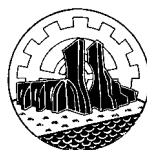


**GAEAF
2014
40c**

**Cylchlythyr
Cyngor Cymuned
Dyffryn Clydach**



**Newsletter of the
Dyffryn Clydach
Community Council**

**WINTER
2014
40p**

Additional copies available from Abbey Gate Stores and Longford Stores or the Editor, Cllr Alyson Thomas
Copiâu ychwanegol ar gael o Siop y Gât, Mynachlog Nedd a Siop Rhydhir neu'r Golygydd, Cyng. Alyson Thomas
15 Graig Parc, Neath Abbey Tel: 01792 528754 E-mail: ladyalthomas@hotmail.co.uk

To include local interest items please contact the Editor or your local Councillor
Er mwyn cynnwys eitemau o ddiddordeb lleol cysylltwch â'r Golygydd neu'ch Cynghorwr Lleol

A GREAT NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT ON ITS WAY TO OUR COMMUNITY

Dyffryn Clydach Community Council is delighted to announce the installation of a great deal of new play equipment at The Drive play area above the Memorial Hall in Longford. The council decided that there was a need for this equipment and in particular facilities for older children and with some provision of equipment for younger children within the main play area. Through extensive consultation within the community, our local schools and the Neath Port Talbot Youth Council the type of equipment was identified. Dyffryn Clydach Community Council allocated £30,000 towards the project and then with the help of Neath Port Talbot officer Mr Paul Hinder, two bids for a further total of £78,000 of grant funding were submitted.

£10,000 was granted to us by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and a further £68,000 by WREN Landfill Communities Fund / FCC Environmental. The process began in 2014 and the full installation of the play facilities will begin in November with completion hopefully before Christmas.

The chairman of the council, Cllr Alyson Thomas, would like to thank the council for all its additional work in securing the grants and extend thanks to our clerk Mr Randall Shopland for his special input. Mr Hinder is also deserving of special thanks in dealing with the blizzard of paperwork the project generated.

Cllr Thomas would also like to thank the Neath Abbey and Mynachlog Nedd schools, Neath Port Talbot Youth Council, Neath Port Talbot Play Service and all the community groups that gave us their support. The children of Dyffryn Clydach Community Council will now have the playground they deserve.

Mae'n bleser gan Gyngor Cymuned Dyffryn Clydach gyhoeddi gosod ystod fawr o offer chwarae newydd yn y man chwarae uwchben y Neuadd Goffa yn Rhydhir. Penderfynodd y cyngor bod eisiau'r offer, yn enwedig cyfleusterau i'r plant hŷn gyda rywffaint o ddarpariaeth offer ar gyfer plant iau o fewn y prif fan chwarae. Trwy ymgynghoriad eang o fewn y gymuned, ein hysgolion lleol a Chyngor Ieuenctid Castell-nedd Port Talbot fe

ddaethpwyd o hyd i'r math o offer oedd eu heisiau. Dyfarnwyd £30,000 gan Gyngor Cymuned Dyffryn Clydach tuag at y prosiect ac yna gyda chymorth swyddog Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot, Mr Paul Hinder, fe gyflwynwyd dau gais am grantiau bellach am swm ychwanegol o £78,000.

Cafwyd grant o £10,000 gan Gyngor Bwrdeistref Castell-nedd Port Talbot a dyfarnwyd £68,000 bellach gan Gronfa Cymunedau Tirlenwi WREN / FCC Environmental. Dechreuodd y broses yn gynnwys yng Ngwanwyn 2014 ac fe fydd y gwaith o osod yr offer chwarae yn dechrau ym mis Tachwedd a gobeithir ei gwblhau cyn y Nadolig.

Hoffai'r Cadeirydd, Cyng. Alyson Thomas ddiolch i'r cyngor am ei holl waith ychwanegol wrth sicrhau'r grantiau ac estyn diolch arbennig i'n clerk Mr Randall Shopland am ei fewnbnw arbennig. Mae Mr Hinder hefyd yn haeddu diolch arbennig am ymdrin â'r domen o waith papur a gynhyrchwyd gan y prosiect.

Dymuna'r Cyng. Thomas hefyd ddiolch i ysgolion Neath Abbey a Mynachlog Nedd, Cyngor Ieuenctid Castell-nedd Port Talbot, Gwasanaeth Chwaraeon Castell-nedd Port Talbot a'r holl grwpiau cymunedol am y gefnogaeth a rhoesant. Bydd plant yr ardal yn derbyn maes chwarae o safon o'r diwedd.



Longford Mothercraft - Looking Back 47 years in May

In 1967 our health visitor Nurse Jenny Morgan started an afternoon class which was for mothers and babies and children under school age. It was held in Longford Clinic which used to be opposite the nursery on Heol Penlan where Maes y Mynydd is today.

"We would have speakers on many subjects concerning child rearing including once a talk on Clarks shoes. In the summer we would take the children on trips to Caswell Bay when the coach cost just £16.00 and to Barry Butlins at a cost of just £19.35. We always used D J Thomas Coaches or as we knew him 'Doug.'

In 1971, as our children had grown a little we started raising money for charity and our first cheque of £40.00 was presented to the newly opened Jayne Hodge Home. In those days a book of raffle tickets cost just twenty pence.

As the children grew older and were no longer under the care of the clinic Nurse Morgan suggested that perhaps the mothers would like to meet in the evening. We continued raising money for charities and often representatives from them would come along and speak to us.

We raised the money with raffles, jumble sales, carol singing concerts in Longford Memorial Hall and many



other things. One memorable sponsored walk took us from the Dulais Rock, along the canal bank up to Tonna and back down. The weather had been fine for six weeks but as we walked black clouds bubbled up and we had a torrential soaking. We should have finished the walk with a meal together but we were like drowned rats and each had to head home dripping wet.

The money we made always went to local charities including wards in Neath General Hospital and Singleton Hospital, providing a wheelchair for a local boy and many more. In March 1992 we donated £1,000 to Mr Radcliffe for new laser equipment for Neath General Hospital.

Of course it hasn't all been hard work, we had a summer dinner in the early days at a cost of £1.40 for three courses and a Christmas dinner for £2.50. A bouquet of flowers at that time cost around £1.50.

Throughout the last forty seven years we have raised and donated £60,000 but just as importantly we are still meeting together, supporting each other and enjoying one another's company. We owe Nurse Morgan a debt of gratitude for bringing us all together."

Phyllis Griffiths

Honour for caring Ceri

Ceri Emily Lewis, granddaughter of Phyllis and Glynn Griffiths of Taillwyd received the Grand Prior Award at Llandaff Cathedral. The award which is presented by St John's Ambulance is the highest award possible for their cadets. Phyllis and Glynn would like to congratulate her and are sure that her future will bring many bright things.



Longford OAP's Summer Strawberry Tea

Nothing describes summer like scrumptious strawberries and the ladies had them in abundance with all the traditional accompaniments.



Woman of Mystery or Founder of Modern Neath Society?

Between Two Worlds - The Diary of Winifred Coombe Tennant, 1909-1924

Editor, Peter Lord. Book Review by Alyson Thomas

Winifred Road in Skewen. Perhaps not the most exciting place to be but named after a very colourful and significant character in the life of the Neath area one hundred years ago. Winifred was very much alive then and living in Cadoxton Lodge as the wife of Charles Coombe Tennant, the grandson of the man who built the Tennant Canal and owner of the Coombe Tennant Estate.

Most often in history we get a very male account featuring notable dignitaries who all blur into one but this work stands out allowing a very strong female account. At that time in her life Winifred was thirty years old, a mother of four who had sadly buried her one year old daughter owing to the influenza epidemic of that time.

Her life, however, was far from humdrum and domestic. Her interests were hugely varied, taking her from the campaign for women's votes to the heart of the British government and from the magistrates' bench to a world beyond belief.

All her life, Winifred kept a vivid diary recording her thoughts and actions. *Between Two Worlds* is Peter Lord's skilful presentation of the period of the diary written between 1909 and 1924 using Winifred's own words. It represents 200,000 of a total of the 1.25 million she wrote

in total covering a the period when she was most active and allowing us all to know her exactly as she was. The diaries are themselves an incredible resource and Peter Lord's achievement in presenting them for us complete with historical notes is a work of dedication and brilliance

Winifred had an English father and a Welsh mother and had spent the majority of her childhood in Europe leading to her speaking both French and Italian fluently. She married Charles Coombe Tennant when she was twenty after meeting him in Cadoxton Lodge. He was many years older than her and it was not a happy marriage which perhaps caused her to throw herself into her many other interests.

At home in Cadoxton she became passionate about everything Welsh: the countryside, the people, the language and the Eisteddfod and also the politics. She wore 'Welsh Dress' every morning and was a member of the Gorsedd being Mistress of the Robes. She was also a member of Cymru Fydd, (Young Wales) a movement which promoted Home Rule for Wales.

Winifred was curious about everything including the supernatural. An understandably deep and terrible depression caused by the death of her baby daughter, Daphne, enveloped Winifred and she became more heavily involved with the Society for Psychical Research in which she had taken an interest earlier in the century. Along with many other scientist and academics of the time Winifred played an active part in attempting to establishing proof of life after death through a complicated network of mediums and verification of one another's work.

In that society's circle Winifred was an established medium known as Mrs Willetts and she received scripts or sometimes what she called 'daytime impressions' which she believed to be messages from the departed. At the time this was referred to as automatic writing. She often found this work exhausting and confusing and for a while it took over her life. She was highly secretive about it and it is likely that only her mother was aware of it in Wales

This activity, somewhat fantastically, led to her bearing a child to politician and cabinet minister Gerald Balfour as they believed that the child was foretold. A son called Henry was born who they were convinced would bring about peace in the world. How Charles her husband tolerated this is only touched upon once in the diary but both he and Mrs Balfour clearly had the patience of saints.

Winifred's passionate and compassionate nature took her in many directions. She had a terrific passion for giving a voice to those who did not have one. She was a fervent campaigner for Women's Suffrage, though she did not agree with the main campaign's sometimes violent direct actions. She spoke at meetings in Cardiff and London and in both Skewen and Neath she actively converted many men and women to the cause.



Meistres y Gwisgoedd- National Eisteddfod Mistress of the Robes 1923-1924

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WALES- The Peoples Collection



Women at a Suffrage Movement Meeting in Cardiff, 1913

Photo from Casgiad y Werin Cymru. The People's Collection of Wales.
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WALES.

At the outbreak of the WW1 which somewhat derailed the suffrage campaign, Winifred was instrumental in setting up a club in the in the Mikado Café in Neath for soldiers billeted locally. She was on the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association Committee and was overwhelmed by the amount of work in obtaining benefits for the wives and dependents battling with the War Office Pensions Committee who sought to wriggle out of their obligations at every opportunity.

The beauty of the diaries perhaps is their scope. We hear of everything in her life from the trivialities such as choosing fashions and wallpaper to the desperately pitiable conditions of the poor working class, her perpetual toothache and her inside knowledge of government negotiations on Irish Home Rule. She handled the wrangling of the Coombe Tennant Estate alongside her attendance as the first female delegate of the meeting of The League of Nations in Geneva. Winifred had a reputation as being a terrific public speaker and was much in demand to do so by the organisations of which she became a part.

She became the first woman Justice of the Peace in Glamorgan and visited prisoners regularly at Swansea Jail, also she empathised and tried to assist with many local hardship cases, campaigning for coal miner's conditions and sitting on the Neath Nursing Committee.

It was through her interest in Women's suffrage that she first became interested in the Liberal politics which was eventually to make her David Lloyd George's right hand woman in Wales and led to her standing but not being elected to a parliamentary seat in Forest of Dean. Lloyd George stayed with her in Cadoxton several times.

Winifred's oldest son Christopher, her beloved 'Cruff', was especially close to her. As you read the diary her sense of fear and tension as her son joins the Welsh Guards then completes his officer training is agonising. The Front

looms ever nearer and as they both are believers in a life after death they talk about the possibility of this and what they should do should he not make it back.

He is in the trenches for only four days in September 1917 before he is fatally struck by a shell. The grief of every mother who lost a son in that war is contained in the pages of Winifred's diary. She was horrified to go through the dread of losing another son when Henry fighting in WW11 was captured once and then returned to fight again.

Still, she carried on with her life, eventually losing heart in politics and instead on the death of husband Charles she moved back to London and carried on with her lifelong passion of art collection. The patronage of young Welsh and French artists like Kyffin Williams, Gwen John, John Elwyn and Evan Walters was particularly important to her. Evan Walters painted some

wonderful portraits of the Coombe Tennant family at Cadoxton when Alexander and Henry were growing up. On moving back to London in 1931, she became the official buyer for the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery in Swansea.

Following her death, her son by Balfour, Henry, contacted Irish medium Geraldine Cummins who over the next three years dictated a biographical script which purports to be from Winifred herself and details of which the medium claims she could not have had knowledge.

A walk or drive through neighbouring communities now may take you down streets named after the Coombe Tennant family: Alexander Road, Daphne Road, Christopher Road, Charles Street, Stanley Road, Evelyn Road, Henry Street and of course, Winifred Road. After reading the edited diaries you will feel you know all of them personally.

If you have read a little of Winifred's life here you will have met an adopted daughter of Neath and appreciate the real difference she made to the life and culture of Wales. Between Two Worlds is a weighty tome but one which well repays the effort of holding and reading it.

Further reading available for purchase or through local lending libraries:

Between Two Worlds - The Diary of Winifred Coombe Tennant 1909-1924 edited by Peter Lord

University of Wales Press National Library of Wales ISBN 978-1-86225-086-4

Winifred Coombe Tennant - A Life Through Art by Peter Lord, National Library of Wales, University of Wales Press 2007

Swan on a Black Sea. A Study in Automatic Writing. The Cummins -Willett Scripts. Transmitted by Geraldine Cummins ed Signe Toksvig (London 1965)

An Ancestral Link with St Matthew's Church

Fancy a new hobby? Reader Sandra Davies uncovered some fascinating links with the history of Dyffryn Clydach when she began to trace her family tree. Genealogy is easier than ever now thanks to the wealth of information on the internet but a peek at the parish registers brought to light this article which Sandra has generously offered to Ymlaen readers.

New Year's Day 1874, an exciting day for a young couple, groom John Thomas and bride Mary Duncan as they became the first couple to wed in St Matthew's Church, Dyffryn. According to the parish registers, the groom was a carpenter whose address was given as The Dyffryn Arms. There was a small estate of five cottages sharing that address and the Thomas family occupied one of these. They paid rent to the landlord of The Dyffryn Arms who at the time was a Lewis Thomas, smith, of The Lamb and Flag, Cadoxton.

The bride, Mary, was aged 22 and the eldest child of my great-great grandparents Thomas Duncan and Mary (nee Rees). Sadly Mary's mother passed away the previous year aged 41 and so did not attend the wedding. Young Mary had been born in August 1851 where her father Thomas had been gardener to Howel Gwyn at Baglan House. At the time of the 1871 census, Mary was then working as a lady's maid in the employ of magistrate Henry Wynn and his family at Grosvenor Gardens, Knightsbridge.

The signatory witnesses to the marriage were Howel and Ellen E. Gwyn of Dyffryn Mansion. Following his own marriage to Ellen Moore at Plymouth in 1851, Howel Gwyn planned a move to Dyffryn Mansion upon its completion. When finally all was ready in 1854, the Gwyns moved their household and furniture to Dyffryn. Included in this move were Duncans, who were housed at Plasnewydd which was to be their home for many years.

Thomas progressed to being Master Gardener and later Farm Bailiff. In September 1878, Howel Gwynn granted a 70 year lease to Thomas Duncan of six fields on the estate together with 'part of Gellifelgaws Farm with all the cottages, outbuildings and cow barns in the process of being built thereon.' All this was for the princely sum of just £19 per annum.

He remained in the employ of Mrs Gwyn after her husband's death in 1888. (Thomas married twice- one of the daughters from the second family was named Ellen, no doubt in tribute to Mrs Gwyn. His second family with Ann, a sailor's daughter from Pembrokeshire later moved to Gellifelgaws Farm. Presumably, they had to vacate Plasnewydd to make way for the new farm bailiff when



Thomas died there as a result of accidentally fallen backwards down stairs in February 1899.)

As for the young couple themselves, Mary and John Thomas had ten children with all but one surviving into adulthood. As was the case in many families at that time the early children were bilingual but later offspring spoke only English. John progressed to being a foreman pattern maker.

Census entries show the family living at various addresses- initially The Dyffryn Arms, then Bryndewi, The Bath (colliery bath house), and at Mooretown, Skewen. By 1911, aged around 60 years, they were living at Glandwr, Neath Abbey which is just along the road from The Smiths Arms.

There's a very good chance that some readers of this article may be descended from one or other of the Duncan-Thomas family. Joseph and Thomas were born in 1875 with baptism at St Matthew's followed by Mary Hannah in 1877, John in 1879 and Beatrice in 1883. David Harris, Edgar Duncan, Amy Gertrude and Ada Evelyn followed but with no confirmed dates.

These children would have been the nieces and nephews of my great grandparents Thomas Duncan and Margaret Ann (nee Prosser) who also married at St. Matthew's (in 1880.) Margaret was for a while organist at the church, switching to St John's when they moved nearer to Court Herbert Colliery where Thomas (Jnr.) was employed as a winder.

Sandra Davies, May 2014

End notes. An excellent description of the interior of St Matthews can be found here.

<http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/wa-82319-church-of-saint-matthew-dyffryn-clydach>

Mynachlog Nedd Junior School News

Mrs Davies the Headteacher of Mynachlog Nedd Junior School retired at the end of this academic year after fourteen years at the school. Mrs Davies was previously a teacher at the school before taking up the post of Headteacher.

During her time at Mynachlog Nedd Junior School she has inspired and nurtured a great number of children and has thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Throughout her time as Headteacher she has made

many positive changes to improve the school environment and ethos, ensuring all children who have attended Mynachlog Nedd Junior School are valued and achieve their full potential.

Everyone at Mynachlog Nedd Junior School, children, staff, governors and the community would like to thank her for her years of dedicated service and wish her well in her retirement.



Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning Service through their Strategic School Improvement Programme has produced a **CONSULTATION DOCUMENT** on their proposal to amalgamate Neath Abbey Infant School and Mynachlog Nedd Junior School, by closing both and establishing an 'all through' (3-11) community primary school on the same sites.

Parents of children at the school may have received details by now but all members of the community have the opportunity to comment. You can obtain a copy by emailing ssip@npt.go.uk or by ringing the civic centre.

Crime Prevention Advice with PCSO Michael Griffiths



LIGHTING UP

As we look to Christmas many people think of Christmas lights but please remember that good lighting is one of the most effective crime deterrents

How can we use it?

- Leave a light on when you go out in the evening giving the impression someone is home ~ not the hallway or landing, you don't sit there for hours on end.
- Put a table light on timer so the house is not in darkness when you get home at the end of day.
- Leave the radio or television on, it sounds if someone is at home.
- Check the street lighting in your street,

report any problems on - (01639) 686868 or use the online form on the Neath Port Talbot Council web site.

- Think about installing a sensor security light or dusk to dawn light in your garden covering vulnerable points of entry. This can deter a burglar by making them fear detection or discovery.
- Remember to clean already installed outside lighting to get maximum light.
- When out and about at night, take extra care, and
- Avoid unlit areas.
- Where possible, don't walk alone after dark.
- Plan your route and keep to busy well lit areas.
- Always walk facing oncoming traffic.
- Keep property such as mobiles or iPods out of sight

A Merry Christmas to you all!

Telephone: 07880 057669

Mobile phone numbers are provided so that you can speak to your local officers about local issues, not for reporting crimes and incidents. Please use the 101 line to report crimes and incidents. Please continue to use 999 for all emergencies

Email: Michael.Griffiths2@south-wales.pnn.police.uk

Address: Skewen Police Station New Road Skewen SA106HH

As Ymlaen went to press there was no date fixed for the next PACT meeting but I can be contacted using the above details to establish the dates in the next few weeks.

Busy Fingers Never Stop! (Well, maybe for two or three hours in December!) The Helping Hands Knitters have had a very productive year. The group continues to attract new members, share their skills and have fun. In their Annual General Meeting which they held in August they heard that in the year 2013-2014 they raised sufficient funds to donate £ £3,735.00 to a wide variety of charities. This is besides the considerable amount of knitted and recycled goods that they also donate at home and abroad. They are looking forward to their Christmas Lunch down at the Smith's Arms where they will have to put down their needles and pick up their cutlery for a change.

What's On

Dyffryn Clydach Community Council

Tuesday, November 11th, 2014: Observation of 100 years. Remembrance WW1, 11am, Longford Memorial Hall. Councillors in attendance, residents welcome.

Saturday, November 29th 2014: Children's Christmas Disco, 2-4pm at The Memorial Hall.

Wednesday, December 10th, 2014: Community Carol Evening. Join us for an evening of carols with the Salvation Army Band at 6.30pm. Mince Pies, Tea and Coffee available.

Friday, December 19th, 2014: Community Council's Special Fundraising Bingo, 6.30pm-8.30pm.

Saturday, January 3rd, 2015: Senior Hall Users' New Year Party at 2pm to 6pm. Join us for an afternoon of food, fun and friendship.

Neath Abbey Infants School Funds Boost

Neath Abbey Infants School would like to say a big "Thank You" to Lynette Gray and the members of the Skewen Community Group for their generous donation of £500.

The Group was originally set up a number of years ago by a dedicated group of dog walkers who wanted to raise money for the young people in the local community. Over the years the group worked tirelessly and raised thousands of pounds through various fundraising events. Sadly, the group has now disbanded and the members shared the money between worthy charities and organisation within the community and former Chairperson Lynette Gray presented the cheque.



Mrs Kath Evans and Mrs Margaret Smith with the schools ECO Committee

The school's ECO Committee received a generous gift and would like to thank the local Dyffryn Clydach Environmental Group run by Mrs Margaret Smith and her friends for their kind donation of £40. Sadly the group have disbanded after many years supporting the school and the community. We would like to thank them for their support over the years as they have been willing volunteers on many occasions helping us develop our school grounds at the Early Years Unit and on the Main School Site.

Memories of Glynfelin House

I was born and brought up in Taillwyd when it was a very rural area. Glynfelin House could be seen from where we lived and it was a part of the landscape. It was not huge but it was an imposing building in an attractive setting. The estate comprised woods, a farm and land bordering the river Clydach.



It was owned by the Gibbins family who were prominent in the district. Glyn Clydach Pond in those days was much larger and deeper than it is now. Some of the local landowners had stocked it with rainbow trout. These migrated into the river and trout fishing was a popular pastime among the residents of Taillwyd.

In common with other landowners of the time, the Gibbins family had planted foreign plants and trees. There was a particularly good fishing pool situated below the house and shielded by a thick clump of bamboos. We boys knew that if this clump could be reached without being seen, there was little chance of detection. If we were seen by the farm bailiff, we were prepared to hold our ground because we knew he would not cross the river in flood. If seen by Mr Gibbins, we would beat a hasty retreat! Mrs Gibbins would pretend she hadn't seen us and sometimes asked us if we had caught anything.

In common with other large houses in the area, Glynfelin was taken over by the Military during the war. It became a military hospital specialising in treating people recovering from wounds and injuries. Because of our proximity to Llandarcy Oil Refinery the area suffered many air raids. On one occasion, Glynfelin was bombed because it was thought, Glyn Clydach Pond was mistaken

for one at Llandarcy. The plane dropped a "stick" of five bombs, one of which hit the house causing extensive damage. The rest fell at intervals along the valley, the last landing in the Cwm at the bottom of the gardens. No-one was hurt but the blast blew out the front windows of our row of houses.

My father was an Air Raid Warden and he with other men from Taillwyd went to Glynfelin to rescue the family. It was a brave thing to do in retrospect because there was no way of telling at the time what sort of bombs had been dropped because some had delayed action fuses. The Gibbins family went to live with their relatives, the Gilbertsons in Bryncoch. Air raids or not, we were expected to go to school the following morning and it was sad to see the dead animals in the fields, killed by the bombs.

I did my National Service between 1953 and 1955. In early 1954, I was posted to Kenya where I served for nearly twenty months. On the last day of my embarkation leave I took some pictures of Glynfelin House and the Bamboo Pool from Taillwyd Road. The two huge trees below the house are still there. I pinned the pictures up in my billet and sometimes when the "hiraeth" used to cut in, I used to look at those pictures and in my mind's eye I could see the blue, evening mist forming on Drummau Mountain and hear the river gurgling over its stones. An officer asked me once where the pictures had been taken. He was surprised when I told him because he had formed an entirely different mental picture of this part of the world.

The Gibbins family have passed on, they were respected in the area and supported many community activities. I still walk past Glyncllydach Pond regularly, hopefully, any future changes will not be such as to alter the appearance of the place and the view will continued to be enjoyed by generations to come.

Harry Thomas



Dyffryn Clydach Community Council is very pleased to announce that it has a new website. It has been established with the help of a grant from the Welsh Government for which the council is very grateful. It will enable us to provide information for our residents and includes a contact form for direct communication with our clerk.

Dates of the council's social events, public meetings and minutes of meetings will be available on the site as well as the council's important policies.

We have to thank our clerk, Mr Randall Shopland and our communications committee for their work in gathering the information for the site, David Dugay for photography and also Gwe Cambria Web, the web designers who created the site.

The web address for the site is
www.dyffrynclydach.org
You may want to set it as your home page or bookmark it for easy reference.

Mae'n bleser mawr gan Gyngor Cymuned Dyffryn Clydach gyhoeddi fod gennym wefan newydd. Mae wedi ei sefydlu gyda chymorth grant gan Lywodraeth Cymru ac mae'r cyngor yn gwerthfawrogi hyn. Bydd yn ein galluogi i ddarparu gwybodaeth i'n trigolion ac mae'n cynnwys ffurflen gyswllt lle y cewch gysylltu'n uniongyrchol â'n cler. Bydd dyddiadau, digwyddiadau cymdeithasol, cyfarfodydd cyhoeddus a chofnodion cyfarfodydd ar gael ar y safle yn ogystal a pholisiau pwysig y cyngor.

Mae'n rhaid estyn ein diolch i'n cler Mr Randall Shopland a'n pwyllgor cyfathrebu am eu gwaith wrth gasglu'r wybodaeth am y safle, David Dugay am y ffotograffiaeth a hefyd Gwe Cambria Web, y dylunwyr a greodd y safle.

Cyfeiriad y safle yw
www.dyffrynclydach.org

St John's Church News

The Remembrance Sunday Service:

9th November at 9.30am in St John's and is followed by short service at the cenotaph outside Carnegie Hall in time to observe the silence.

St John's Christmas Market:

Saturday, 22nd November, 1.30pm at the St John's Church. Come along and snap up Christmas Crafts. Enjoy the bustle of bargain hunting and find the perfect gift, then relax with a cuppa and a mince pie.

Combined Churches Advent Service:

Sunday, 30th November, Calfaria Chapel, Stanley Road, Skewen at 4pm.

Christingle Service:

Sunday, 14th December, St. John's Church at 4pm.

Angela's Auction has raised tens of thousands of pounds for St John's Church in recent years. It is an annual event which is always very well attended and includes a buffet supper as well. Angela would like to thank all who support the event, those who donate auction items and the members of the church who support her efforts.



Reverend Chris Coles with Mrs Angela Miller at the last auction



By the look on their faces these locals were snapped unexpectedly at the Hope and Anchor a few years ago. One of them is Tom Williams, Ann Doran's father. Can anyone tell us roughly when it was taken and who the others are?

OSPREYS SUPPORTERS' CHOIR SING TRIBUTE TO WWI WELSH FALLEN

In early May 2014, members of the Ospreys Supporters' Choir, myself included, went on its second tour of Belgium. The choir had a programme of very diverse engagements planned and although it would be a lot of fun it would be hard work as its Chairman ensuring the itinerary ran to plan.

Travelling by coach with a planned lunchtime Channel Tunnel crossing we met with our first delay. No matter, the choristers all took it in good spirit and started their singing engagements early by putting on a 'flash-mob' in the departure hall. The choir mingled with the crowd then one by one they began to sing California Dreaming until the whole choir was singing four part harmony. Their voices rang around the atrium as did hearty applause and smiles all round from the tired travellers who filmed it all on their mobile phones.

The choir stayed in the Royal Astor Hotel which was right by the beach front at Ostend. Our hotel had thoughtfully provided us with a free bar which they may reconsider in future as although the choir works hard they also are a group of great friends with hilarious entertainment programmes scheduled in their free time.

On Good Friday they sang at the town's Wapenplein Square Bandstand and then later at restaurants and bars in the district. Saturday brought further performances at Ghent's Grand Pavilion and Ghent Rugby Festival. Easter Sunday's first destination was Artillery Wood Cemetery and the grave of Hedd Wyn; the Eisteddfod Bard who was chaired posthumously.

The choir paid its respects by singing "Gwahoddiad" and laying a wreath of poppies and travelled to a reception at De Sportsman Bar and Restaurant whose owners have been instrumental along with Peter Carter Jones in organising the wonderful new Cromlech and Dragon memorial to the fallen of Wales in Langemark.

The highlight of the tour was Easter Sunday evening when



Mr David Williams, oldest member of the choir lays a wreath at Hedd Wyn's grave. Standing with him is Mr Dylan Rees, Swansea historian, who accompanied us on our tour and helped us to understand the importance of the Welsh troops in the struggle.

the choir sang "Calon Lan", "Gwahoddiad" and "Rachie" at the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate. Considering the emotion and solemnity of the occasion and the crowd of a thousand who had gathered to pay their respects it was a solemn and daunting experience but also one which will live in our hearts forever.

If you have an interest in choral singing then please join us at our practice sessions held in Neath RFC each Wednesday at 7.00pm. No audition is required and you do not have to read music. You will be very warmly welcomed or contact us via our website: www.ospreysupporterschoir.org

Alyson Thomas

The Inlaid Tiles of Neath Abbey

A facsimile copy of the *Inlaid Tiles of Neath Abbey* has been reproduced by Neath Abbey printers Glamorgan Press. Originally printed in 1850 it contains images of the medieval tiles which depict the arms of the Norman Knights who controlled South Wales since the early 12th century. Other tiles depict birds and bears, geometrical patterns and the famous hunter and his dogs chasing a stag, plus many more.

Local historian Brian Lodwick has prepared a detailed introduction to the book which contains reference to Henry Hey Knight, Rector of Neath, who prepared the tile descriptions.

Approximately a hundred books were



published in 1850, very few survive.

The book, priced at £8, will be of value to local historians who wish to increase their knowledge of one of the gems of Wales: Neath Abbey.

**Books available from Glamorgan Press,
Unit 27 Neath Abbey Business Park, SA10 7DR.
Telephone: 01792 815152**

Message from the Chairman

As Christmas approaches I find myself wondering where time went this year? Continuing my chairmanship of Dyffryn Clydach Community Council for a second year has meant that the length of time between putting the decorations away in January and retrieving them from the loft again at the end of November seems to have shrunk alarmingly!

The council year is always a busy one but planning our fantastic new playground and ensuring it all ran smoothly certainly gave myself, the clerk and the other councillors plenty to get to grips with. We carried out a lot of research before deciding on a design which should mean our children get a facility they can enjoy and of which our community can be proud.

Of course, it could not have been done without additional grant funding we received but it makes me proud to have served on a council that has consistently managed its budget well allowing us to consider this project at all.

Our *Ymlaen* newsletter is also something special to this community council, we know how much this is appreciated especially by the older members of our community as if it isn't distributed we get many concerned enquiries. It has been in circulation in the area in one form or another for forty years this year.

We would like to reassure you now that this will continue to be published along with the additional facility of council's brand new website.

This is just another great way that we are able to communicate with our residents. Together with the other councillors I am looking forward to meeting many of you at the 10.45am on Tuesday, November 11th to pay our respects together at the Memorial in the Memorial Hall and also at our Carol Evening at the hall on Wednesday, December 10th.

Over the last few years we have taken a collection at the Carol Evening which is given towards the Salvation Army Hardship Fund. Please also remember that St John's Church is also still accepting your donations toward Neath's Food Bank. It is a sad current fact of life that these are still needed although we are assured we are no longer in recession.

Looking forward to 2015 our community council will be carrying out improvements to freshen up the kitchen in the Memorial Hall as it is very heavily used but not before the decorations are safely stowed away.

A warm and peaceful Christmas to you all.

Alyson Thomas



Neges gan y Cadeirydd

Wrth i ni nawr ddynesu at y Nadolig rwy'n synnu wrth feddwl at ble'r aeth yr amser eleni. Gan fy mod wedi parhau â chadeiryddiaeth Cyngor Cymuned Dyffryn Clydach am ail flwyddyn, mae fel petai'r bwlch rhwng dod i'r addurniadau i ffwrdd yn Ionawr a'u casglu nhw o'r grogloffft unwaith eto ar ddiwedd mis Tachwedd wedi culhau yn ddychrynlyd.

Bydd blwyddyn y cyngor bob amser yn un brysur ond mae cynllunio ein lle chwarae newydd ffantastig a sicrhau bod popeth wedi rhedeg yn esmwyth yn sicr wedi rhoi digon i fi, y clerc a'r cynghorwyr eraill fynd i'r afael â nhw. Cyflawnom dipyn o ymchwil cyn penderfynu ar gynllun a ddylai olygu bydd ein plant yn cael cyfleuster y gallant fwynhau ac y gall ein cymuned ymfalchïo ynddo.

Yn sicr, ni allwyd ei wneud heb yr ariannu ychwanegol drwy'r grantiau a gawsom ond mae'n fy ngwneud yn falch o gael gwasanaethu ar gyngor sydd wedi ein galluogi i ystyried ymgymryd â'r gwaith o gwbl gan ei fod wedi rheoli ei gyllideb yn gyson.

Mae ein cylchlythyr *Ymlaen* hefyd yn rhywbeth arbennig i'r cyngor cymuned hwn, rydym yn ymwybodol o faint mae'n cael ei werthfawrogi yn enwedig gan aelodau hŷn y gymuned oherwydd os yw ychydig yn hwyr yn cael ei chyhoeddi cawn sawl ymholiad pryderus. Hoffem eich sicrhau y bydd yn dal i gael ei chyhoeddi yn ogystal â chyfleuster ychwanegol, sef gwefan newydd y cyngor.

'Rwy'n edrych ymlaen at gyfarfod a nifer ohonoch am 10.30yb ar Ddydd Mawrth, Tachwedd 11eg i dalu ein teyrnged gyda'n gilydd wrth y gofeb yn y Neuadd Gymuned a hefyd yn ein Noson Garolau yn y neuadd ar Ddydd Mercher, Rhagfyr 10fed.

Yn ystod y blynnyddoedd diwethaf rydym wedi gwneud casgliad yn y noson garolau tuag at Gronfa Caledi Byddin yr Iachawdwriaeth. Cofiwch hefyd fod Eglwys Sant Ioan yn dal i dderbyn rhoddion tuag at Fanc Bwyd Castell-nedd. Mae yn ffaith drist bod angen y rhain er i ni gael ein sicrhau nad ydym rhagor mewn dirwasgiad.

Gan edrych ymlaen at 2015 fe fydd ein cyngor cymuned yn ymgymryd â gwelliannau i ffresháu'r gegin yn y Neuadd Goffa gan fod defnydd mawr yn cael ei gwneud ohoni - ond nid cyn i'r addurniadau cael eu rhoi o'r neilltu.

Nadolig gwresog, tangnefeddus i chi i gyd.

Alyson Thomas

Extra copies of *Ymlaen* will be available at Abbeygate Stores and Longford Stores. Thank you to Jagtar and to Jan for their support.

Remember to support your local shops and businesses.

Bydd copïau ychwanegol *Ymlaen* ar gael yn Siop y Gât a Siop Rhydhir. Diolch i Jagtar a Jan am eu cymorth. Cofiwch gefnogi eich siopau a busnesau lleol.

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