

# Llais Llandyrnog Voice

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June 2024 – Volume 9 – Issue 9

## What's in this month's edition?



The tractor boys are at it again! (p. 11)



What is astrophotography? (p. 9)



Thinking about the value of water (p.7)



Learn more about the person behind the venture that was called 'a national treasure' by Professor Paul Meador (p.12) [Photo: Mandy Jones, courtesy of Ceidiog PR]



Special award for Catherine (p. 14)

**When you pick up your copy from the church or Ty Ceffyl Bach, please contribute via the collection box, or give a contribution to your distributor. Thank you!**

# Around the village

## Thanks



We would like to thank everyone for your support on our opening day we were truly overwhelmed.

We are into our second week now and have had a steady flow of people and we love seeing you enjoying Ty Ceffyl Bach.

Remember if you have or have not got a horse Graham can always make you a unique gift from your own ideas.

**Thank you**

**Graham and Angie**

## Congratulations...

... to John, Wendy Grey Lloyd's grandson, on his recent visit to Buckingham Palace Gardens to receive his Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award which was presented by Edward Duke of Edinburgh. In order to achieve the gold award participants must complete 12 months volunteering, a four-day expedition and various skill based residential challenges. John is the first Myddleton College student to achieve this gold level – well done, John.  
... to Danny and Vicky Owen on the birth of Robin, a little brother to Ruby.  
...to John and Shân Ashton on becoming

grandparents once again – Lily Rose was born to Jac and Sarah, a little sister to George. The family live at Sale, Manchester.

**Condolences** to Jenny Salter, Stuart and family, Nythfa in their sad loss. Bryan, who was a jovial Postmaster, ran the Village Shop so successfully for years with his wife.

**Best wishes** to Elinor Griffith, Hen Gapel and Osian Jones, Maes Tynog who will both be celebrating their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday this month.

## Urdd National Eisteddfod

Congratulations to Leusa Jên Williams, Parc Ty'n Llan, on being awarded the third prize for individual recitation, Years 3 and 4. Also to Penri Williams, Maes Tynog on winning the third prize for his modified photograph, Year 6 and under.



The cars taking part in the Three Castles Trial will be passing through Llandyrnog on Friday 7 June from 10am onwards. There will be a coffee halt at Pentre Mawr Country House, and from here they travel to Mostyn Hall, Bodrhyddan Hall, Plas-yn-Cefn and to Ruthin Castle Hotel for lunch.

## Coffee morning



**Saturday 22 June**

**10–11.15am at the Village Hall**

*Donations gratefully received  
to home produce stall*



## Village Hall Events

Sat 1 <sup>st</sup>	Birthday party – private booking, 11am–1pm
Sun 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Baby shower – private booking, 2–5pm
Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Brownies, 5.30–7pm Choir, 7.30–9.30pm
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	Pilates, 7–8pm
Thu 6 <sup>th</sup>	Flower Show Committee, 7–8pm
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup>	Craft Group, 10am–4pm
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday party – private booking, 10.30am–1pm
Sun 9 <sup>th</sup>	Messy Church, 3–6pm
Mon 10 <sup>th</sup>	Brownies, 5.30–7pm Choir, 7.30–9.30pm
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>	Pilates, 7–8pm
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup>	Birthday party – private booking, 10am–2pm
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup>	Brownies, 5.30–7pm Choir, 7.30–9.30pm
Wed 19 <sup>th</sup>	Pilates, 7–8pm
Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Coffee morning: Messy Church and Shelter Cymru, 10.00–11.15am
Mon 24 <sup>th</sup>	Brownies, 5.30–7pm Choir, 7.30–9.30pm
Wed 26 <sup>th</sup>	Pilates, 7–8pm

To book the Village Hall, contact Ivan Butler:  
ivanbutler897@btinternet.com or  
07799 570549.

### Llais Llandyrnog Voice Committee:

Ruth Griffith (chair), Ivan Butler (treasurer and compositor), Anwen Davies (compositor and translator), Gwen Butler, Bryn Davies, Ann and Iestyn Jones-Evans, Rhian Jones, Rod and Margaret Williams, Jane Borthwick

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

## Cocoa Rooms Events

Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Craft Group 10am Trefoil Guild 2pm
Tue 4 <sup>th</sup>	Book Club 10am W.I. 7pm
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Llais Llandyrnog Voice</i> committee meeting 7pm
Mon 10 <sup>th</sup>	Craft Group 10am
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup>	Craft Group 10am
Tue 18 <sup>th</sup>	Book Club 10am Community Council 7pm
Thu 20 <sup>th</sup>	Craft workshop 7–9pm
Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Craft workshop 10am–12pm
Mon 24 <sup>th</sup>	Craft Group 10am Quilting group 7pm
<i>To book the Cocoa Rooms, e-mail Mrs Emily Williams: emilylloyd1@tiscali.co.uk</i>	

## Church Services

2 <sup>nd</sup>	11.15am	Eucharist
9 <sup>th</sup>	11.15am	Eucharist
	3.30pm	Messy Church at Village Hall
16 <sup>th</sup>	11.15am	Morning Prayer
23 <sup>rd</sup>	11.15am	Eucharist
30 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Joint service at Holy Trinity, Trefnant

## Dyffryn Chapel

2 <sup>nd</sup>	10am	Family service
9 <sup>th</sup>	11am	Rev. Megan Williams
16 <sup>th</sup>	9.45am	Rev. Andras Iago (communion)
23 <sup>rd</sup>	9.45am	Rev. Huw Dylan Jones
30 <sup>th</sup>	11am	Rev. Christopher Prew

**Congratulations** to Gwenan, Pen y Bryn, who was a member of Côr Ifor Bach, Cardiff that won the S4C competition Côr Cymru 2024/ S4C Wales Choir 2024.

# Llandyrnog and Llangwyfan WI

The meeting on the 7th May was our best attended yet with three new visitors who wanted to see if they enjoyed the group – we hope they did!

Since the last meeting, members have been for lunch and a tour of St Asaph Cathedral, as well as taking a trip to a WI event at Corwen, to listen to a talk by a contestant from the *Great British Sewing Bee* craft TV show (preceded by lunch of course!).

The speaker for the meeting on the 7th was Rhian Pierce from RSPB who came to talk about the conservation of curlews on Mynydd Hiraethog. It was extremely interesting. We learned that only four Welsh counties now have breeding curlews and that the birds live for up to 30 years, returning to the same nesting areas every year. The number of young that survive has drastically declined due to many factors including less upland grazing, more conifer belts, dryer uplands and more intensive farming.

The project has been active for four years with the help of farmers local to the Brenig area and is seeing the population rise gradually. Many of the curlews we see are not our native birds such as the ones that have inspired Welsh poets over the ages.

Visit [www.curlewlife.org](http://www.curlewlife.org) to find out more.

This link is also a very interesting one:

<https://www.curlewaction.org/y-gylfinir-and-other-welsh-names-for-curlew/>.



## Recipe

### MARINADE FOR CHICKEN PORTIONS

½ cup olive oil

2 tablespoons soft brown sugar

3 tablespoons soy sauce

1½ teaspoons lemon zest

3 tablespoons lemon juice

1 tablespoon fresh parsley leaves chopped

1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves chopped

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground black peppercorns

2 teaspoons crushed garlic (2 cloves)

6 chicken thighs (skin on)

Rock salt

Mix together the following ingredients in a large bowl – olive oil, brown sugar, soy sauce, lemon zest and juice, garlic, herbs, pepper and salt.

Add the chicken thighs and immerse in the marinade.

Cover the bowl and refrigerate for several hours or leave overnight.

When ready, remove the chicken and place in a roasting tin lined with foil.

Spoon a little of the marinade over the thighs and sprinkle some rock salt on top.

Bake in a preheated oven 200 °C Fan for 35–40 minutes.

When cooked serve with new potatoes and tenderstem broccoli and garnished with chopped fresh parsley.

Veronica Roberts

## Trefoil Guild

The guild enjoyed a talk by Alan Tiltman about childhood radio memories. We heard voices and signature tunes which we all recognised from times gone by. The meeting ended with tea and biscuits and then we sang Taps. The speaker won the raffle.

Next month we will be visiting Plas Coch gardens.



# The Wright Life



Traditionally, by June the time for sowing seeds is over, but we have had such a wet and cold spring, many vegetables and bedding plants still need to be planted. My asparagus, planted in 'lockdown', is now at its most abundant with fresh spears shooting out every morning; you can almost see them growing. The asparagus always comes when there is a glut in egg-laying and I make asparagus quiches and put individual portions in the freezer for later in the year. By the middle of June, the season is over and it's best to leave the plants to allow them to build up energy for next year. They grow into large clusters of bush-like ferny plants which float about in a breeze and soak you with the droplets of water which gather on the feathery foliage after a summer downpour. It does take up space in the vegetable garden, is dormant for most of the year, but for that short eight weeks it produces tender spears with a buttery sweet flavour and a hint of earthy bitterness. This elegant and aromatic vegetable can be an acquired taste for some, but you can't beat home grown and freshly picked.

Asparagus is a good source of dietary fibre and aids digestion, feeding the important gut bacteria and it's a good source of Vitamin A. On the downside though, it can cause 'stinky pee' named asparagus pee. This harmless odour is caused by a breakdown of asparagusic acid. However, this particular side effect doesn't affect everyone. Asparagusic acid is a sulphur-containing compound that is found exclusively in asparagus. Some people notice the smell as early as 15 minutes after eating asparagus. This effect is not universal, and researchers have found it's a genetic modification that some people do not respond to the smell – it's called asparagus anosmia, or for us laypeople, the inability to smell asparagus pee.

Well, I have digressed a little, and normality should resume. The winter hasn't done my

lawn any favours and it's in a very poor condition. It didn't help that I had a contractor to take my horse manure away and being so wet, the tractor ripped up what grass was there. I raked and spread grass seed in early May, but that was a disaster as the hens ate the lot. I have therefore decided to let nature take its course as the grass will re-establish – eventually. The lack of lawn meant I have only just got the mower out and yes, it didn't start. A call to Andy at Blue Hand Mowers and it was quickly fixed and is now eating up the grass. I am sure some of you are expert lawn custodians, but I am rather casual in my mowing. I really can't get excited about grass, but I understand the perfect lawn is something gardeners crave, with methodical weeding, scarifying, and feeding. Of course, the perfect finishing touch to your beautiful lush green healthy lawn is to cut the edges to a pristine straight line. I have a natural feature where weeds are welcome and edges are blurred. The hens and dogs love it, its imperfections providing wildlife an abundant habitat and for me it can provide the added surprise of an enormous hole, usually dug by an eager geriatric canine who loves to sit in her hole and watch the world go by.

## Hazel

## Mothers' Union

Instead of our usual meeting in May we were privileged to visit St Kentigern's Hospice for an introductory talk and a tour. It was fascinating to hear how many therapies and treatments are offered at the hospice and how many people benefit from its facilities. The rooms we visited were beautifully designed and decorated and, once the garden is complete, all bedrooms will have direct access to the garden. We are so lucky to have this wonderful resource on our doorstep. Next month we will be going back, but this time to enjoy afternoon tea!

*Mary Steel*

# Bryn's barometer

To be honest, material things aren't really my scene – the important things are those that money can't buy – happiness, health, friendship, things that make us count our blessings. Anyway, where am I going with this, you might ask?

I was recently fortunate, thanks to my late mother, to inherit a banjo barometer that had been in my parents' possession for many years. I have the privilege to care for it for the next generation.

My mother had complete faith in the barometer – a tap on the glass cover to see which way the arrow moved, up or down. Without fail, during the conversation, she would mention the weather – would it get better/worse depending which way the arrow was moving? As simple as that, and the weather forecast was pretty near the mark!

I don't know if you've ever been to *Yr Ysgwrn* – Hedd Wyn's home [the poet from Trawsfynydd who had won the Chair at The Birkenhead National Eisteddfod in 1917, but had been killed at Ypres, France a few weeks earlier]. I was fortunate to be at the house when it was being renovated, and could not help but notice the shape of a banjo barometer in the wallpaper. It was obvious that the family had been instructed not to remove the barometer from the wall at any cost – and had papered around it 26 times, with each layer showing the fashion at the time.

When Gerald, Hedd Wyn's nephew who looked after the house, stopped lighting the fire in the hearth, dampness started to creep up the walls. The National Trust, that owns the house, decided to move the barometer temporarily to a safe place, and as they did so, layers of wallpaper about an inch thick slipped from the wall. If you would like to learn more



about the wallpapers, watch the video from Eryri National Park's website: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sgw5K6cuRn8> (but it is in Welsh).

However, back to the barometer. Doesn't everyone want to know these days what day and what time it's going to rain, the wind strength and its direction? In fact, I'm often using my *Apple* if I'm organizing one of my walks or cycling, not just to decide whether I'm going or not – just which clothes to take with me and how wet I'm likely to get!

I had suggested to our three children – in order of age – would they like to have the barometer to remember Nain giving a little tap on the glass? I might as well have asked them if they'd like a dose of flu!!!

So to honour my mother's wish that I was to be the keeper of the barometer, I took it from the wall and handled it very carefully. To my surprise, written at the back in my grandfather's handwriting was – '*Thomas Davies, Segrwyd Isa*'. To explain, my grandfather lived at Segrwyd Isa near Denbigh before moving to Bancer. I don't know when – sometime in the mid-1930s, a very difficult period for all industries including farming.

Why had he felt the need to write his name on the back, who knows, but I'm forever grateful to him, as it means so much more to me. But haven't I contradicted myself now?! It is a material thing, but somehow I cannot help but think about my grandfather tapping the glass before retiring to bed to see which way the arrow moved – rain or sunshine – and most likely lying in his feather-bed planning for tomorrow!



## Bryn's barometer: ctd

Dic Jones, the renowned bard once said in one of his poems, *Nid agorir heb ei guro / 'Without a knock, it will not open'*, and that's how it was in my mother's home – never open the door without using the large knocker! Then stepping in, my mother greeting me, as she realised who was there. *'Well, come in, give that barometer a little tap. What's the weather going to be like, Bryn? Put the kettle on, we'll have a cuppa'!*

Unfortunately, that period has gone, but although the barometer is a material thing, this is a special barometer that has brought back many fond memories with it.

Bryn Davies

## Messy Church

In our May Messy Church session, we learned about God's precious gift of water. We heard about people who have no clean water and how important it is not to waste it. We understood how important water is to plants and to all sea life creatures, and that we must not pollute our oceans. We put messages on a big pump, saying why water is vital, we made a huge raindrop and we planted marigolds in pots to take home and care for. We learned about the water cycle and we did some magic painting and colouring.



Our next session will be on 9th June at 3.30pm as usual. Everyone is welcome; children, please bring a grown-up to share the fun.

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# World War II in Llandyrnog

## Extracts from Audrey Martin's experiences as an evacuee on a small family farm in Llandyrnog during the Second World War

Some friends of my parents had a cottage in North Wales – Tan y Bryn on the Bodfari road near Llandyrnog. It was a typical two-up two-down cottage with no electric or running water and a toilet at the bottom of the garden. During this time my mother must have met Mrs Lloyd of Rhiwbebyll Isaf.

In the Spring of 1941 we had to vacate Tan y Bryn. Mrs Lloyd heard that we were looking for somewhere else to stay. This is how my mother and I ended up living in the parlour at Rhiwbebyll Isaf – a farm in Llangwyfan that was run by Mr and Mrs Lloyd. They had a son David who was a couple of years younger than me.

Our accommodation in the farmhouse was the parlour and the bedroom directly above it. The parlour was our sitting room-come dining room-come kitchen. My mother prepared and cooked most of our meals here. She used two small paraffin stoves on the hearth.

Occasionally, if it wasn't in use, Mrs Lloyd would let my mother bake things in the oven of the kitchen range. The range was always kept going. Mrs Lloyd baked all her bread in a bread oven in a separate building. The kitchen was the centre of life on the farm, the place where everybody gathered. I remember playing board games like snakes and ladders with David on the kitchen table.

I attended the Village School in Llandyrnog, but I also went to Sunday School in Llangwyfan Church. Miss Behrens, an ex-teacher, taught us at Sunday School. She lived with her sister in a cottage over the fields from the church. They had an evacuee boy from Liverpool staying with them. He pulled over the font and broke it. Not sure if it was deliberate or an accident.

Going down the road towards Llandyrnog, on the right hand side was the White House. David and I were caught taking apples from the orchard on one occasion. I had put the apples in my knickers. The owner of the house



*Audrey, Mrs Lloyd and David*

caught us – I must have looked ridiculous.

David and I found some cigarettes in the stable. We took them up to the loft above the stables where we were allowed to play. We then thought it would be quite grown up to smoke them. Unfortunately, Mr Lloyd found us, he was very angry, not just because we were smoking but the fire risk to the stables.

Living in two rooms, my mother had nowhere suitable to store our food so she put some of it in an old suitcase under her bed. This attracted a rat – she could hear it under her bed. Mr Lloyd was summoned, who promptly turned up with a gun and shot it! He then removed the dead rat and advised my mother that it was not a good idea to store food under her bed.

We left Rhiwbebyll in the Autumn of 1943 as Liverpool had not been bombed for more than a year. I look back at the time spent on the farm as some of the happiest days of my life. After the war I made regular trips back to visit the farm until work and marriage took me further afield.

**Audrey Martin's full story and others will be published by The Llandyrnog Historical Society in 2025.**



# Llandyrnog Astronomical Society

On Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April at Llandyrnog Village Hall, the Llandyrnog Astronomical Society held a special meeting with two talks about astrophotography where members Len Jones and Gareth Jackson took us into another world for the evening. The talk was titled 'What is astrophotography?'

Astrophotography is the name given to taking photographs of celestial objects such as stars and planets, the sun, the moon and deep sky objects (DSOs) such as nebulae, galaxies and star clusters.

The first talk by Gareth was on the basics of astrophotography and how you can start in this wonderful hobby with just a camera phone or basic DSLR and take some great images of some of the brighter objects in our sky such as the moon. During the aurora display on 10<sup>th</sup> May that we were lucky enough to experience here in North Wales, many good photographs were taken with a Canon DSLR with a standard kit lens (18–55mm), although there are also plenty of great images taken with just mobile phones.

During the talk, we defined astrophotography and talked about the scale and distance of different celestial objects and how you can take pictures of them with just a camera lens or using a telescope with a camera attached.

Some objects in the sky are very big but very faint. For example, the Andromeda galaxy is as wide as 6 full moons but is so dim that we need to take long exposures to be able to capture an image of our nearest galaxy. We also need to select the correct magnification so that we can fit it all into one image!

After a brief demonstration of some of the equipment involved, we saw some of the images that can be taken on a modest budget setup.

After a break for tea and refreshments Len presented details and pictures of a recent visit to Calar Alto Observatory in Almeria in



*Andromeda galaxy*

Southern Spain where Europe's largest mainland telescope is located at 2,200m at the east end of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, specialising in the search for exoplanets (near earths). The evening ended with a comprehensive look into the many pictures of deep sky objects, including colourful nebulae and galaxies located many millions of light years from earth imaged by Len's telescopes around his European travels to Dark Sky locations.

These were truly awe-inspiring photos of the deep space around us and both speakers took us on a light fantastic journey through the universe. Their enthusiasm and commitment to this 'hobby' was evident in the presentation and willingness to share their knowledge. It is amazing how much effort goes into achieving the images which were displayed in the talk, with both speakers showing us their journey across the universe from Llandyrnog and abroad.

We certainly look forward to more talks. Why not join us? We meet monthly on the last Tuesday of the month at the Golden Lion in Llangynhafal and the first Tuesday at the White Horse in Hendrewydd. We have observation nights, talks, book exchanges but mostly we chat about all things Astronomical.

**James Davies, MP for Vale of Clwyd**

[james.davies.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:james.davies.mp@parliament.uk)

Constituency office: 01745 888920

Westminster office: 0207 2194606

## Tuesday Club



The guest speaker in the May meeting of the club was Deri Cottle from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service. He gave us very important information and advice regarding fire safety in the home.

The orders and payment for our midsummer lunch were collected and we're all looking forward to this at the Drovers Arms, Rhewl.

Regards were sent to Chris Palin who is not in the best of health at the moment, tea was served and the raffle drawn.

The next meeting at the Cocoa Rooms will be on Wednesday, 17 July at 2pm. New members will be given a warm welcome.



- ◆ Install smoke alarms on each level in your home. Keep them free from dust and test them once a week. For a free Safe and Well Check and free smoke alarm installation, call 0800 169 1234.
- ◆ Make a fire action plan so that everyone in your home knows how to escape if there's a fire. Keep the exits from your home clear from clutter and obstructions. Make sure that everyone in your home can easily find the keys for doors and windows.
- ◆ Take extra care in the kitchen – accidents while cooking account for over half the fires in homes. Don't leave pans unattended while cooking and never leave young children and pets alone in the kitchen. Take extra care when cooking with hot oil.
- ◆ Never leave lit candles unattended or in rooms where children are on their own. Make sure candles are in secure holders on a surface that doesn't burn and are away from any materials that could burn.
- ◆ Never smoke in bed. Use a proper ashtray that can't tip over. Be careful if you smoke and use emollient creams – they can soak into clothing, bedding and dressings, leaving a flammable residue.
- ◆ Get into the habit of closing doors at night. If you want to keep a child's bedroom door open, close the doors to the lounge and kitchen.
- ◆ Don't overload electrical sockets. Appliances such as washing machines should have a single plug to themselves as they are high-powered.
- ◆ Keep matches and lighters where children can't see or reach them.
- ◆ Do not leave the television or other electrical appliances on standby. Always switch them off and unplug when not in use. Check that electrical appliances are in good working order. Don't leave washing machines, tumble dryers or dishwashers running overnight.
- ◆ Keep heaters well away from flammable materials. Never use heaters to dry clothes. Make sure they're switched off and unplugged before you go to bed.
- ◆ **IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE, GET OUT, STAY OUT, AND CALL 999**





## Taith Dractorau Dyffryn Clwyd Tractor Run



In aid of both



Thanks to all who supported the coffee morning in aid of The DPJ Foundation and Wales Air Ambulance. The wonderful sum of £450 was raised, which will go towards the total raised by the Vale of Clwyd Tractor Run, held on Sunday, 2 June. If you would like to donate to the charities supported, visit <https://www.justgiving.com/team/voctr-2024>.

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## Summer League fixtures

Evening matches ko 7.15pm

Monday 2 June: Nantglyn v Llandyrnog

Thursday 6 June: Llandyrnog v Llanrhaeadr

Saturday 8 June: Llandyrnog v Ysceifiog  
ko 12pm

Monday 10 June: Ysceifiog v Llandyrnog

Thursday 13 June: Llandyrnog v Henllan

Monday 17 June: Rhewl v Llandyrnog

Thursday 20 June: Trefnant v Llandyrnog

Monday 24 June: Llandyrnog v Llanfair

Thursday 27 June: Trefnant v Llandyrnog

Support our local team!

### 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

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# Spotlight on... Heather Powell

*This month we meet a very busy lady, whose days are filled with music.*

## ***What are your earliest memories?***

My earliest memories are of my family home in Buckley where I lived with my parents and older brother Neil. I remember family holidays to Yorkshire, being a Brownie and going to ballet (I was terrible)! I vividly remember joining the local brass band aged 7, Royal Buckley Town Band. I also recall my brother having a *Rubik's Cube* one Christmas – he could always do it quicker than me, so, in my temper, I took all the stickers off it – he has never forgiven me to this day!

## ***Where was your first school/further education?***

I went to Southdown Primary School in Buckley then Argoed High School in Mynydd Isa followed by Mold Alun 6<sup>th</sup> Form. From Mold Alun I went to the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester where I studied an honours degree in musical performance with my main instrument being Baritone and my second instrument Trombone.

## ***How did the interest in music come about?***

At aged 7 I watched the local brass band playing in assembly at my school and was inspired – one of my best friends, Paula and I begged our parents to take us along to a band rehearsal. I joined the junior band and was given a battered old instrument which I soon found I was pretty good at.

By 12 I had passed all 8 *ABRSM* exams and then joined more advanced bands – I was also a principal in the National Youth Brass Band of Wales. I've played with several well-known bands including Foden's and Black Dyke. I lived and worked in Germany for a year after my degree and played with a military band there which was an interesting experience!



*Heather, 1st right, with fellow staff members of DMC at the 2023 Music and Drama Education Awards*

## ***How did you choose your career? And how did Denbighshire Music Co-operative (DMC) begin and develop?***

When I graduated, I moved back to North Wales as a peripatetic music teacher. I taught as a brass teacher in many schools for a few years happily until 2014 when Denbighshire Council had to axe the music service due to austerity. I decided to fight to continue to provide music for children and set the company up myself as a social business for the good of children in the area. What started in my lounge as an idea has now become one of the lead music services in Wales – *DMC*. We have over 70 tutors and around 5000 children use our services weekly. Professor Paul Mealor, the new artistic director of the North Wales International Music Festival in St Asaph called the *DMC* 'a national treasure'.

We have just purchased our office thanks to support from the levelling up fund. I am now also on the advisory Board for Music education in Wales, I am chair of AIMS UK (*Independent Music Services UK*) and also

## Spotlight: ctd

current Chair of Welsh Music services. I sit on the Advisory Board for Social Business Wales and have helped set up many social businesses in Wales and further afield.

### ***What is next for DMC?***

Next on the Horizon for *DMC* is a trip to the National Urdd Eisteddfod, Meifod at the end of May with 100 pupils from Denbighshire who will lead a parade through the Maes to celebrate the National Music Service of Wales with the First Minister. After this we look forward to a 5-week tour with our *Make Some Noise* band, offering over 200 live concerts throughout September and Early October in schools and other education settings – all of this after 3 summer schools to run!

### ***In your spare time, what are your interests?***

In my spare time I am Director of a CrossFit gym – I train 4 or 5 times a week locally with Farm Fit and also with Commando XFit Wales in Rhos-on-Sea.

I do a lot of weightlifting and boxing and also play football – I played for the Llandyrnog ladies team last year in the summer league. I enjoy walking and fitness in general – I am about to go to a training camp in Tenerife for a week of weightlifting and walking! I also have 2 dogs that keep me busy – Holly who is a 4 year old Collie and Bob the Pug who is 2.

### ***What makes you really angry?***

Politics at the moment!

### ***What are you most proud of?***

My three wonderful children – Lloyd is a drummer who plays with Beaumaris Youth Band and has just been placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in European Youth Championships in Lithuania, Mason is a saxophone player who plays in Ambrose Welsh Language Band and Jacob lives and works in London but comes home often. Alongside my children I am proud of all we have achieved with *DMC* over the years.

*Thank you, Heather, for your time!*

## Ysgol Bryn Clwyd

The children have been enjoying the pleasant weather and making the most of learning outside.



Babanod have been learning to measure liquids using millilitres and are looking forward to visiting Denbigh castle this week.

Nursery have been going on letter and number hunts around the yard whilst Dosbarth Iau have been learning the story of Blodeuwedd and making floral art to represent her.



Rehearsals have also started for our end of year play, "A funny thing happened on the way to Camelot." The play will be performed in the village hall at 5.30pm on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July, entry is completely free so we would love to welcome our community to join us.



## Literary award



Congratulations to Catherine Howarth for winning the Prose Award with the following story at the North East Wales Learners' Eisteddfod.

### MARGARET

Margaret turned the key in the door and walked slowly back into her tiny flat. Well this was it! This was to be her agreed prison cell for the next 12 weeks or longer. All people over 70 should self-isolate Boris had said. However, was she going to manage? She was a very sociable person! No more singing in any of her 4 choirs. No more working in the charity shop 2 mornings a week. No more church, no more meeting up with friends for a *panad* and a wander around the shops. And this year was to be her 90th birthday. How was that milestone to be celebrated under these circumstances?

After a few days of watching TV and knitting, there was a knock at the door. Before this her door was always open and she used to just shout 'come in', but now she went to answer it. Standing well back from the door was her neighbour Theresa. "I'm going to Tesco for a few of us, is there anything you need?" she said. Margaret was so grateful for this gesture, but also to see another human, face to face; already this felt so strange, but so wonderful! A few days later, Margaret thought I'll be the one to go to the shops for the others – age was no barrier to her and they all had to eat! She went knocking at the doors of her neighbours to see what they needed. A chat was needed more than anything, and if they kept 2 metres apart and didn't go into each others flats they weren't breaking the rules. And what a difference it made to how they

were all coping with this strange period.

The warmer days of spring came early as if the world knew that this year it was needed more than ever. The residents could sit outside in the communal garden and enjoy each other's company and never had they appreciated each other more.

The flats had a house manager but she was on furlough, so the residents were left to organise themselves and that's what they did with enthusiasm. A new rockery was created, more seating purchased and barbecues planned. The 'clap for carers' every Thursday evening became a social event. After going out onto the road and banging their pans, no-one wanted to go back to their flats. They started playing bingo; a dart board was bought and a competition began. Steve wrote a quiz every few weeks. Margaret, along with the other residents, looked forward to these evenings. They also got to know other, quieter residents who had never joined in with events before. They were becoming such a close-knit community, taking care of each other.

As the winter closed in and the virus came back, Margaret's 90th was approaching. She resigned herself to not celebrating and with her daughter across the border – she wouldn't be able to visit either. Then Theresa called. She had had a wonderful idea. So, on her special day, wearing a crown and sash they had made, Margaret was seated on a special chair at the end of the long corridor. Other residents sat at their doorways and Theresa delivered afternoon tea to them all. Margaret reflected on what a wonderful community she lived in and how they had turned the worst of times into such a memorable period.

(Based on a real story of my mum during lockdown – Catherine Howarth)





# A message from the Priest

## ***A Message from the Priest.***

Many of us had the joy of a light display in the night sky on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May, like nothing so close since 2003, I read in the media. I was one of the fortunate ones who did see the Aurora Borealis and all from within the comfort of the vicarage garden. Here in Denbigh Mission Area, here in North Wales, we live in a place so undisturbed by light pollution that the sky is truly magnificent on a clear night. The changing, pinks, greens and whites predominantly on that Friday and faint blues were just fantastic and it was an awe-inspiring pleasure to witness.

The BBC offered a great explanation of what causes this elegant display of colour: "The Northern Lights are caused by atoms with electric charges, called charged particles. The lights appear when these charged particles are shot out from the sun and hit gases in the Earth's atmosphere. In this instance, the Sun is experiencing an extreme geomagnetic storm, which is sending out solar winds with those particles into the solar system. We see different colours in the sky when the various gases in the Earth's atmosphere are energised by the charged particles."

Our curiosity about something so spectacular makes us want to try and understand it, and if you have access to a smart phone, there is an app called the Night Sky. When you point your phone at stars, the app gives you a full breakdown of what's up there, including star constellations and their origins. The app breaks everything down and you can even zoom in to space stations.

I once heard it said that in every person there is a cosmos, made in the image of God. We each have a quality of the universe as our existence. If we think of this, it helps us to approach each other with the respect, wonder and dignity that we should.

In the annual church calendar, we had just celebrated Ascension Day the day before the light display in the night sky. 19<sup>th</sup> May was the

next significant date, when Pentecost was celebrated. This was when the Holy Spirit entered the room where the disciples had been hiding, frightened and missing their friend and leader. The book of Acts which follows the four Gospels in the Christian New Testament Bible is full of recordings of the incredible things the first Christians did against all odds. They were fired up on that feast of Pentecost, going out into the world confident in the power of the Holy Spirit and awake to it.

Wanting to understand the lights of the night sky is natural because of the great mystery. I invite you to consider the wonders of a faith in Jesus. The enquiry does indeed inspire you to want to know more and the spectacular discoveries are like the northern lights alive in our own inner life. The cosmos within us comes alive and faith in Jesus lights up all the dark places in our lives and offers to fill them with magnificent colour. Every blessing to all as we continue to journey through life through these summer months.

*Rev. Martin Pritchard*

*Denbigh Mission Area*

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Cymraeg

# Llandyrnog Community Council

The following matters were discussed at the May meeting of the council:

- ♦ Kinmel Arms – still awaiting the unilateral agreement before planning certificate can be released.
- ♦ Disappointing to hear that due to financial restraints, DCC has stopped using a local contractor with a JCB to clear the roads and ditches. The operator was local and had vast knowledge of the network of drains and gullies. The Community Council to contact Portfolio Holder and Head of Service to express disappointment at this action without consultation with those most affected, which would be the rural areas.
- ♦ There was no objection to the proposal for a new shop front and internal alterations to the shop, providing the local authority ensured that all signs were bilingual.
- ♦ Cllr Griffith was thanked for her long reign as the Chair and the new Chair for the next twelve months will be Cllr Butler with Cllr Borthwick being the Vice Chair.
- ♦ It has been reported to DCC that there are seemingly dead and dangerous branches on the horse chestnut opposite the White Horse and there were concerns for the safety of pedestrians. The tree is one of the historic Three Kings on the Pentre Mawr estate.
- ♦ Blocked gullies on Kinmel Terrace and Maes y Wern had been reported with the hope of the gullies being emptied and the drains jetted.
- ♦ It was disappointing to see that the dangerous ruts between Rhiwbebyll and Gwynfa have not been filled and that the only means of warning road users of an impending disaster were a row of cones placed in the water which filled the ruts.
- ♦ There were reports from the AONB meeting and Highfield Park liaison group where it was reported that of a possible 67 places available 66 were taken, very few vacancies and no agency staff.
- ♦ Cllr Parry met Mr Shuker at the Cocoa Rooms who was going to provide some suggestions and pointers towards grant funding for improved heating and insulation.
- ♦ Work on planting the roundabout has started and to be completed Sat 1<sup>st</sup> June, weather permitting.
- ♦ The Swirl Roundabout at Cae Nant has been serviced by Wickstead.
- ♦ The community council members were all sad to hear about the untimely passing away of Bryan Salter who had been the Postmaster for many years and our thoughts are with Jenny and Stuart at this sad time.
- ♦ The road by Ty Coch/Plas Onn is to be closed between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June to facilitate drainage works.

## Denbighshire County Council

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