. Really take notice of the beauty in our countryside around us.
3. Nourish yourself with the best possible food you can find. Lots of lovely winter-

warmer recipes out there for carnivores and vegetarians, so let's start cooking.

4. Make an effort to contact all those people in your address/phone book you haven't been in regular contact with.
5. Avoid overexposure to newspapers and news bulletins. Let's try and give energy and attention to all the good news that still remains in the world. It just doesn't get reported enough.
6. Exercise as much as you possibly can (preferably outdoors).
7. Be a radiator sort of person not a drain. Try to give off warmth and energy to those around you.
8. Laugh, laugh and laugh again.
9. Be around children and animals (if you haven't got your own supply – try to borrow some). They are always looking on the happy side of life.
10. Keep busy – life can be full of activities, even the simple ones in and around our homes. Take time to include all the ones which make you happy.

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I have ticked off no. 2 already this morning – seeing 6 or 7 herons down by the river.

I hope that you might all have your own 'happiness list' and be able to push away some of the winter blues. And if you are one of the lucky few who love and thrive in the winter, then please share your tips with us through *Llais Llandyrnog Voice*. Thanks.

On that note, I include a little quotation a friend sent to me recently which was posted on his hotel door during a recent visit to the Scilly Isles – perfect for these peculiar times:

'Not all storms come to disrupt your life,
Some come to clear your path!'

Until next time, happy thoughts and if you have the opportunity, happy gardening too.

Fiona Bell

Reading Well for children

A new scheme has been launched in Wales to help children understand and manage their mental health and wellbeing through reading. More than a million parents believe their child could benefit from professional help – in Wales, one in ten children between the ages of 5 and 16 have a mental health problem and many more experience behavioural issues.

The programme, is being brought to Wales by The Reading Agency in partnership with Welsh Government and public libraries. It includes book collections and supporting resources made available in both English and Welsh. The booklist responds to the increasing demand for expert-endorsed information and advice to support children to understand and manage their mental health and wellbeing.

The titles in the list deal with topics from anxiety and grief, to bullying and internet safety, to how to cope with events in the news. The booklist also explores living well with a range of diagnosed conditions including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), dyslexia, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and physical disabilities.

The booklist is targeted at children in Key Stage 2 and the books are available free to borrow from local public libraries.

For more information, visit:
reading-well.org.uk/wales.

A familiar face and voice

Manon Elis, formerly of Groes Efa Bach, is a well-known actress in Wales. She has now diversified and opened a shop in Caernarfon, selling vintage and retro items mainly, along with Welsh-made modern products.

At the end of October, a short series of three programmes started on S4C, called *Agor y Clo* (Unlocking). Manon is the presenter of this series, showing personal treasures and the intriguing stories behind them.

The series can be seen on demand on S4C Clic, iPlayer, and other platforms, and has English subtitles.

Meanwhile, on Radio Cymru, a play of two parts has recently been broadcast – *Lleisiau'r Môr* by Manon Eames. It's based on her work for the Welsh Women's Archive, researching the part played by women in the sea industry that is so significant in Wales' history.

The play itself is an adaptation of the stories of four captains' wives and gives us a glimpse of their experiences of being at sea.

Non Haf, formerly of Hafod y Bryn, another familiar face on stage and television in Wales, is one of the cast.

Lleisiau'r Môr is available on BBC Sounds – but no subtitles, obviously!

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Notes from our County Councillor

Well, if you would have asked me this time last year what I would be doing this November, I would be telling you all the places Hilary and I wanted to visit in Vietnam that we didn't get time to see in 2019 and how we would have been travelling through Cambodia and Thailand with the thought of surprising Nok (Pym's mum) on our travels, how wrong would I have been.

Today I have been helping businesses in my area apply for the lockdown resilience grants to help them survive through what has or is the worst pressure on businesses in our lifetime. I hope they are all successful in their applications. I can't stress how important it is for you to consider the needs of these businesses and support them the best you can.

Over the last few weeks, I have been involved in several on-line council meetings ranging from our monthly full council, planning committees, area member meetings and our

very important community council meetings. I would especially like to thank the clerk, Bryn Davies, for his dedication to our community.

I'm writing this for the *Llais* on 28th October; I can't predict what we will all be facing by the time you are reading this. The Firebreak finishes on 9th November but I'm convinced other restrictions will be in place to help the control of this very annoying COVID-19.

One thing I do know is that if you live in Llandyrnog Ward you are probably in one of the best places in the world, knowing that there will always be someone ready to help you. You might have to ask but don't be proud – most people will be pleased to help.

It looks like there is little movement on the Arla site. I have been keeping in touch with the owners and the economic development team from Denbighshire in the hope of alternative uses.

The building development above Maes Llan is progressing slowly and when it goes ahead, a sizeable sum will come from the developers as a commuted sum to assist with the upgrading of the children's play area in Cae Nant.

We are heading into darker and colder nights – again, could I ask you to look after your neighbours and the vulnerable close by. But make sure you firstly protect yourself and keep your distances and follow the guidelines.

My details, if you need to contract me are below.



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

Or leave a message on **Facebook**

Three places

We begin a new series of articles, asking our readers to tell us about their favourite three places, or those that have a special significance for them. We begin with Margaret Williams of Rhiwbebyll Isaf.

Pen Banc Field, Pant y Gynnuau

I grew up in Pant y Gynnuau, Bryn Saith Marchog. On Pen y Banc field – Pant y Gynnuau's highest field – there is a ruined cottage with spectacular views across the Vale of Clwyd, from Craig Lelo in the South to Moel Famau and Moel Fenlli in the north. As one of seven children I liked to come for a while on a Saturday afternoon to enjoy the scenery and consider my future.

Stone Town, Zanzibar

Zanzibar Island, now part of Tanzania, but ruled by the Sultan of Oman for centuries. Residents today are a mixture of Somalian, Indian and Middle Eastern. They are very relaxed and welcoming people, specialising in growing vanilla, cloves, cinnamon and black pepper. Stone Town is the capital of the island and that is where Farrokh Bulsara (Freddie Mercury) grew up. Having visited his humble home, it was very different to stay in one of the Sultan's palaces and enjoy a bath on the balcony overlooking the Indian Ocean.

China

It was a great pleasure to travel with Gwilym and Myfanwy, Tŷ Newydd and a group of friends – most of them from the Vale of Clwyd – thanks to the Agriculture Office's invitation to this huge country in 2001.

One memory of the trip is our bus crossing a narrow river over a rather cramped bridge on our way to a small village in rural China. I remember that Gwilym was quite doubtful about the condition of the bridge and Myfanwy's scream, when the bus dropped into the river, echoes in my ears to this day. Fortunately, the bus and passengers were no worse. While we were enjoying a delicious

meal, a large group of villagers successfully got the bus out of the water.

I also remember standing at the Great Wall when the Chinese Army was out on training. There were thousands of young soldiers marching, with rows of them stretching for a distance. That's when I really realised what the real size of the country was and thought about how important it was for our political leaders to achieve global harmony.

Llandyrnog & Llangwyfan:

Y Rhyfel Mawr

1914–18

The Great War

The fully bilingual book contains many colour and black-and-white photographs. It tells the story of the 21 men and boys who had a connection with the villages and who died as a result of the Great War. Their names are on the memorial by the Church of St Tyrnog, Llandyrnog. The book also provides a picture of the life of the area during the period, includes maps of the places with which the men were associated as well as giving a brief overview of the history of the war.

The book is available, price £14, from the Village Shop, Llandyrnog; Siop Elfair, Ruthin; Ruthin and Denbigh libraries or by e-mailing llangwyfan.history@hotmail.com.

Review of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB

WE NEED YOUR HELP – Please complete our survey!

The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB is a working landscape of farms, forests and moorland, rich in wildlife and history which is hugely valued as a place to walk, cycle and to enjoy many other activities. It is also a place to appreciate the spectacular views, fresh air and relax from the busy lives we all lead.

The AONB management plan, identifies why this nationally important landscape is special. The plan looks at the issues and opportunities that affect the AONB and sets out an action plan for the future.

The current plan is the Management Plan 2014-2019. It is now 6 years old and due for review. A lot has happened in that time, many of the issues and opportunities we face now were not imagined when it was written.

We need to refresh the management plan to enable us to meet the challenges we face such as the climate and ecological emergencies, agricultural reform and COVID-19, to enable the AONB to continue to thrive and deliver all it does for its residents and visitors.

The next management plan will cover the 5 year period 2020-2025. The Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Partnership has commissioned JBA Consulting to work alongside the Partnership to develop a comprehensive and accessible plan.

We need your help to make sure we include all the important issues and opportunities to inform our thinking. We need this to ensure that we have the best possible plan to help us keep the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty a wonderful place to live, work and visit for the years to come.

1. **Complete our short (5 minute) survey** to gather views about how people value and engage with the AONB and priorities for future management of the AONB.

2. To give us a more detailed response as to

issues and opportunities for the AONB you believe need addressing in the new management plan, please **email the JBA project team**.

3. **Attend one of our events**, details of which will be published soon on the AONB website and social media channels:

Website:

www.clwydianrangeanddeevalleyaonb.org.uk

Facebook: @ClwydDeeAONB

Twitter: @Clwyd_Deer_AONB

Instagram: @Clwyd_Deer_AONB

Events of the past in November

- ◇ 1536 – Act of Union, Wales coming under English rule
- ◇ 1948 – Welsh Folk Museum at St Fagan's opened to the public
- ◇ 1982 – S4C started transmitting
- ◇ 1953 – Dylan Thomas died in New York
- ◇ 1294 – the Welsh captured Denbigh Castle from the English and held it for 7 months, during the Welsh Revolt 1294–95
- ◇ 1969 – Welsh Chess Union break off from British Chess Federation. Its motto is 'Bold in attack; in defence, secure'
- ◇ 1956 – Large protest in Liverpool by the Welsh against the drowning of Capel Celyn to form a reservoir to give a water supply to the city
- ◇ 1805 – Pontcysyllte aqueduct opened, carrying Llangollen canal over the Dee Valley
- ◇ 1893 – Women had the vote in a general election for the first time, in New Zealand
- ◇ 1898 – C. S. Lewis, the author, was born. His grandfather, Richard Lewis, farmed in Caergwrle, Flintshire
- ◇ 1973 – Ryan Giggs was born – he has a lot to celebrate at the moment!

World Diabetes Day and the Welsh connection

World Diabetes Day (WDD) is marked every year on 14 November, the birthday of Sir Frederick Banting, who co-discovered insulin along with Charles Best in 1922. WDD was created in 1991 by the International Diabetes Federation and the World Health Organisation in response to growing concerns about the escalating health threat posed by diabetes.

There is a Welsh connection to one of the first patients to receive insulin to treat diabetes. This article is going to take a long return journey from the Vale of Clwyd to the USA, and almost to the White House in Washington.

In 1788, Jane Evans was born in the Vale of Clwyd (it hasn't been possible to ascertain the exact location of her birth). She married Nathan Hughes, a Welshman, in Finsbury, London. One of their children, David Charles Hughes, who was born in Tredegar, Gwent, emigrated to the USA in 1855, when he was 23 years of age. He became a Baptist minister, was learned in Greek and Hebrew, and contributed to a new translation of the English Bible which became the American Standard Edition in 1900.

David and his wife, Mary, had a son called Charles Evans Hughes. Charles became governor of New York, having pipped William Randolph Hearst to the post.

In November 1916, the USA almost had a President that could speak some Welsh. Most editors of the major newspapers believed that Charles Evans Hughes would be the new President and some printed headlines declaring this. Unfortunately, Woodrow Wilson won the race to be President, so the Welsh language didn't get to the White House. Charles subsequently became Secretary of State and one of the most distinguished Chief Justices of the Supreme Court of the USA.

Charles and his wife, Antoinette, had four children – Charles Jr, Helen, Catherine and

Elizabeth. Elizabeth was diagnosed with juvenile onset diabetes mellitus in April 1919 (age 11); she had lost a lot weight and was drinking a lot. An eminent doctor saw Elizabeth and declared to her that 'without treatment, the life expectancy of juvenile diabetes is less than a year from onset of symptoms'. She was placed on a 'starvation diet' – to find on how few calories she could survive.

Between 1921 and 1922, a team at the University of Toronto succeeded in isolating the hormone insulin, which people with type 1 diabetes are unable to produce on their own. This discovery led to a deluge of requests from patients and their doctors to come to Toronto to receive treatment. Most were to be disappointed due to the extremely limited supplies of insulin available at the time. However, one of the lucky ones was Elizabeth Evans Hughes. In August 1922, she became one of the first children to be treated with insulin. This treatment almost immediately transformed her existence.

Elizabeth Evans Hughes went on to live a very full and successful life. When she died in 1981 she had had diabetes for over 61 years. It is estimated that she had taken over 40,000 insulin injections during her life.

Connaught Laboratories in Toronto and Eli Lilly and Company in Indianapolis were the first to produce insulin to treat diabetes. In 1995, the Eli Lilly Company in Britain commissioned a number of medals to be struck to honour Welsh people living with diabetes. The medal honours Elizabeth Evans Hughes as one of the first children to be treated with insulin in 1922 and commemorates her Welsh background.

A Children and Type 1 Diabetes Day event took place at the Senedd in Cardiff on 3 February of this year to raise awareness of early symptoms, so that children can be diagnosed before they become seriously unwell. The Senedd event

World Diabetes Day and the Welsh connection: ctd.

was sponsored by Jayne Bryant MS to celebrate the achievements of children in Wales who live with the condition.

At the Senedd event, the grandson of Elizabeth Evans Hughes, Professor David W Denning of the University of Manchester, presented the newly reissued Elizabeth Evans Hughes Medal to people living with diabetes in Wales.

The story turns a full circle, since Professor Denning, great-great-great-grandson of Jane Evans is now retired from clinical practice and has a residence in the Vale of Clwyd. His wife, Merian, is a native of Denbighshire.

If anyone knows of individuals who are an inspiration to other diabetics and might be worthy of this medal, please contact Diabetes UK Cymru.

Little Acorns Day Nursery

The children had great fun during dinosaur week: they made Chocolate Mud, Salt Dough Fossils, Egg Shell Collages, Frozen Dinosaur Eggs, Dinosaur hats, Dinosaur Small World, Hand Print Dinosaurs, Shape Dinosaurs ... and much more

Little Acorns Day Nursery is fun, friendly and affordable childcare. It's a privately run pre-school for children aged 2 years to school age – all children welcome! The nursery is based at Ysgol Bryn Clwyd and is open from 8am–5.15pm, Monday–Friday during term time.

Childcare Vouchers are accepted and The Childcare Offer for Wales (30 hours' free funding) is run there. Viewings welcome and children will receive a FREE taster session!

Prices started from £10 – for more information ring 0777 6796020 or e-mail littleacornsltd@outlook.com.

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Matters discussed in the October meeting of Llandyrnog Community Council

- * Denbighshire County Council (DCC) has confirmed that it has received the application to place a bench at Cae Nant and that the application is being processed.
- * The Council has received two quotations for upgrading the play equipment at Cae Nant and will be seeking a third quotation.
- * The Cocoa Rooms have been painted and the Community Council is seeking a third quotation for a new carpet.
- * DCC has confirmed that as part of the development adjoining Maes Llan, the 30mph signs will be relocated. However, the County Council is not requesting the developer to carry out any additional road works off-site as requested by the Community Council, responding to local residents' concerns.
- * The gates across the bridleway between Pen y Bryn, Llangwyfan and Moel Famau car park had been rehung by the landowner.
- * The stile by Pentrefelin (path 29) has been repaired by DCC making this path more accessible.
- * The meeting was addressed by a member of the public who had exercised his right to attend the meeting virtually and representing those opposed to the application to reclassify path 34/36 from Penisa'r Waen to Tŷ Gwyn as a restricted by-way. Concerns were expressed about the way the Community Council dealt with the matter in 2006 and that person would be opposing the current application which had been submitted to DCC recently. To date, this has not been formally submitted to the Community Council for consideration – a copy for information only has been received directly from those making the application. The matter will be discussed in detail upon receipt of the application from DCC in due course.
- * MHC has kindly confirmed that it will be reminding all staff to be mindful of appropriate disposal of PPE items. A number of masks has been reported as being inappropriately disposed of in the area although the Community Council is very aware that others may well be responsible.
- * A Planning Application has been received for consultation – a listed building consent to convert a barn at Plas Ashpool into holiday accommodation.
- * Concerns were expressed again about incidents of fouling by dogs at Cae Nant. The Community Council has requested DCC to arrange ad hoc visits by the Dog Warden. However, the County Council is reluctant to do this due to the fact that Cae Nant is not in their ownership. Therefore, the Community Council is asking everyone to be vigilant any pass any relevant information to the clerk or to its members.
- * PCSO Geraint Jones has reviewed the crime figures for the area and confirmed that they has been only one recorded incident of a crime since June – attempted break-in to a garden shed.
- * The road surface around the Groes Efa junction has been repaired to an acceptable standard.
- * It was reported that it was maize harvesting time and that the landowners and DCC have been proactive, working with landowners and contractors to ensure as little disruption as possible to residents and to keep the roads as clean as possible during this period.
- * It was agreed to have the gates to Cae Nant painted.

Useful telephone numbers

Denbighshire CC Customer Service Centre
01824 706101

Out of hours: 03001 233068

North Wales Police: 101 (Non-emergency)
Report dog fouling free 0800 2300 2345