

# Llais Llandyrnog Voice



llandyrnognews@gmail.com

£1

February 2026 – Volume 11 – Issue 5

## World champion



While visiting *Y Lle Celf* (Arts Pavilion) at the National Eisteddfod in Wrexham last year, one of the exhibitions that stood out as soon as you stepped through the door was a stone wall built within a wooden frame. Standing beside it was a young bearded man with long hair and a broad smile. The craftsman's name was Barney Murray, and he had won the *People's Choice* competition at *Y Lle Celf* for the most striking exhibit there. 'Cerrig Oerion' (Cold Stones) was the title of his work at the Eisteddfod, as all the stones had been sourced from a traditional farmstead, 'Cerrig Oerion' in Cyffylliog that had lain in

ruins since 1900. Barney felt passionately that his artwork served as a record of traditional Welsh farm buildings. But even more interesting was the fact that he lives in Avoca, Llandyrnog!

Barney is a 26 year-old dry stone waller. After leaving school, he began a foundation course in stonemasonry at Yale College in Wrexham. But after just one term, he was offered full-time work with a stonemason who had recently started a dry stone walling company. After only two days on the job, Barney knew instantly that this was what he wanted to do in the future. Since then, he has won Welsh, British and international awards as a waller.

He is the first Welshman in 30 years to receive Master Craftsman status — he was awarded the Master Craftsman Certificate in 2024 after just five years of studying the craft. Over the past year, Barney has won the *Dry Stone Walling Grand Prix* after a series of events across the UK and beyond. In 2022, in Trentino, Italy, he won the only international competition in the world for dry-stone walling — meaning he is the world champion in the craft!



Another example of Barney's work

# Around the village

**Best wishes** to Dick y Fron who celebrated his 91st birthday on January 17th (*Mandy and Jon*).

**Best wishes** to Pym following a broken wrist, and to Archie Davies and Gary Lewis following hospital treatment.

**A warm welcome** to Jo Brett, Dolerw who has moved from Nantglyn.

**Congratulations** to Gwilym and Myfanwy Gwylfan, Maes Tyrnog on becoming great-grandparents once again. Zara Elizabeth was born to Sioned and Will Kemp, Yorkshire just before Christmas.

**Condolences** to Sue Vine, Maes Tyrnog, in the loss of her husband Peter, and the families of the late Joyce Cattroll, formerly of Llangwyfan, and Derek Evans, Denbigh, son of the late Cliff and Sylvia Evans.

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The Unit currently has vacancies for girls aged between 7 and 10 years old. We meet every Monday at 5.30pm to 7pm in Llandyrnog Village Hall.

If you are interested in finding out more about what we do, please contact Brown Owl (Mrs Karen Morris) on 07540 146125 or email her on [gingerkaz64@gmail.com](mailto:gingerkaz64@gmail.com)

## Llandyrnog Shop

### Shop opening hours

Monday	8am – 5.30pm
Tuesday	8am – 5.30pm
Wednesday	8am – 5.30pm
Thursday	8am – 5.30pm
Friday	8am – 5.30pm
Saturday	8am – 4pm



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### Post Office opening hours

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Saturday: 9am – 12.30pm

Parcels ordered on-line can be collected from the Post Office, for your convenience.

Also, post all your items at the counter, since an income is received from this.

# Cocoa Rooms events

Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Knitting group Trefoil Guild	10am 1.30pm
Tue 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Friendship Group <i>Llais</i> committee meeting	2pm 7pm
Wed 4 <sup>th</sup>	Paint and <i>paned</i>	12–2pm
Fri 6 <sup>th</sup>	Cath Boardman's quilt-along	1.30–3.30pm
Mon 9 <sup>th</sup>	Knitting group	10am
Wed 11 <sup>th</sup>	Mothers' Union	2pm
Mon 16 <sup>th</sup>	Knitting group	10am
Tue 17 <sup>th</sup>	Community Council	7pm
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday Club	2pm
Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Knitting group	10am

Grateful thanks to Emily Williams for taking bookings for the Cocoa Rooms over many years. We welcome Carolyn Langford-Jones as the new Booking Officer.

**To book the Cocoa Rooms,  
contact Carolyn Langford-Jones:  
01824 790122  
cocoaroomsbookings@gmail.com**

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

# St Cwyfan's

Sun 1 <sup>st</sup>	Morning Prayer	11.15am
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup>	Eucharist	11.15am
	Messy Church at the Village Hall	3.30pm
Sun 15 <sup>th</sup>	Eucharist	11.15am
Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Eucharist	11.15am

# Village Hall Events

Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Brownies	5.30–7pm
Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Choir	7.30–9.30pm
Wed 4 <sup>th</sup>	Pilates	7.15–8.15pm
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup>	Craft group	10am–4pm
Sun 8 <sup>th</sup>	Messy Church	3.30–5pm
Mon 9 <sup>th</sup>	Brownies	5.30–7pm
Mon 9 <sup>th</sup>	Choir	7.30–9.30pm
Tue 10 <sup>th</sup>	Garden Club	7–9pm
Sat 14 <sup>th</sup>	School booking	All day
Mon 16 <sup>th</sup>	Choir	7.30–9.30pm
Tue 17 <sup>th</sup>	Pony Club AGM	7–9pm
Sun 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Brownies – thinking day	All day
Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Brownies	5.30–7pm
Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Choir	7.30–9.30pm
Tue 24 <sup>th</sup>	Astronomy Club	7–9pm
Wed 25 <sup>th</sup>	Pilates	7.15–8.15pm



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# Llandyrnog Shop's Second Christmas –

– and what a success it was!!! Thank you to everyone who continues to use the community shop, especially the 35 people who bought our splendid Christmas Hampers this year. They will certainly be returning in 2026.



Last autumn we were one of 400 successful recipients of Welsh Government money funding Warm Spaces across Wales as part of the Warm Wales Project. Delicious soup was offered over the Christmas period, and hot drinks and toast will be available every day until the end of March. Our community shop is just the place to socialise and keep warm this winter. Do join us! We already have lots of

local groups calling in for a coffee, especially local walking and cycling groups. We are increasing the seating capacity within the shop and providing a bike rack very soon.

Our Warm Places funding is also providing free lunches during half term for school-aged children. Children are the life and soul of community and we encourage everyone to pop in and use our numerous games and books! We are also bidding for a grant to work with Ruthin Craft Centre and Llandyrnog School on an art project within the shop – watch this space!

Remember, this is YOUR shop. All ideas and suggestions are warmly welcomed. The shop was initially set up with help from the UK Government Community Ownership Fund, the Welsh Government Community Facilities Fund and the Brenig Wind Ltd Community Benefit Fund. Whether you are after some bread and milk, ingredients for a homemade Thai curry, want to pay in some money or return that Amazon parcel, then Llandyrnog shop is the place to do it.



**14–21 February**

Free lunch for school-aged children during half term. Choice of baked beans, egg or cheese on toast.

**Until 27 March**

Free hot drink and toast for adults wanting some company in a safe and warm space

# Rubbish!

Have you noticed more litter on the roadside lately? According to recent statistics, around 65% of drivers actually admitted to littering – that's not counting bikers!

The worrying part is that it's the younger generation who are the worst, apparently, and judging by the amount of drive-through establishment rubbish we find along the B5429, it's worrying – but true. It can also do a lot of damage to wildlife with wild animals digesting the rest of your takeaway or sniffing into a crisp bag.

I can assure you, I have witnessed this and have no idea why, but snails love to sniff around in discarded prawn cocktail crisp bags – no other flavour. Someone will be able to enlighten me, I'm sure!

Apparently 35% of 18–24-year-olds think that it's perfectly ok to throw your rubbish out of the window. Anyway, our very own Geraint decided to do something about it and went solo on the 13<sup>th</sup> January and picked up seven carrier bags full of rubbish from the lanes around his home, transferred into red bags the council will collect if you deposit them by a litter bin. They are clearly marked 'collected by volunteers'.

Thank you Geraint for giving your time to keep Llandyrnog looking really special –



much appreciated. There are others who deserve a mention because the red bags appear regularly. Whoever you are – take a bow, and thank you!

I can also mention Brian from Pont Horn who does regular litter-picks but at a time when most of you are still in bed. Brian does a very early morning shift – around 5.30am in his head torch and high viz!

It's only fair to mention here that Jane, Geraint's partner and a community councillor, has worked closely with the school's pupils who have designed and placed some posters to discourage litter louts. Hopefully these posters will make drivers think twice!



If anyone is interested in forming an informal group to do a regular litter pick or would like some red bags, just drop an e-mail to Llais: [llandyrnognews@gmail.com](mailto:llandyrnognews@gmail.com)

Thank you to everyone!

Bryn

# The History Society

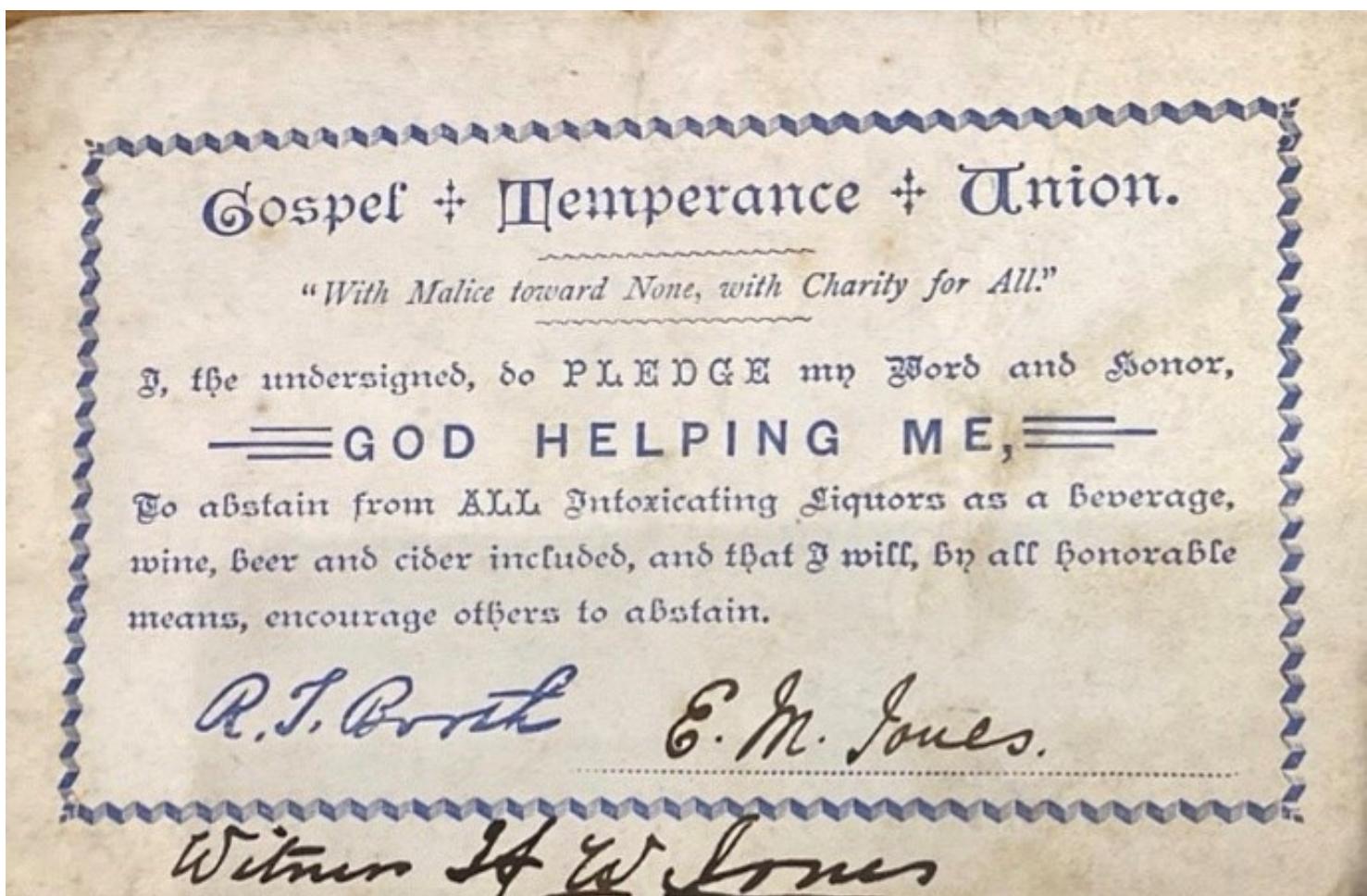
There was another excellent turnout for the January meeting of the Llandyrnog and Llangwyfan Local History Society in Llandyrnog Village Hall.



Society member Dr Chis Madoc-Jones gave an excellent presentation about the Temperance War and Cocoa rooms covering the chapels, the Quakers, The Salvation Army, The Band of Hope, the brewers, the publicans, the gentry, and the happy drinkers and much more.

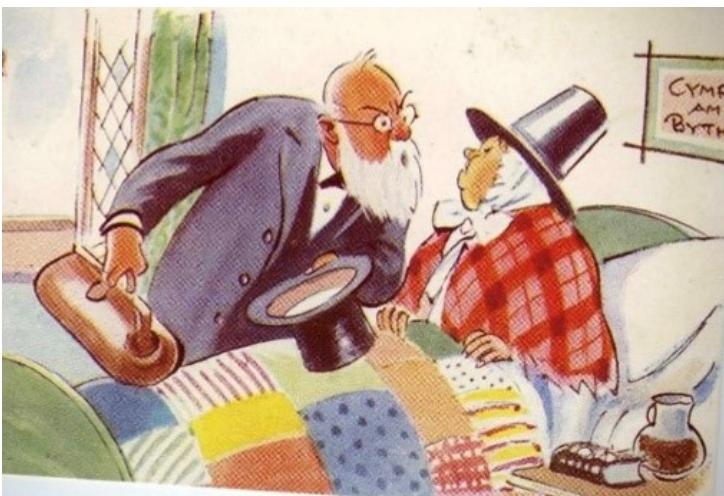
The 19th century Temperance Movement was a reaction to the widespread and growing abuse of alcohol. The Temperance Pledge was highlighted and a photo of an actual signed pledge displayed amongst a number of illustrative pictures accompanying the talk.

In 1874, Fry's launched British Workman's Cocoa designed for working classes and for Temperance Halls. Cocoa Rooms provided affordable, non-alcoholic alternatives to pubs for working class families, providing hot cocoa, meals, reading rooms and recreation. They served



# The History Society: ctd

# Ysgol Bryn Clwyd



*"Is that alcohol I smell on your breath, Mrs Jones?"*

as community spaces, offering newspapers, billiards and games to encourage sobriety and wholesome leisure.

Society members and guests were also treated to a performance of the Salvation Army Song from society member Wendy Grey Lloyd wearing a Salvation Army-style bonnet!! The Salvation Army was founded in 1865 by General William Booth with his wife Catherine. Chris shared examples of how families were divided by their beliefs and the impact this had on social gatherings.

Today, both the Kimmel Arms and the White Horse have closed (as well as The Bee which was on the road out of the village towards Llangwyfan) and the village is left with only The Golden Lion still open. The Cocoa Rooms remain a community hub.

The next meeting of the Llandyrnog and Llangwyfan Local History Society will be on Wednesday 18th March when Paul Evans will talk about Old Boys of Denbigh County School/Great War 1914-18.

For further information, email [llangwyfanhistory@hotmail.com](mailto:llangwyfanhistory@hotmail.com).

Only three weeks into the New Year and we have already been very busy despite some weather set backs.

Dosbarth Tyfu are learning how to write recounts and have been on walks around the village to give them inspiration.

Nursery pupils have been working really hard on their cutting and sticking skills and made some 'f' flowers for their new letter sound.

Meanwhile dosbarth Hedfan have been learning how to tie a round turn and two half hitches knot and using these to make swings and dens.

This month we celebrated our time with Aiden on what would have been his tenth birthday. We wore green (his favourite colour), shared happy memories and enjoyed a spot of Minecraft in his honour. Diolch also to Aiden's dad who baked one of his amazing birthday cakes for us all to enjoy.

Dosbarth Hedfan are excited to be going on a residential trip to Llangrannog next week and we look forward to sharing photos with you in the next *Llais*.

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# Barney Murray: ctd



(Photo above and on front cover: Dry Stone Walling Association)

Having passed Levels 1, 2 and 3 in dry stone walling, Barney went on to complete Level 4, the Master Craftsman level. Philip Hughes, former director of the Ruthin Craft Centre, was a great help in securing a £5,000 bursary for Barney to buy materials needed to build the walls required for the certificate assessments. He had to build three “noble” walls in different locations, and then pass the big timed test. To gain the certificate, he had to build a five-square-metre stone wall, including a square corner, at the Dry Stone Walling Association’s test field in Cumbria. He succeeded remarkably well. Barney managed to climb from Level 0 to Level 4 within five years — quite an achievement for a young man! He has also won the *English Heritage* Young Building Craftsperson of the Year.

He has worked on some fascinating projects, such as restoring a well in the gardens of Highgrove, the luxurious estate in Gloucestershire that was the main home of

Charles and Camilla before Charles was crowned King.

One of his favourite jobs so far was working on a Capability Brown wall (there is only one Capability Brown garden in Wales) in the grounds of Wynnstay Hall in Ruabon near Wrexham. Another extremely difficult task was building a dry stone wall on a steep 30-degree slope in Llangynog, Powys. As Barney says, nobody wants that job because it’s so tough!

Winning at the National Eisteddfod, the *Grand Prix* along with becoming a Master Craftsman, is the crowning achievement of the past few years in Barney’s brilliant career — the best dry stone waller in the world!

*Huge congratulations to you, Barney.*  
(Editor)

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# Dyffryn Chapel

**Y Gymdeithas** On the first Sunday afternoon of 2026, a Prayer Service full of blessings was held prepared by Glesni and Dafydd Meirion. Following the service, during refreshments, everyone had the opportunity to make an 'Afal Calennig' (a decorated apple symbolizing a New Year gift) – an apple on legs, with cloves, herbs and evergreen leaves as decoration – with refreshments of course!



## **Calennig – (January 1st) and the Old New Year – (January 13th)**

A belated happy New Year to you! But not *that* late if you happen to live in *Cwm Gwaun*, Pembrokeshire. We always wish everyone a happy New Year and wonder what lies ahead – twelve months, 52 weeks, 365 days, 8,760 hours, 525,600 minutes and 31,536,000 seconds. God's gift.

There are so many different traditions across the world to celebrate the New Year. One Welsh tradition, of course, is *Calennig*. *Calennig* (which means New Year's gift) is an ancient Welsh custom traditionally observed on New Year's Day or on the Old New Year (January 13th) in parts of Pembrokeshire. On this day, children would go from door to door carrying an apple decorated on three sticks, singing *Calennig* verses, and receiving money, treats or food such as bread and cheese in exchange for their good wishes for the year ahead.

The decorated apple—adorned with cloves, nuts and evergreen leaves—

symbolised good luck, fertility, renewal and blessing. It is thought that the tradition dates back to pagan times, when the apple represented the sun, the sticks



symbolised its rays, and the evergreen leaves stood for eternal life. Over time, the symbolism has shifted, with some people today giving it a Christian interpretation: the apple as the body of Christ, the three sticks as three years of prayer, and the cloves or nuts as the crown of thorns. The apple was decorated with different plants for different reasons, for example: laurel for glory; holly for foresight; rosemary for remembrance; box for courage and lavender to ensure abundance for the coming year. One typical rhyme would be:

*A happy New year to you, and to everyone in the house,*

*This is my wish for you, A Happy New Year to you.*

The *Calennig* tradition has returned in some communities, often joined by the *Mari Lwyd* in the celebrations. One area of Wales that has kept to the Old Calendar (January 13th) is *Cwm Gwaun* in Pembrokeshire. There, they celebrate New Year twice – once on January 1st and again on January 13th, with the children of the valley going around singing and collecting *Calennig*, just as generations before them did.

(Thanks to Glesni Edwards for sharing an excerpt from the service we had at Capel y Dyffryn recently. *Ed*)

## **Services**

01/02	10.00	Local arrangement
08/02	9.45	Rev. Andras Iago
15/02	11.00	Mrs Maryl Rees
22/01	10.00	Circuit service – Y Fron chapel, Denbigh

# A November Escape to Indonesia

In November 2025, Hilary and I were lucky enough to spend just over four weeks travelling through Indonesia, with time in Singapore, Bali, Lombok and the Gili Islands. As is usually the case with us, the trip wasn't tightly planned – much of it was decided day by day, which gave us the freedom to slow down, stay longer where we felt comfortable, and change course when something caught our interest. It was a real contrast to a surrounded-by-fields November at home, and one we'll remember for a long time.

We began in Singapore, a city that never fails to impress. From the calm beauty of Gardens by the Bay to the moving visit to Changi Chapel and the bustle of the hawker centres, it felt safe, welcoming and wonderfully efficient. It was a perfect gateway into Southeast Asia.

From there we flew to Bali, starting on the coast at Sanur before heading inland to Ubud. Bali is a place where daily life and spirituality are closely linked – the small flower offerings placed everywhere, known as *canang sari*, give the island a calm and reflective feel. Ubud was greener and cooler, with walks through rice terraces, visits to temples, waterfalls and coffee plantations, and some excellent local food.

One thing that stood out everywhere we went was just how friendly and welcoming people were. Many families live very simply by our standards – often with basic housing, limited possessions and hard physical work. Yet there was a real sense of happiness and contentment. People were generous with smiles, conversation and help, and there was a strong feeling of community and pride in local life.

We then travelled on to Nusa Lembongan and later the Gili Islands, where life slows right down. No cars, just bicycles, beach walks and snorkelling in clear water including swimming with turtles. It was relaxed, friendly and wonderfully simple.

From the Gilis we crossed to Lombok, staying first in Kuta and then Senggigi. Lombok felt less developed and more rural, which I found particularly interesting. Farming is everywhere – maize and rice grown in small plots, often worked by hand, but producing good crops, thanks to the climate. It reminded me how central farming is to everyday life in many parts of the world.

Like many visitors, we couldn't ignore the problem of plastic waste, especially after heavy rain when rubbish is washed into rivers and out to sea. It's a big challenge for Indonesia, and something that stays with you.

We finished the trip back in Bali and Singapore before heading home. It was a journey full of colour, kindness and contrast – busy cities, quiet islands, stunning landscapes and warm people.

After a long November away, it was good to come home to Llandyrnog but we'll both be carrying a bit of Indonesia with us for a long while yet.

*Merfyn Parry*





# The Wright Life



For those keen-eyed folk there are some early signs of spring to look for. I saw my first snowdrop on 31<sup>st</sup> December snuggled under the hedge in my garden and by February, these little bulbs are starting to put on their display. They can be seen in drifts in our damp woodlands and along riverbanks, parks and of course wherever there has been human habitation. They are not a true native species, and were probably introduced here in the late 1500s.

These early blooms can be seen pouring out of the hedge at Bryn Egwallt, like a river of white and green heralding the start of spring. Or take a walk along the Llangynhafal community miles, up past Pentre Farm towards the Moel Famau Country Park and you will pass several abandoned cottages. First is Pentre Bach and further up is Pentre Uchaf, last inhabited in 1901 and has a mass of snowdrops tumbling over the bank into the little stream. This 'round the houses' walk is approx. four miles and takes you past the sites of nine abandoned houses.

Snowdrops's botanical name is Galanthus, they stand at around 7–15 cm tall with white bell-shaped flowers at the end of an erect flowering stem with two or three leaves. There are lots of varieties with estimates around 2,500 (cultivars). As children we would pick these little flowers but today it's illegal to uproot them as they are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Snowdrops have their place in UK folklore as well – they symbolise hope as well as death. Hope as a sign of spring and winter's



end but bringing them indoors was thought to bring bad luck. A rather obscure saying is to bring them indoors before your chickens hatched was thought to spoil the eggs. Not sure about that one, as my hens are off lay when the snowdrops are in flower and I am certain the girls

would consider it too cold to sit on eggs. Plants were widely planted in graveyards and became strongly tied to mourning and remembrance, often called "Corpse Flower" or "Death's Flower". Llangwyfan Churchyard has an abundance of snowdrops well worth a visit to see them. Eastern European folk medicine reportedly used the bulbs to relieve pain when rubbed on the head. They also play a role in modern medicine: galantamine, used to slow cognitive decline in Alzheimer's, was first extracted from snowdrops. They bring hope not only as signs of winter's end but also through their contribution to medicine. But a word of warning – snowdrop bulbs are poisonous so do not consume them or self-medicate with them.

Something I am always keen to see is the emergence of the hazel catkins. The male catkins hang down like tassels and are a true sign spring is on its way. Some call them 'lamb's tails' and they release their powdery pollen as you brush past them. This fertilises the tiny red female flowers and form the hazelnuts we enjoy in Autumn. I'm sure that by the end of this month spring will be here; the hens will be laying again and the first seeds will have been sown ready for the gardening year to burst forth for 2026.

**Hazel**

# Shrove Tuesday – Frappe Day

Most of us love the fact that we can devour as many pancakes as we can manage on Shrove Tuesday without feeling guilty whatsoever! As everyone knows, Shrove Tuesday was a time to feast on leftovers in the larder – butter, flour, eggs and so on, before Ash Wednesday that marked the beginning of Lent in the Christian calendar – a time to fast and prepare spiritually for Easter.

Up until the 20<sup>th</sup>C, children in Wales kept the tradition of going from house to house to sing and ask for their ‘crempog’ – pancakes!

One of the most popular folk songs would be ‘*Modryb Elin Ennog*’:

*Aunty Elin Ennog,  
please can I have a pancake?  
You may have tea and white sugar,  
and an apron full of pudding.....*

Both the traditional song and pancakes are still very popular. They even have a Pancake Race in Ruthin to mark the occasion.

This tradition is also very much alive world-wide, and in France, and parts of the USA – they have the ***Mardi Gras*** (Fat Tuesday). New Orleans has an international event that attracts around one million tourists to see the spectacular street parades.

They still love their pancakes/crêpes any time of the year in the South of Brittany – their word ***Krampouezh*** and ***crempog*** come from the same Celtic word.

We have visited many a *Carnevale* / Carnival in Italy during the last twenty years or so, and thought that they were all in honour of local saints. But some had their beginnings because of Shrove Tuesday. The *Venice Carnevale* lasts 10 days and attracts thousands of tourists – but there will probably be a parade through the street, and plenty of colourful clothes and masks in many other towns in Italy at that time. You can also book a course on ‘mask-making’ and have a good time as well!

The word itself derives from *Carne* - meat

and *Levare* - to remove. There would be no meat during Lent!

Some towns have competition for the best carnival float of the day and the winners are applauded in a colourful ceremony at the end of the celebrations.



*Elen Mazzi and her daughters at a carnevale.*

Another custom is the confetti (eco!) throwing – most children have a small box of confetti, and at a given time in the town square, hundreds of excited children throw their confetti up in the air at the same time. There are plenty of rides in the small temporary fairground to enjoy afterwards.

Of course, as always, food is a very important part of the *carnevale* celebrations – plenty of meat, pizzas, pasta and hot chesnuts on the street stalls. And the cakes – wooow!

One very popular cake/fritter is the ***frappe*** (not the coffee!) or ***chiacchiere***. It has flour, eggs and salt just like our pancakes but there’s no milk, and they add some butter. They deep fry the dough rather than sprinkle some fat on the frying pan for every pancake

– you need a good, heavy-based frying pan. So, this year, what about a change? Fill yourself with *frappe*!!

## Frappe

300g – self-raising flour

50g sugar

30g butter

2 eggs

Pinch of salt

Vanilla essence

## Method

Mix the flour, sugar and salt in a large mixing bowl.

Carefully add the butter, eggs and vanilla to the mixture until it can be shaped into a ball of dough.

Knead for at least 6 minutes. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and let it rest for at least 30 minutes at room temperature.

Divide the dough into smaller portions, roll each portion as thin as possible, and cut into rectangular strips.

Fry 2, 3 pieces at a time for 1, 2 minutes, until they are browned, and put on kitchen roll.

Sprinkle with icing sugar, or eat with a good dollop of ice cream. Enjoy!!

Ann Jones Evans



In the first meeting of the year, we had a very interesting talk by one of the residents of the village, Sarah McCulloch, on the community interest company STAND North Wales.

Sarah set up this company, together with her business partner, to support families with children or young adults who have additional needs and disabilities in North Wales. STAND also offers a library of sensory toys and books with relevant information that families registered with the company in Conwy and Denbighshire can borrow.



Sarah was thanked by Betty, in Anwen's absence due to illness. Light refreshments were served, and the raffle was drawn. The next meeting will be at 2pm on Wednesday, 18 February when we will have a talk about Denbigh's community fridge.

## 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

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# Garden Club

Llandyrnog garden club enjoyed an informative talk by John Rowlands on his passion – Sweet Peas, their history, how to sow and grow them, and for the adventurous, exhibit these delicate scented flowers. An excellent turnout saw John show us how he prepares the ground for these surprisingly hardy plants. It certainly was an education that seeds can be sown in the colder months of January and February and left in a cold frame, under a layer of snow, to germinate and grow on before they are planted outside. We think of these flowers as sun-lovers, but the hard work of growing them starts in mid-winter. These vigorous climbers produce blooms in an assortment of colours (not yellow) from whites, pinks,

purples, reds and blues with wavy or ruffed petals.

John demonstrated how to sow these seeds, and we all then took part sowing our own pots of seeds to take home. Watch out Llandyrnog Flower Show as there will be plenty of entries this year for Sweet Peas! Refreshments were provided and we all enjoyed catching up over a cuppa before heading home.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday February 10<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Lower Room at Llandyrnog Village Hall when Allan Evans will be showing us how to grow and show Dahlias. If you are interested in joining the club, why not pop along or email us at [LlandyrnogGardeners@outlook.com](mailto:LlandyrnogGardeners@outlook.com).

**Becky Gittins, MP for Clwyd East**

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**Paul Clark  
Conservatories**



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*One of John's many prize-winning exhibits*

# A word from the priest

## Reflection on Ash Wednesday

For Christians, Ash Wednesday, which falls his year on February 18th, marks the beginning of the season of Lent.

In Ash Wednesday services, churchgoers are marked on the forehead with a cross of ashes as a sign of penitence and mortality.

The use of ashes, made by burning palm crosses from the previous Palm Sunday, is very symbolic, and the following words are usually said: 'Remember you are but dust and to dust you shall return'. The ash is sometimes mixed with anointing oil, which makes sure that the ashes make a good mark and also reminds the churchgoer of God's blessings and of the anointing that took place at their baptism.



The marking of their forehead with a cross made of ashes is a reminder that:

- Death comes to everyone
- We should be sorry and repent of our sins
- We must change ourselves for the better
- God made the first human being by breathing life into dust, and without God, human beings are nothing more than dust.

The shape of the mark and the words used are symbolic in other ways:

- The cross is a reminder of the mark of the cross made at baptism
- The cross of ashes may symbolise the way Christ's sacrifice on the cross as atonement for sin replaces the Old Testament tradition of making burnt offerings to atone for sin.

At some churches the worshippers leave with the mark still on their forehead so that they carry the sign of the cross out into the world.

At other churches the service ends with the ashes being washed off as a sign that the participants have been cleansed of their sins.

Using the ashes to mark the cross on the believer's forehead symbolises that through Christ's death and resurrection, all Christians can be free from sin and have eternal life through our Lord Jesus, a new beginning.

As we head towards Spring, let us consider Spring as a time of new beginnings – of re-birth – of new birth which can make our hearts glad and joyful. Who can look at newborn lambs frolicking in the fields or see the trees coming into bud and blossom and not feel joyful and smile? This spring why not take some time to be still and contemplate the joy of Spring, it can be surprising just how energising it can make us feel.

In a few weeks it will be Easter – a season in which Christians celebrate new life – the new life of the risen Jesus and the promise of the new life we can have through his sacrificial death and resurrection – bringing joy to our hearts and souls.

*Rev. Canon Juliet Fraser*



# Llandyrnog Community Council

## Matters discussed at the January meeting of the community council included:

- ⇒ Vicky Owen gave a brief and concise presentation about a planning application she had submitted to open a secure dog-exercising facility at Speddwyd Farm. It will be strictly controlled with on-line booking only.
- ⇒ Dr MacKinnon-Day gave a presentation about the artist in residence project which will include hopefully twice-weekly visits to the shop, sketching visitors to the shop and their everyday activities. There was a cost involved and the community council will consider this when appropriate, but in the meantime will forward a letter of support.
- ⇒ The Police Community Support Officer was unable to attend but has forwarded a written report. There were four recorded incidents last month which include:
  - ⇒ A suspicious person seen near building site in the early hours of the morning but no sign of forced entry
  - ⇒ Phone-based fraud – payment attempted but stopped by bank
  - ⇒ Two welfare referrals – one missing person located and returned, and concerns about the welfare of a child referred to the appropriate authority
  - ⇒ The PCSO committed to attending the shop to discuss concerns with the local people and any coffee morning if workload permitted.
- ⇒ The community council had considered purchasing SmartWater so that residents could easily identify their belongings under UV light should they be stolen. It has been advised by North Wales Police that there is a charge of £25 per pack with a minimum order of 100 so the cost is prohibitive. Disappointingly, it was decided not to proceed.
- ⇒ Carolyn Langford Jones has kindly offered to take on the role of the booking clerk for the Cocoa Rooms – details to be published in the *Llais*, the Cocoa Rooms and the community council's website.
- ⇒ The council has been successful in its bid for additional funds for the Cae Nant project and has secured another £9295. When added to the lottery funding, this allows the project to proceed. A meeting will be held shortly with Kompan to agree a programme of works. A new fence is to be considered as well, to separate the car parking and play area. However, since this was not included in the proposal there will be an additional cost involved and will be discussed.
- ⇒ The business plan and the biodiversity plan have been updated and in due course will be included on the website.
- ⇒ The road between Celynog and the Kinmel is in appalling condition and the community councillors have made enquiries as to whether resurfacing is still in the capital funding budget or have the funds been reallocated.

## Denbighshire County Council



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