

YMLAEN

GAEAF
2018
40c

Cylchlythyr
Cyngor Cymuned
Dyffryn Clydach



Newsletter of the
Dyffryn Clydach
Community Council

WINTER
2018
40p

Additional copies available from Abbey Gate Stores and Longford Stores or the Editor, Cllr Sarah Elias
Copïau ychwanegol ar gael o Siop y Gât, Mynachlog Nedd a Siop Rhydhir neu'r Golygydd, Cyng. Sarah Elias
92 The Highlands Neath Abbey, SA10 6PD. E-mail: sarahmelias@yahoo.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



Nadolig Llawen

Merry Christmas

Photograph: Steps to Londford Road, 1990

Editor's Note

Well here we are again, we have had a beautiful Summer for once and Autumn so far has been sunny and cold but bright. We have been busy as ever on the Community Council. We have had a changeover on the Chairperson from Mr Martyn Peters to Mrs Jennifer Davies and she has written her first address of her time as Chair this year. Christmas can be a very busy and sometimes stressful time but I am hoping to be able to take some time out this year and catch up with family and friends and relax! We will see.. Well here's to a very Merry Christmas to all our readers and a Happy New Year from us all on the Community Council.



Golygyddol

Wel, dyma ni, unwaith eto - roedd yr haf yn hyfryd am unwaith, ac mae'r hydref wedi bod yn oer ond yn heulog hyd yma. Rydym wedi bod mor brysur ag erioed yn y Cyngor Cymuned. Mae Mrs Jennifer Davies wedi cymryd lle Mr Martyn Peters yn Gadeirydd, ac mae wedi ysgrifennu'i chyfarchiad cyntaf am ei hamser fel Cadeirydd eleni. Gall y Nadolig fod yn amser prysur iawn, a straenus, ond rwy'n gobeithio cymryd ychydig o amser i ffwrdd eleni i ymlacio gyda ffrindiau a'r teulu! Cawn ni weld ... Felly, dyma ddymuno Nadolig Llawen i'n holl ddarllenwyr, a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda o bawb yn y Cyngor Cymuned.

Pets Corner

We have a lovely photo of two dogs who have become the greatest of friends. On the right we have Bess who is a spaniel cross belonging to our very own Councillor Karon Hopkins and family. Bess is fourteen months old and is a spaniel



cross. She was rehomed to Karon as her first family found her to be too playful. On the left we have Atlas belonging to Pam and family from Longford. Atlas is a collie cross and is fifteen months old. He was born at Many Tears Animal Rescue Centre and Pam has had him since he was a puppy. As Karon says; 'they are the best of friends and can usually be found running around local fields together, under supervision of course!'

Tee-Whiz!

Local sports whizz Morgan Mellin, aged twelve has proved herself to be a talented golfer. She has only been playing for eighteen months and is part of the South Wales Girls team. She plays at Neath Golf Club and has already represented her County. Morgan was



part of the team that won the Intercounty Championship in Mold, North Wales. She is practising and playing regularly and thanks in part to the hard work of Richard Bennet, the club professional from Neath, she is reaping the benefits. Morgan currently has a handicap of thirty two. Morgan is a student at Dwr-y-Felin Comprehensive School and lives in Dyffryn Clydach.

We at the Community Council congratulate her on her achievements at such a young age and wish her all the best for a bright future.

Chinese Charity Auction is a Winner

Councillor Jennifer Davies was motivated to stage a charity auction for a personal reason.

Neuroendocrine cancer is a rare cancer which unfortunately affected a close family member of hers. Jennifer would like to thank Mrs Angela Miller, who runs the annual auction in St John's Church, and a group of volunteers who donated auction lots and provided a lovely buffet.

The total raised on the night was £520 and a further £250 was raised through a raffle meaning that the charity NETS were delighted to receive the £770.00 donation.



Catching up with the Working with Nature Project

The Community Council is pleased to be utilising the services of the Working with Nature Project run by Neath Port Talbot Council. They have given us amongst other things, an apple orchard in Longford, volunteer programmes to tidy up our woodland and free courses through Dyffryn Clydach on such topics as varied as 'connecting with nature' through to 'learning how to prune fruit trees.' Neil Hinds of Working with Nature fills us in on some of the activities initiated by them, some carried out by members of the community;

'Earlier this year the National Autistic Society (NAS), who have their base in Neath Abbey, joined forces with the NPTCBC Countryside project, Working with Nature, to give time each month to helping to manage Coed Bach, the woodlands adjacent to Longford Road.

The NAS have a dedicated group who spend their Tuesdays out around the borough helping to manage and maintain different locations and grounds. Every other Tuesday the group can be found in Glynneath at the Rheola gardens working on the orchards and vegetable and woodland plots. The remaining Tuesdays sees the group alternating between a site in the Afan valley and our very own Coed Bach. So far, they have focused on scraping the paths throughout the woods that, due to leaf litter, have become boggy and wet.



This work is invaluable to all who use the site and it hasn't gone unnoticed. Sections that were a few months ago thick with mud and leaf litter (we are talking 4-6 inches thick), are now clean and cleared back to gravel, making the walk much more accessible for those with mobility issues (or those of us who forget our walking boots!)

The National Autistic Society are doing amazing work and we are very happy to have them working alongside us to help maintain the woodlands that benefit us all! If you'd like to become a Working With Nature volunteer in the woods, get involved in woodland events or volunteer with the National Autistic Society, then please get in touch n.hinds@npt.gov.uk. A huge thank you to the staff and users of the National Autistic Society!

'Actif Woods Neath Port Talbot has been providing woodland activities and Eco-therapy for residents of Neath Port Talbot for 5 years. Over that time, we have seen loads of different people pass through our (theoretical) doors, some staying only one or two weeks, others coming again and again to programmes.

The Actif Woods project was borne out of the desire to help those with physical or mental health challenges and the understanding and awareness that spending time in the woods is a great way to improve health and well-being. (Did you know that spending 15 minutes in the woods has been shown to lower blood pressure and reduce stress, whilst simultaneously improving concentration and clarity? Awesome right?)

The summer of 2018 saw us entering the woods of Coed Bach in Dyffryn Clydach and welcoming a great group of people to join us in a whole range of interesting activities. Although we (Maggie and Neil) are staff and leaders, once we get into the woods, there is no 'us and them'. It is just all of us, out there, reaping the benefits of nature connections.



We have had a great time learning how to start fires, make nettle string and needle felt, as well as enjoying some mindfulness and going on wonderful nature and foraging walks (culminating in some delicious cooking and foraged salads), and although the 12 week programme came to an end in September, we are hopeful of maintaining a monthly session with the group (and whoever else wants to join us) where we will expand our sessions and connections with nature to improve the quality of all of our lives, and of the woodlands itself!

For more information about Actif Woods Wales programmes, contact us on ActifWoodsNPT@smallwoods.org and follow our Facebook page @ActifWoodsNPT for updates and dates of future activities!

THE FRIEND'S OF ST JOHN'S CHURCH

A small group of people are endeavouring to establish in this Parish; 'The Friends of St John's Church.', the purpose being to bring together in a common fellowship and devotion all those who care for the Parish church of St John the Baptist and the desire to take part in maintaining its' fabric and services.

The church has been a part of all our pasts whether you attended Sunday School, sung in the choir, maybe had a member of the family or yourself christened or married. Sadly the church has been there when a loved one has died and you have held a



funeral or scattered a loved one's ashes in the Cremation Plot. We now need to look to the future so that the parish of Skewen has an Anglican presence and the Gospel and Peaceful Worship may continue there. We do

need all your help, your prayers and your support.

'The Friends' will be chaired by the priest in charge Rev. Chris Coles and are there to organise various events, keep the church alive and to enhance what we already have, the church and churchyard (containing approximately 2000 graves) whilst ensuring that the church is more easily accessible. We are launching the 'Friends' of St John's on March 1st 2019 and hope we can count on your support in any way possible. Let us look towards a positive future.

You can become a 'friend' life member for £150 or £250 per couple and a corporate member for £400. This includes a bi-annual newsletter which includes dates of all events to be held for the following 6 months.

Thanking you for your support, God Bless.

OUR SACRED MOUNTAIN

Whether consciously or not I imagine many of us will gaze up at Drumau at some point most days. (Many and varied have been the spelling of this mountain's name but I've adopted what is now the conventionally accepted correct form in Welsh of 'Drumau'.) Mynydd Drumau, meaning "Mountain of the Ridges", has steep facing slopes here on its east side which make it appear more impressive than its actual height of 272m/ 892ft. It's been described as a sacred mountain because of the presence on its top of prehistoric burial cairns and the megalith or standing stone - the second highest in Glamorgan - known as the Y Carreg Bica ('the pointed stone') or Maen Bredwan which probably dates to the Bronze Age between three and five thousand years ago. Our prehistoric ancestors chose to bury their dead on prominent locations, sites which might also have served for them as ritual gathering places.



As a prominent feature in the landscape the Carreg Bica - pictured here - was named in a charter of King John in 1203 as a boundary marker between the lordship of Gower and that of Neath. The ancient Gower lordship includes far more than just the peninsula of Gower, stretching as it does from Rhosilli right up to the Black Mountain at Brynamman. The lordship still exists and continues to generate a substantial income for the Duke of Beaufort who has inherited this title and its landed estates.

Drumau consists of Pennant Sandstone and stands in an area of geological disturbance. The fault lines along the sides of Drumau and the neighbouring March Hywel mountain form the edges of that broad trough of land which lies between Alltwn and Bryncoch. Drumau's fault line is clearly revealed in the bare rock face with its fallen boulder field above Darran Wood. Numbers of minor earthquakes associated with this faulting have been recorded over time.

The mountain played a role in one of the ground shaking advances of human knowledge. Alfred Russel Wallace (1823 - 1913) lodged in Bryncoch Farm while working as a surveyor in this area. It was while walking Drumau and exploring the Vale of Neath that he first developed a love of botany which led to him becoming a world acclaimed naturalist. Wallace would go on to conceive, along with Charles Darwin, the theory of evolution of species through natural selection, though it was Darwin who reaped most of the acclaim for this discovery.

The mountain's resources have been much exploited down the centuries. The Cistercian monks grazed their profitable sheep flocks on Drumau's flattened top and may have built some of the earliest stone walls there. It's been quarried - some will remember Bater's Quarry with its splendid masonry wall and delivery chutes near

Penshannel at the Skewen end - and extensively mined for coal. Large sunk pits which tunnelled under the mountain existed Bryncoch and in Skewen employing hundreds of men, a major local industry until its collapse in the late 1920s. Numerous drift mines - 'adits' as they are known, which follow the coal seams horizontally - dot the flanks of Drumau and some small, private mines continued working to well within living memory. A video exists of the Darran Mine filmed in 1983: this enterprise was one of the last in South Wales to employ pit ponies to pull the coal wagons ('drams'). Coniferous forests were planted which covered large portions of the mountainside above Bryncoch and Skewen. When the Forestry Commission sold off its land the Woodland Trust acquired three woods, Coed Maesmelin at the Skewen end, Dyffryn and Tyn yr Heol at Bryncoch in the 1990s, aided by generous contributions from local people, safeguarding these areas for nature and recreational use. Coed Maesmelin, purchased in 1998, had the distinction of becoming the Trust's 1000th woodland in the UK. These woods flanking Drumau consist of the sort of primeval forest that would once have covered much of the country before clearances. Drumau proved unsuitable for agricultural exploitation and so the ancient character of its woods were preserved. An exciting recent development has been the discovery of the very rare Blue Ground Beetle in Coed Maesmelin. A Heritage Lottery Fund aided project directed by Buglife Cymru and the Woodland Trust plans a series of activities to increase knowledge of this rare beetle and to search for it in neighbouring woodland habitats.

Drumau played a part in the Second World War having a decoy station on its top where fires were lit to simulate bomb damage to the nearby Llandarcy oil refinery, a prime target for the German Luftwaffe's bombers. A WWII bunker from this time can still be found there. At the foot of the mountain not far from Longford Court is a small industrial area known to some as the Coach Works from one of its past uses. A wartime reserve fuel depot was based here with an underground pipeline connecting with Llandarcy in case the vitally important oil refinery there was bombed. The local Home Guard unit had a combat practice area close by the Glyn Clydach Pond. They'd have been well aware of the strategic importance of Drumau mountain which might still conceal an underground bunker where an Auxiliary Unit of the Home Guard would have hidden ready to harry the enemy in the case of German invasion. One such an underground installation has been discovered on March Hywel and it would make strategic sense to site one on Drumau as well to ensure good surveillance from both mountains of the surrounding area. In more recent decades it was once common for military aircraft to fly low and noisily over Drumau, spooking humans and animals alike. The flat mountain top has also been used for glider flights launched by winches and as a grass flying strip for powered light aircraft and microlights. There was even a horse racing course on Drumau's top for a short time.

A mountain in a populous area inevitably generates many legends and stories. Perhaps the best known is the folktale that on Easter morning the Carreg Bica uproots itself to take a dip in the river Neath. Children from Skewen used to race up the mountain at Eastertide, a tradition that continued until the 1930s. Within living memory three prominent crosses used to be erected and floodlit on the Skewen end of the mountain for Easter. An

continued on the next page

OUR SACRED MOUNTAIN – continued

article in the recently published *The Neath Antiquarian Volume Three* by Dewi Bowen examines the theory in relation to local prehistoric monuments that some were erected to observe the movements of the sun, moon and major stars. The Carreg Bica, with its commanding viewpoint on Drumau, receives special attention as a location from which such astronomical observations may have been made. Drumau has its share of unusual phenomena as might be expected of a mountain associated with strong folkloric, mythic and religious dimensions. There have been sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) while other reported mysterious phenomena include hearing the Carreg Bica emitting a singing noise under the full moon. Some believe that geological fault lines as exist on this mountain may be responsible for unusual phenomena like emitting strange lights.

And did you know that Drumau is classified as a 'Marilyn', i.e. having at least 150m of a drop in all directions – that is, if you climb this mountain from any direction you'll always have to climb at least 150m to do so? Drumau is one of 158 mountains in Wales to fall within this Marilyn category, a term coined to complement the better known 'Munros', i.e. peaks above 3000 feet/ 915 metres.

I'll finish with lines from a poem entitled 'Carreg Bica' by the late Terry Hetherington who had a deep love for our sacred mountain and its history:

'... from these infinite heights circled
by falcon and raven ...
Silurian fire still smoulders
darkly at this site of
divination, the great
megalith endures.'

Jeff Griffiths

Jeff Griffiths is Chair of the Dyffryn Clydach and Bryncoch Historical Society which meets monthly in Longford or Bryncoch. The author would welcome any contributions to add to this account of Drumau.



Dates for the Diary

We will be holding our annual Christmas carol service on Wednesday, 19 December, 2018 starting at 7pm in Longford Memorial Hall. Come along for some festive cheer with the talented Salvation Army band. All welcome to stay for a mince pie and cup of tea after the service.

The children's Christmas party will be held as usual in Longford Memorial Hall on 1 December, which is a Saturday from 3.30 pm until 5.30 pm. All welcome to see if Santa turns up early! The annual hall users party will be held on Saturday, 5 January, 2019. This popular event commences at 2pm, all hall users are welcome for a fun afternoon.

Dyffryn Clydach Memorial Hall Your Community Space

Often referred to as Longford Memorial Hall, our hall serves the entire community of Dyffryn Clydach.

Not many residents will remember it when originally built as a prefab building called affectionately 'The Hut' though one of our residents, Mrs Louisa Davies, remembers raising money for its upkeep with raffles, fundraising dinners and the like.

It had a major transformation in 1984 when the Community Council secured funding from local government and the Welsh Office which enabled the addition of a committee room, and a kitchen refit.

Reading through old editions of Ymlaen it is fascinating to read the variety of events that have taken place there including plays and pantomimes, fashion shows, grand concerts, charity fairs and children's entertainment. Of course there have been many parties, barbecues, and celebrations too.

Again in 2006 refurbishment was needed which included entire replacing the roof, kitchen remodeling and an additional committee room, a second disabled toilet and access ramp. This ensured that the hall now has two separate access foyers so as to accommodate different groups of users simultaneously.

In the past we have had education courses, art classes, lectures, public meetings, church meetings, salsa classes, Neighbourhood watch, Brownies, Parent and Toddler many more small groups meeting there.

During the last five years kitchen has again been revamped, the central heating boiler replaced and both The Drive Play Park and now the toddler play area at the rear of the hall have been renewed.

Dyffryn Clydach Community Council is rightly proud of our facilities and hopes that the community feels the same way. Any day of the week there is someone meeting there.

- Monday Mornings - Indoor Short Mat Bowling open to everyone from 9.30am
- Tuesday Afternoon - Alternate weeks there is our Senior Citizens group at 2.00pm
- Tuesday Evening - Karate from 6.30pm
- Wednesday Afternoon - Wednesday Stitchers Quilt Group
- Wednesday Evening - Monthly Neath Abbey WI Meeting
- Thursday - Helping Hands Knitters Group. 12 to 4pm
- Thursday Evening - Karate 6.30 TBC
- Friday Evening - Charity Prize bingo 6.30 to 8.30pm
- Saturday Morning - Tiny Toes Ballet 10am-2pm

As we have the hall and two meeting rooms we have a possible 54 hire sessions available in total.

It is a constant balancing act to keep the hire charges as low as possible whilst also providing ongoing maintenance and serving the utility bills. Why not get a book group together or a fitness or diet class or friendship group? What about your next party or do you need rehearsal space?

We invite you all to come along and use your hall. Bookings are made through our clerk. For information about prices please see the details below; Mr Randall Shopland 01639-635787 or through our website. www.dyffrynclydach.org

Little Drummau Boy

I recently spoke to our very own Dyffryn Clydach County Borough Councillor Mr Martyn Peters, lifelong resident of Longford to record his recollections of life within the area in the 1950s. Martyn starts off at the very beginning 'I was born 1950 in the prefabs in Tregelles Road in Longford. I moved from the prefabs when I was one to Heol Heddwh in Longford. I went to Neath Abbey when I was five as that's when you started school in those days. I had a teacher was a lady called Miss Paddock and she lived on Longford Rd roughly where number 107 is now, who used to come to school like Miss Marple, she had a bike and a basket in the front and a cap. She was probably in her middle fifties. She had a sister I think called Miss Tucker and she was another Miss Marple and they lived together. My parents moved to Longford because they had apartments in Cadoxton and they got a prefab in Longford.'



Martyn goes on to recall life as a child in the area which is very different to now; 'I remember the houses on Heol Penlan being built and my cousin was a builder working on them and when I was about four my mother would send me over with a shiny vacuum flask and sandwiches for him. I can also remember where the garages are on Heol Penlan, wild rabbits being about. I can remember my father coming home with ducks from somewhere. Got up one morning, I was about five I suppose and they were all dead, a fox had killed them in the garden. We used to go to a market in Carmarthen in my Uncle's landrover and we used to go down about June time and buy young turkeys, we used to kill them for Christmas and keep one and sell the other. Also I can remember the miners coming home from the collieries with faces black as the ace of spades.

He continues on to talk about life as a child in Longford and what playing here was like in the 50s; 'I can also remember my first bike it was all painted black and it was a hand me down god knows where it came from and it was too small, used to ride the bike and I couldn't reach the pedals so I used to put my legs through the bars. Some of the bikes had fixed wheels and no brakes so if you stopped pedalling you went over the top of the handlebars. None of this modern stuff with helmets. Different times.'

Of course society was very different in this decade and religion featured more prominently in the lives of residents; 'We used to play out all day but on a Sunday we had to go to Sunday School Moriah chapel, knocked down now. We used to go out to play on a Sunday morning then at 12 o'clock then get into your Sunday best for Sunday School. Sunday School in the afternoon, then you had your tea and you had to go back to chapel service in the evening. Once a year you had to recite in Welsh in Ebenezer Chapel

in Neath Abbey, all the chapels against each other, some were better than others. We used to have Whitsun teas too all coming out singing loudly from chapel and walk up Tai Llyd Road. Used to go in a house there and have tea. The Whitsun Walk was through farm fields and we used to chase the cows away.'

Martyn then recalls life as an older boy living in Longford and getting up to mischief; 'I can



remember the first car, a black standard ten and Arthur Harris of Heol Penderyn had it and we all used to look at it but my Uncle had a Land Rover. We used to have two or three trips a year to Jersey beach, none of this strap them in! A load of us in the back. Sandwiches on the beach full of sand. We played football and would start with five a side and end up with forty a side, piles of you. Much different now, in the Winter time we would run home get changed to play out before it got dark and the other thing was hide and seek in the dark round the lampposts.'

Although the popularity of Halloween is a more recent American influenced phenomena, celebration days were as important, perhaps more so for children in the 1950s; 'Of course another thing was bonfire night, used to search everywhere for firewood to build a bonfire. I remember one year it had gone, people on the street had pinched it for firewood. There was a penny for the guy, we used to make a guy buy a mask fill a bag and the clothes for the guy were better than the people had! We used to learn that if people had a few drinks in the afternoon then they would be more generous and give you more money for your guy! You would go make a couple of bob and go and buy fireworks. Behind the Highlands was the Greenaway Colliery and we used to slide down the coal tips, we used to swim in the canal in the summertime in Neath Abbey. Used to light fires with old tyres, down to the marsh and fetch old tyres and driftwood. We had freedom to do what we wanted. Boys used to throw you in the canal. Beano comics on a Saturday morning, to get up early. On Christmas Eve you went to chapel with the school. We got Dandy Wonderdog books from 50's, a tangerine, apple and an orange and a few nuts. One gift if you were lucky and an annual, we used to swap the books around then. We used to open them so not to damage the paper, first couple of days wrap them up again and pretend it was Christmas again. The houses had parlours in them and only on Christmas day would there be a fire in that grate, normally only one fire in the living room, an open fire. We used to go in there and one year I had a wigwam for Christmas and I used to sit in the parlour pretending it was a campfire!'

Martyn recalls more adventures as he got older and explored the locality further; 'We also used to go to the Gnoll Cinema in Neath to watch cowboys and indian films with my brother who was older. I can remember the start then of the tv coming, we didn't have one but a bloke down the road Mr Preece had one. I was friends with their son well a few of us was because they had a tv! Tv would come on at four for an hour of children's programmes then go off at five then back on at six and finish at 10 o'clock dead on. We watched Robin Hood, Cisco kid and the Lone Ranger. It was a tiny black and white tv. When my mother and father had one year later you could only get one station BBC, half the time it didn't work so you would give it a hit. You could guarantee that it would conk out at Christmas!'

He recalls weekends away from parents, not dissimilar to the children and young adults camping in the vicinity now at the end of term; 'When I was eleven I was allowed up Drummau Mountain. We used to go camping up Drummau after school (aged 11) on Friday evenings and take the dog and come back on Sunday night. The only worry was bigger boys. We used to look for flattened grass where courting couples had been and you might find a threepenny bit if you were lucky! You could have a good ice cream for threepence. My second job was working with the contractors as a tea-boy knocking down the prefabs that I lived in! It was always cold and we were all small as the cold stunted you. We would buy army coats to put on the beds. I had terrible asthma. My mother thought I was taking my last breath. I remember the winter of 1963 and the river in Longford was frozen solid and we used to play on it and walk on it for about 2 and a half months. Some snow in certain parts was there until June. It started on Boxing day and it snowed every day until March 21st but we still went to school, we never missed a day of school.' Life in Longford was very different and often harder for people in the 1950s but as Martyn describes there was much fun to be had for the children even if they had next to nothing and were often cold!

Fantastic fundraising in Dyffryn Clydach!

It has been a bumper year for local fundraising with residents being as generous as ever and giving to worthy causes. Neath Abbey Women's Institute held a



coffee afternoon on the 10th of July to raise funds for breast cancer care. This event was well attended and a roaring success. As well as the delicious tea/coffee and cakes on offer there was a raffle and quiz.

Our own Councillor Alyson Thomas has been a busy bee fundraising herself for her 'Syria Camps Appeal'. Alyson asked for donations to help refugees and in particular children in camps in Jordan, Turkey and Syria. The appeal was a great success and Alyson collected toiletries such as nappy cream, shampoo and also items such as children's clothing to send to those in need. Local people helped enormously with the appeal.

Alyson is also a member of 'The Helping Hands' knitting group in Neath who raised £500 for Marie Curie which was handed over on 5 July 2018. They also presented the Marie Curie charity with a pretty blanket for them to raffle and raise further funds. Well done all!

Longford Ladies exhibit in 'Festival of Stitch'

This summer Swansea City Council held a 'Festival of Stitch', a mixture of exhibitions, market stalls and taster craft sessions throughout the city centre. It ran from August 10 - 24, 2018 and utilised public venues such as the Waterfront museum, the LC and also Swansea Museum. The event was such a success that they are hoping to run another one next summer. We are proud to say that our very own Longford Wednesday stitchers held a quilt exhibition in Swansea Museum which was a roaring success. Here are some examples of their wonderful work. The exhibition was then moved to St David's Church in Neath. Well done ladies, the quilts look fabulous.



Tribute to Those Lost in World War One

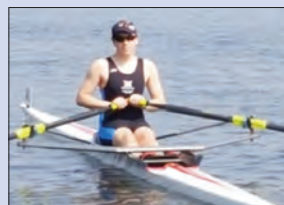
We remember all those local men who fought and died in the First World War, the families who suffered their loss, and all who made sacrifices for the 1914 - 1918 war effort.

'They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.'



OARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

The Highlands has a talented rower in its midst. Harvey John aged fifteen of Dwr-y-Felin



Comprehensive school, has been rowing for five years as part of a team at the City of Swansea Rowing Club. During the last eighteen months Harvey has been rowing singly, known as single scull. The squad competed

in Nottingham in April 2018 and Harvey was chosen to represent his country. He continues to work hard and build upon his achievements, practising in various places including Monmouthshire for squad training days. Harvey is currently within the top ten rowers in the UK based on age and we wish him all the best of luck for his future competitions.

Harvey has not only been participating in sport but singing too! In October 2018 Dwr-y-Felin school put on a show called Rock of Ages and Harvey was chosen for one of the lead roles, Lonny. He sang, danced and acted his way through four days of performances and enjoyed every minute, congratulations to him and long may his drama days continue.

A Roaring Success

Congratulations to our very own editor's son Evan Elias aged 15 of The Highlands, Neath Abbey, for his appearance as 'the boy' in the verse



drama 'The Boy and the Lion's head'. This was written by successful Swansea born playwright and poet Peter Thabit Jones. The drama was part of the Swansea International Festival curated by Mal Pope in September 2018 and was performed onstage at The Waterfront Museum. The drama has also been recorded onto a CD for a US and UK release featuring Evan's voice and there is a possibility of a US tour of it next year. It is Evan's first acting role and he was chosen after Peter Thabit Jones liked the way he read aloud in class. Congratulations on your success, Evan.

Chairperson's Address • Cyfarchiad y Cadeirydd

I would first like to thank the other members of the Community Council for having the confidence in me to be their Chairperson for this year. It is a privilege I have held once before. I seek to enjoy my year and meet as many people as possible through carrying out my other duties as Chair of the Halls Committee, including holding bingo sessions, children's parties and other events. I would also like to thank a few good friends who have helped me and supported me in these events who are not involved with the council as without their help it would have been very difficult to continue.

I would like myself to say a few words about Councillor Gwyn Edwards who is sorely missed as he helped me when I joined the council and also supported me and the community by attending every event that was held and also called the bingo every Friday night which is not organised by the council.

One of the projects I am happy to see completed for the Community Council is the refurbishment and new equipment for the small children's playground behind Longford Memorial Hall. This adds to many of the facilities that we have provided over the years.

I would like to thank community for the support they have given me since I have been with the council. That just leaves me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Councillor Jennifer Davies.



Hoffwn ddiolch yn gyntaf i aelodau eraill y Cyngor Cymuned am eu hyder ynof i fod yn Gadeirydd eleni. Mae'n fraint yr wyf wedi'i chael unwaith o'r blaen. Rwyf am fwynhau fy mlwyddyn a chwrdd â chynifer o bobl â phosib drwy gyflawni fy nyletswyddau eraill fel Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Neuaddau, gan gynnwys cynnal sesiynau bingo, partis plant a digwyddiadau eraill. Hoffwn hefyd ddiolch i rai ffrindiau da sydd wedi fy helpu a'm cefnogi yn y digwyddiadau hyn er nad ydynt yn rhan o'r cyngor, oherwydd heb eu cymorth nhw, byddai wedi bod yn anodd iawn parhau.

Hoffwn ddweud ychydig am y Cyngorydd Gwyn Edwards, yr ydym yn gweld ei eisiau yn fawr, a helpodd fi pan ymunais â'r Cyngor a hefyd fy helpu i a'r gymuned drwy fynychu pob digwyddiad a gynhaliwyd. Yn ogystal, roedd yn galw'r bingo bob nos Wener, er nad y Cyngor sy'n trefnu'r noson.

Un o'r prosiectau rwy'n hapus yn gweld y Cyngor Cymuned yn ei gwblhau yw cyfarpar newydd ac ailwampio iard chwarae fach y plant y tu cefn i Neuadd Goffa Longford. Mae hyn yn ychwanegu at y cyfleusterau lu rydym wedi'u darparu dros y blyneddodedd.

Hoffwn ddiolch i'r gymuned am eu cefnogaeth ers i mi ymuno â'r Cyngor. Y cyfan sydd ar ôl i mi ei wneud nawr yw dymuno Nadolig Llawen iawn a Blwyddyn Newydd dda ac iach i chi i gyd.

Y Cyngorydd Jennifer Davies.

Festive Recipe

We have a lovely Christmas cake recipe here sent in by our very own Chairperson, Mrs Jennifer Davies. This cake can be made up to a week before consumption or frozen without the topping...

Ingredients

- 75g glace cherries chopped
- 175g sultanas
- 75g seedless raisins
- Grated rind of one lemon
- 5 ml or 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- 150 ml Guinness (the best bit!)
- 75g butter or margarine
- 175g plain flour
- 75g dark muscavado sugar
- 2 eggs
- 45-60mls or 3 to 4 tablespoons of redcurrant jelly
- Assorted glace fruit, nuts, e.g. cherries, pineapple, apricots, almonds, Brazil nuts etc
- Edible silver balls or dragees.

Method

1 Mix together the fruits, lemon rind and mixed spice in a medium bowl and pour the Guinness over. Cover and

leave to soak overnight in a cool place. Grease a 1.4 litre or 2.5 pint ring mould or deep cake tin and dust with flour.

2 Cream the butter or margarine and sugar together in a bowl until pale and light. Gradually beat in the eggs.

3 Fold the butter or margarine, sugar and egg mixture into the fruit and Guinness with the flour and spoon into the prepared tin.

4 Bake at 170C (325F) Gas mark 3, for around 1 hour and 10 minutes (1.5 hours if using a deep cake tin) or until a skewer comes out clean. Cool slightly then turn out to cool on a wire rack.

5 Heat the redcurrant jelly until completely melted. Brush a little lightly over the cold cake. Arrange the fruit and nuts and silver balls over the top and sides of the cake. Flash the cake under a hot grill for 2-3 minutes to caramelise slightly and tinge with colour.

6 While still hot, liberally glaze the cake with the remaining redcurrant jelly. Leave to cool. Store in an airtight container for up to one week. Enjoy and Merry Christmas to you all!



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 copiâu 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.

Published by Dyffryn Clydach Community Council. Cyhoeddwyd gan Gyngor Cymuned Dyffryn Clydach.

Printed by Glamorgan Press, Unit 13, Milland Rd Industrial Estate, SA11 1NJ. Argraffwyd gan Wasg Morgannwg, Uned 13, Ystad Ddiwydiannol Heol Milland, SA11 1NJ.