

Rhosgoch Gossip

Volume 26 Issue 1

Sept / Oct 2020

£1

MUSHROOM TIME AT LOWER PENGARTH



Robert dried them in the low oven of the Aga, creating a dark brown puddle of evaporation on the floor and a powerful smell throughout the house.

RHOSGOCH & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

Battle of the cucumbers



With no Gardening Club show this year some of the club members have been doing battle via their facebook page.

RHOSGOCH & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB NEWS

<https://www.painscastle-rhosgoch.co.uk/gardening-club.html>

We have created a private area for members of the Club who are also on Facebook. We use it to keep us connected, to promote our meetings when they start again, share pictures of plants, recipes and garden visits, or to help each other identify mystery plants.

If you are a Gardening Club member who is also on Facebook and would like to be a member of this private group, please contact me by phone or Facebook Messenger or email gardeningclub@painscastle-rhosgoch.co.uk.

Allison Joyce – 01497 851 294



W.I. NEWS

There will be a W.I. tea afternoon at the end of September.

LOCAL INTEREST GROUP

Local Interest Group have resumed their programme with a project on the perambulation of the Manor of Lower Elfael in 1853. Two walks on the last Thursdays of July and August were arranged to follow the line of the boundary. It is hoped that we will be able to continue meetings, if not indoors, they will remain as walks until Covid 19 regulations permit the usual monthly gatherings.



DIGITISING THE LOCAL HILL PONIES



of the world, photographing mountain ibex in the alps, zebra and elephant in Africa, wombats in Australia, llamas in Argentina to orca in the Pacific North West. However, the hills, rugged landscape, and beauty for which Wales is famous, have always been home for me and I have returned here regularly to visit family, friends and to get a dose of the weather as often as I could.

I have been visiting the area around Hay on Wye for over 40 years but was finally drawn to Rhulen just over 15 years ago and set up home in this quiet hamlet, surrounded by its ancient hills and stunning views.

My career has been varied and somewhat eclectic including research chemist,



publisher, photographer, software developer, and more recently supporting new business start-ups using artificial intelligence to help those suffering with dementia. But I have always been drawn to photography and design throughout most of my life and returning to the hills of Wales has afforded me the opportunity in recent years to devote more time to art and design.

Living in Rhulen, wandering the hills, villages, and



towns of Radnorshire, has enabled me to pursue my passion for photography.

In recent years I have become fascinated by the local herds of Welsh ponies

that roam the Rhulen Hill, Red Hill, Llanbedr and Painscastle Hills, spending many hours tracking them down and then patiently watching them as they meander slowly across the hills.

The ancientness of the Welsh Mountain ponies is well known throughout the world. Local farmers have kept these animals on the Welsh hillsides for many generations.

Originating in Wales long before the settlement of the Roman Empire, many of them have been domesticated and have become a firm favourite for riding and showing. They are believed to have existed in the different mountainous regions of Wales for more than a thousand years and



Although having been born in Wales, I have been fortunate enough to be able to live and travel throughout many parts

endured many kinds of hardship. For many centuries, feral equines ran wild across Wales, often creating a 'nuisance' to the locals, including the shepherds as well as the farmers. Eventually, the issue reached such a height that, in the 16th century, King Henry VIII ordered their destruction. Fortunately, some of them escaped into the forests and hills of the rugged Welsh landscape and remained there, avoiding slaughter, and managing to survive. Over time they have adapted to the landscape and developed the hardiness and intelligence to cope with the environment and become the cheeky and fun-loving animals we see on the hills around us today.



Photographing these animals requires patience and fortitude, braving our wild

and windy weather, snow, frost, fog, and rain. Every so often we are blessed with perfect sunny days, when the heather is in full bloom and sitting amongst the ponies affords a great opportunity to get up close and personal with



these wonderful animals. Whether early spring and new foals, mid-summer in the bracken, amongst the autumn mists or the snows of deep winter, these rugged and playful characters roam the hills and make for great photography and paintings.

Having always been interested in photography, digital photography allows you the flexibility to adapt your photographs to many different types of media. Digital painting is one such art form. Although familiar with the concept, I became interested in digital painting and drawing at the beginning of the Covid-19 lockdown. Whilst there are many different ways to approach digital art, the easiest way to explain it is to imagine a piece of digital paper (physically a computer tablet or drawing board), a digital brush or pen (literally a computer stylus, rather than more traditional mouse), and an infinite variety of 'paint' colours and types.



Using specialist software, you approach your paintings and drawings in the same way you would if using paper and paint. You outline your drawing and begin to lay down digital ink and paint to build up the resulting piece of artwork.

Like any learning process, when it comes to drawing and painting, digital art requires patience and time to develop the necessary skills and ultimately a style. Add to that the complexity of learning to use complex software, digital paper, brushes, and pens, and you can spend hours and days experimenting. Often the process is frustrating, and you throw many of your attempts 'in the bin'. Getting the right amount of 'paint' on the

right kind of 'brush', and applying it with the right strokes and dabs to simulate paint, is a skill. Just like in the real world there is no scientific method or approach, but rather an 'art' to achieving the final 'look and feel'.

But after many false starts, and many approaches and styles, I finally feel as though I am developing a distinct look and feel to my water colours and pen & ink drawings. Artists of course hope that their work will be viewed and enjoyed by others. I have been fortunate enough to have been commissioned to create several water colours and pen & ink drawings for some of our local's favourite pets, as well as one or two paintings of those hill ponies we all know and love.



I am always happy to take commissions and with Christmas on its way, if you would like your favourite photograph turned into a work of art, please give me a call or drop me an email. In the meantime, please check out my digital art and photography at www.nielsenphotographic.com.
Stuart info@nielsenphotographic.com Tel: 07720 412489

Food for Thought – 6

These are the last of the quotes from my great grandfather James Nunn's notebook.

- Deeds are fruit, words are but the leaves.
- Tis one thing to be tempted but quite another to fall.
- Deep lies the language of the heart.
- There's never a why but there's always a wherefore.
- Prudent people are like pins, their heads prevent them from going too far.
- May fortune all your life befriend you and happiness and joy attend you.

Maybe Gossip readers can add some more?

Cherry Williams

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A Medal from the head of the RAF

Jonathan Lloyd receives a medal from the head of the RAF, Sir Stephen Hilliers for serving as a reservist for 10 years. Jonathan, a former pupil of Rhosgoch School (1975-1982) has recently served 4 months in Estonia and Iceland. He lives near Edinburgh, and his "other job" an analyst with a veterinary consultancy.



Pilates Emma

Pilates lengthens and strengthens the body whilst improving your flexibility, balance, posture and core.



Pilates Emma Group Classes

After Government announcements for England & Wales I am able to start offering indoor face to face classes which will begin Monday 14 September. Spaces will be limited to c12 at Booth's and c15 at Clifford. Apologies, but due to revised Covid-19 restrictions I am unable to offer classes at Painscastle, Peterchurch and Eardisley at present.

Autumn Term Timetable

Monday 14 September – Friday 23 October 2020 inc

Monday 9.00am	Booth's Studio, Hay-on-Wye
Monday 11.00am	Booth's Studio, Hay-on-Wye
Tuesday 6.00pm	Booth's Studio, Hay-on-Wye
Wednesday 9.30am	Booth's Studio, Hay-on-Wye
Wednesday 6.00pm	Clifford Community Centre
Friday 9.00am	Booth's Studio, Hay-on-Wye

Classes will run on a 6 weekly basis at £10 per class payable in advance @ £60.

Pilates Emma online classes

Pilates Emma will have a permanent online offering via Facebook – rolling 4 weekly subscription £20. To enable me to align my online and face to face teaching, from Monday 7 September I will be sharing a weekly 1 x 45 minute class (alternating between beginner and intermediate levels) plus a 20 minute "masterclass".

Pilates Emma Interactive Zoom classes

I will be offering a *new* weekly interactive "Zoom" class on Tuesday mornings at 9.00am for 50 minutes. Zoom classes will begin Tuesday 15 September

Outdoor Pilates

I hope to be offering a couple of classes during the first two weeks of September & will separately email the outdoor gang re suggested dates/times.

Warm wishes Emma

07702 241725 or emma@pilatesemma.co.uk

www.pilatesemma.co.uk www.facebook.com/pilatesemma

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INTRODUCTION TO CLAN MCFADZEAN

The good people of Painscastle may have noticed three new boys in town. You will have heard of the good, the bad and the ugly: the three newcomers might better be described as the large, the old and the noisy.

The old boy, an arthritic yellow lab called Fudge, may be new to Painscastle but he was born in Llanvaches, near Caldicot. Born Welsh, like me.

The other two interlopers have only enjoyed visits to Wales since being rescued from a kill centre in Spain where canine strays find themselves, abandoned after a hunting season or the result of enthusiastic street encounters leading to puppy progeny of mixed race. In the case of the large, Bryn, and the noisy, scruffy terrier-like Tigger, neither found it easy to find a home. Thanks to the tireless dedication of a charity based in Jersey which raises funds to find homes for these animals destined for a short and cruel life, they found their respective ways, after careful vetting for suitability for family life, first to our home in Jersey and thence to Painscastle.

And they have asked me in their own inimitable fashions which, in the case of Tigger, means barking when he is excited or anxious about being left alone and Bryn by just being very cool in his red bandana and very, very large, to thank you all for being so kind and welcoming.



This is an expression of gratitude which, as their human companions, we would like to echo. We could hardly believe our luck when during a weekend stay in Chapel Cottage over a glorious May bank holiday weekend in 2018, we found and fell head over heels in love with Painscastle, the stark beauty of the Begwns and the friendliness of those who were lucky enough to call this place home. There happened to be an empty house wanting to be a home and David and I are now able, COVID-19 restrictions permitting, to be here as much as we can. At least one of us is usually here.

Our two legged teenagers, Ciara and Harley, join us occasionally and will be spotted, now and again, nose to an electronic device, strolling down to the Bachawy with one or more of the dogs. They are at an age when they probably do not realise how lucky they are to be able to stroll unperturbed along leafy, sun-dappled lanes without fear for their own welfare or safety; their principal concern is the absence of 4G but even they recognise the utter loveliness of this place.

This, I hope, serves as a brief introduction to us; Painscastle for David and me is intended to be, as the kids might put it, a forever home. We have been fortunate enough to meet a good number of Painscastle residents in the lanes, last year's village fête and the pub (but, unlike the three new boys in town, we have never been offered free sausages by Tony). We have, however, received a genuinely warm and generous welcome which gladdens the heart and when we cannot be here, makes us long to be on the way back home here, a quiet idyll, on top of a hill in the shadow of the ancient castle groundworks. This home is genuinely where our heart is.
Sam & David McFadzean



National Garden Scheme STAYCATION STAYS SAFE

In recent years we've grown so accustomed to the ease of packing our bags for foreign holidays the beauty on our doorstep has often been overlooked. But with the fabulous weather it really has never been a better time for a Staycation. With its stunning country towns and villages and centuries of rich history there is so much to discover and enjoy here in Powys – especially if you add a fabulous National Garden Scheme garden to your visiting adventures! To find and pay, visit <https://ngs.org.uk/product-category/garden-tickets/wales/>.

Why not join in to host your own garden party in September? It's free to sign-up and in return you'll receive information on everything you need to throw a wonderful celebration for family, friends and neighbours. From personalised invitations to mouth-watering recipes and fabulous party inspiration to exciting fundraising ideas there's plenty to get you started. ngs.org.uk/gardenparty

All funds raised will go to the charity's Help Support Our Nurses campaign and make a real difference to Nurses at the frontline.

POWYS GARDENS OPENING

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Gail Jones (Publicity Officer, South Powys)

gail.jones@ngs.org.uk or calling 0797 410 3692



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POEM / STORY

In my possession I have a very old, hand-written poem-come-story of some shenanigans that happened in Painscastle Village sometime in the late 1920s. It is all true and tells a story of some young men from the village and local areas who, after a silly prank, got into deep trouble with the Law.

The poem/story was difficult to decipher in places, parts of it are rhyming and some not, and so I will do the best I can and you should get the gist of the story and the outcome. It is called: **The Broken Shaft**

One Sunday afternoon, the 8th of October
After the service in the Chapel was over,
There was a singing practise going on
To practise for the Grand Eisteddfod.
There were some boys outside loitering about
Waiting for the singers to come out.
Someone noticed a pony and trap outside the Pub
One said it was a dogcart not a tub.
Another crafty fellow said "now for a lark,
Let's sell this trap before it gets dark."
So they gathered around to sell Herbert Harris's gig
But to begin the bidding wasn't very big.
The Auctioneer was Allan Lloyd, Pendre
He was the best you'll all agree.
"I'll be the Clerk" said Tom Abberley, The Hom
"Gather together we mustn't be long".
Says Auctioneer Lloyd, "how much for this trap, how
much I say
You all know the rules so bid away,
It's here for sale boys in perfect order."
"Two shillings" said one with plenty of money
"Two shillings I've got," said Allan "two shillings I'm bid
Who'll say three, Bob Stephens you've plenty of money."
Bob said "I'll give another sixpence to help on the fund".
The bidding indeed was very slack
So they thought they'd have a ride in the old trap.
So into the shafts went Bob and Tom,
The Auctioneer said "don't be long."
They all got ready for the ride
Climbing up in from back and side.
Down the road they went at full speed
And as long as it lasted it was fun indeed.
The inferior shaft began to bend
Under the weight of all these men.
One got his coat stuck in the spokes of the wheel.
Fred Edwards who was a very heavy chap
Jumped on the back and the shaft went snap
Down went the trap with the boys out on the road.
One said "boys we'd better go home."
Silence now for a minute or two
Not one of them knew quite what to do.
Most decided it was time to run
An early end to their bit of fun.
But four of them were gallant men
And returned the broken trap and then – cleared.
Then on the Tuesday came Sergeant Weale
Looking for the boys who were in on the deal.
Three of them got very frightened
And Sergeant Weale very soon was enlightened.
A week or two later the summons came,
They had to go to Court for their little game.

Three of the boys had little wit
For on the others they would not split,
So they all had to go to Clyro Police Court.
These eleven boys all shaking with fear,
On 28th October they had to appear.
The Chair of the Bench (George Davies) said
That it was all very silly, but fine them he must
To the tune of eight shillings per head.
He said "I hope it will not break the bank"
And sent them home following their little prank.
They left the Court feeling very pleased
To have been just fined and then released,
But Austin said "I brought 10 bob to pay my fine"
So it was to the Baskerville Arms
To celebrate and have a good time.

Footnote:

What high jinx the young men of Painscastle got up to in those times! I have been told that Herbert Harris did not want to take these lads to court as he did the threshing on some of their farms and he didn't want to lose this work. He was also a carpenter by trade and had said that he could soon make a new shaft for the trap.

However, it seems that Sergeant Weale had other ideas and said that he would take them to court as he had had trouble with them before and it would teach them a lesson once and for all.

A fine of 8 shillings each (11 of them) was quite a sum of money back then.

Who's who of those mentioned:

- Allan Lloyd, Pendre, Painscastle, (Roy's dad). I have spoken to Roy and he remembers his father telling this tale. Does anyone else have any memories of this story or better still have an original copy?
- The Stephens brothers, Robert (Bob) & Austin were from Trewyrlod, Painscastle.
- Herbert Harris was from Crossway, Clyro.
- Fred Edwards – possibly/probably from Church House, Bryngwyn.
- Tom Abberley - said to have been at The Hom – verified by Arthur Nicholls.
- Chair of the Bench Alderman George R Davies was from Llowes Court.
- Seargeant John Amos Weale was stationed in Glasbury. When on the beat in Painscastle he often called at New House, Painscastle for a cuppa, my Grandpa Septimus Lloyd being a Special Constable. Cherry Williams

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POEM

The background to the poem is, in 2003 I was backpacking around Australia. I was at a Polocrosse tournament near Perth in Western Australia and I was introduced to a farming couple who needed help on their horse and sheep farm. I bundled my backpack into their horse truck and 5 hours later found myself at Dorset Downs.

I spent two months there working with their young horses, and when it came to shearing time, I found out what hard work really is!

Vanda, their dog, was my buddy and friend. When it was time for me to leave, I had nothing to give them to thank them for their hospitality and so I wrote this poem about Vanda and that was my thank you gift.

Just like Mikey, Vanda was a real character and he made every day there special.

The Shepherd

(by Noleen Harper)

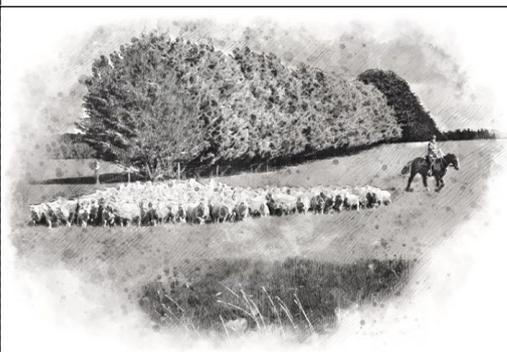
Allow me to introduce myself
Evander Hollifield is my name
I live on Dorset Downs
And shepherding is my game

Now you may think it is easy
Herding sheep into a pen
But let me assure you otherwise
Some days I work from dawn
to ten pm

The missus, she wakes me
with brekkie
And later she'll give me a holler
The sound of the quad bike
starting
Is my cue I must earn my dollar

Out into the fields we muster
If I'm lucky I hitch a ride
But sometimes missus goes by horseback
And I have to run alongside

Now sheep, let me tell you, are stupid
One brain is shared in the flock
They take one look at me and the missus



And the bloody
lot of them run
amok

Some run off to
the left
And some run
off to the right
And there's
little me in the
middle

Wondering what
I did that made
them take flight

The missus she yells at me then
'Vanda sit down you bloody fool'
But it is hard to stay calm and collected
When surrounded by a whirlwind of wool

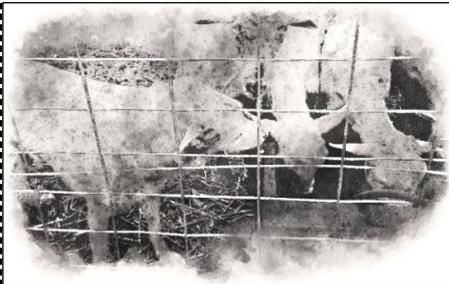
So off to the left I dart
Then scamper to the right, as fast as I can
And all the stray sheep are back in the flock
And missus has lifted my sitting ban

They all scurry on up the pad-
dock
With me hot on their heel
And should any try to escape
They soon learn my teeth can
make their flesh peel

Now it is not in my nature to be
nasty
But some sheep have just never
learned
And when the missus is not
looking
I take a quick nip whilst her
head is turned

All the running makes me
thirsty
And hot needless to say
I take time out to hop in a trough
And cool off in the heat of the day

But there is no rest for the wicked
And it is straight back to work for me
I am told to get the sheep in the shed



The shearers are
there, waiting and
ready

'Speak up' shouts
the missus from the
sideline
Her tone tells me it
is a command
It is now that I must
start barking

For my voice is in demand

'Move on up the line' I bark loudly
To ears that are deaf and not listening
Then one stupid sheep turns to eye me
And perhaps she sees the saliva glistening

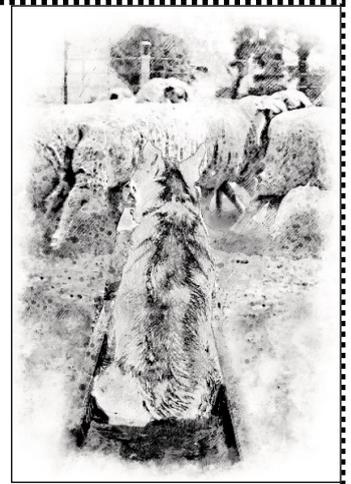
She turns and runs like a madwoman
And heads full speed for the shed
And all the other 776 fools follow her
It is almost as if they have but one head

The rest of the day is sat guarding
For escape they would if they could
But I am on call by the missus and shearers
To herd sheep if they think I should

I love my job as shepherd
And would not change it for all the bones
And when I pass from here to beyond
I've left my legacy in many homes

For look around the area
And you will see many a familiar eye
When I wasn't herding sheep
I was giving the local lassies a good try!!!

In memory of
Vanda



CULINARY COLUMN

Drovers Rest, Dorstone.

As life returns to the new normal, we all have to adjust to a new pace of life. It would be useful if everyone wore a colour coded badge to indicate their desired level of social distancing: it would save a lot of awkward situations. If you are a level green then I will feel free to reach around you in Aldi to get to the apples, but if you are red then I will give the apples a generous 4m wide berth.

Within extended families, balancing everyone's social distancing requirements is a challenge. When my parents came to stay they were breaking out of 4 months of shielding and so were understandably anxious. We suggested Sunday lunch out but it was with some trepidation that they accepted. However, Drovers Rest satisfied all requirements.

This lovely cluster of barns and holiday cottages is a glamp site with safari tents, and has also branched out in the last few months to serve food to the general public. We chose to visit for Sunday lunch, but there are also curry, pizza and barbeque nights, where the food is all served in a light airy barn with the doors open to the glamping field. The atmosphere is lovely and relaxed with the owner's 12 year old daughter taking drinks orders, and even the dog was warmly welcomed.

Sunday lunch is served as a set menu and comes with tray-loads of roasted meat, roasted vegetables and potatoes. You serve yourself at the table, and there is plenty to go round. The meat was beef and chicken, and sausages wrapped in bacon. The beef had been vacuum packed and slow cooked for 24 hours in a water bath at 70 degrees, before being roasted in a wood fired oven. It was melt in the mouth. The vegetables had been predominantly grown in their own garden, and were boiled up in large pots on an open fire. The fresh peas in particular tasted just like summer. Pudding came on another big tray with individual pots of chocolate mousse with a piece of chocolate brownie hidden at the bottom. It was the perfect amount of sweetness to end a Sunday feast.

With such a relaxed atmosphere, it was lovely to be able to wander round the farmyard and see the three day old Shetland pony foal and an assortment of poultry. There is a tremendous amount of work put into this business, and the owners give off fantastically laid back vibes, although I am sure that they are like elegant swans really with their feet paddling madly underwater. Everything about this glamp site was impressive, from the smart bathroom block with a shower room for each safari tent, to the wonderfully chatty gardener in charge of tending the kitchen garden. We left feeling very full of lovely food, but also full of positivity from being well looked after and having such a lovely afternoon.

Food **** Service *** Value **** Atmosphere *****

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Chocolate Brownie Mousse trifle

This is a great pudding for children to make and eat, and is a true Willy Wonka chocolate extravaganza.

Ingredients:

Brownies

200g (7oz) Cadbury Bournville dark chocolate, chopped

45g (3 tbsp) unsalted butter

2 eggs

2/3 cup granulated white sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

1/4 cup plain (all-purpose) flour

1/4 tsp baking powder

Chocolate Mousse

200g (7oz) Cadbury Bournville dark chocolate, chopped

4 eggs, separated

2 tbsp caster (super-fine) sugar

225ml double (heavy) whipping cream

Get Ingredients Powered by Chicory

Method:

To make the brownie base, grease and flour an 8-inch square pan and set aside.

In the microwave, melt the butter and chocolate in 1 minute increments. Whisk until smooth and allow to cool to room temperature.

Using an electric mixer, beat eggs, sugar and vanilla until thick and pale – about 10-15 minutes.

Fold in flour, baking powder and melted chocolate. Mix to combine. Set aside for 10 minutes to allow the batter to thicken.

In the meantime, preheat oven to 180°C, 350°F, Gas Mark 4.

Pour batter evenly into the square pan helping it along into the corners if need be, and bake in the oven for approx. 20-25 minutes.

Allow to cool completely in the pan then transfer to a large bowl. Using a fork, crumble the brownies into a mixture of small and medium sized crumbs then place the crumbs in each trifle or dessert bowl, approx. 1/4-1/3 full.

To make the chocolate mousse, cut the chocolate into small chunks and place in a microwave safe bowl. Microwave in 30 second intervals until the chocolate has completely melted. Take care not to burn the chocolate. Allow to cool a little, then add the egg yolks, one at a time until fully incorporated.

In a separate bowl, whisk the 4 egg whites until they start forming peaks. Add the sugar and continue whisking until stiff peaks form. In another bowl, whisk the cream until soft peaks form.

Add the chocolate/yolk mixture to the cream in three stages until fully mixed, and fluffy.

Using a big metal spoon or a spatula, fold in the egg whites into the cream/chocolate mixture until incorporated.

Pour or spoon the chocolate mousse over the brownie crumbs until almost full then top with white and milk chocolate curls.

Or whatever else you fancy.

Place the desserts in the fridge for at least 3 hours to set, and enjoy.

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HERMON CHAPEL RHOSGOCH

ALL SERVICES EVERY SUNDAY AT 2.30pm
Sun Oct 25th Joint service at Moriah

MORIAH BAPTIST CHAPEL, LLANDEILO GRAAN

All being well, we will be having our first service at Moriah on Sunday 20th September at 2.30pm

The next service will be the Joint service with Rhosgoch and Painscastle on October 25th (that's provided there are no more restrictions)

EBENEZER CHAPEL, NEWCHURCH

Sunday September 13th 3 pm
Sunday October 11th 3 pm Harvest
Sunday November 1st 3 pm
Sunday December 13th 3 pm Carol Service

PAINSCASTLE VILLAGE HALL

As you are all aware, since the lockdown started, and in accordance with Government Guidelines, the Village Hall has been closed. However, as the rules have started to ease, the Hall Committee recently held a socially distanced meeting to discuss the possibilities of reopening. After assessing the practicalities, we came to the conclusion that the layout of the Hall will make it exceptionally difficult to reopen safely while maintaining the 2-metre social distancing requirement so, for the moment, the Hall will remain closed.

On a more positive note, the Village Hall funds were recently bolstered by the receipt of a Covid-19 related grant from Powys Council. We have therefore decided to use these funds, together with some of our retained funds, to carry out essential repairs and generally improve the décor during the time while the Hall is out of use. At the recent meeting a number of suggestions were made including dealing with the damp issue; replastering the walls; painting throughout; improving the kitchen and toilets; and, better utilising the space we have. We have started to contact suppliers and trades to obtain quotes for the work but, before we go any further, we would really welcome the input from all readers of the Gossip. Our current funds don't allow us to carry out really large-scale projects and, as a result of the economic effects of Covid, access to grants for capital projects is currently limited. Therefore, we would really like to know:

What repair and refurbishment work do you think we should carry out at the moment?

Looking longer term, if we were able to obtain a large capital grant to completely redevelop the Village Hall from, for example, The National Lottery, what would you like to see included in the project?

Please send any comments and suggestions to any of the following:

Geraint Lloyd (01497 851740) gezlundy@gmail.com

Meg Lloyd (01497 851247) meg_171@yahoo.co.uk

Wayne Mathews (01497 851754)

wayne_mathews@talk21.com

Sian Davies sianpowell87@hotmail.co.uk

ERWOOD & PAINSCASTLE CHURCHES

Church Services

Sunday 13th September	14th Sunday after Trinity
10:30am Llandeilo Graban	Eucharist
Sunday 20th September	15th Sunday after Trinity
10:30am Bryngwyn	Eucharist
Sunday 27th September	16th Sunday after Trinity
10:30am Aberedw	Eucharist
Sunday 4th October	Outdoor Harvest Celebration
2:30pm Llandeilo Graban (Weather Permitting)	
Sunday 11th October	18th Sunday after Trinity
10:30am Llandeilo Graban	Eucharist
Sunday 18th October	19th Sunday after Trinity
10:30am Bryngwyn	Eucharist
Sunday 25th October	Last Sunday after Trinity
10:30am Gwenddwr	Eucharist

We are still taking a cautious approach to opening for Church services in the Erwood and Painscastle group.

For September and October, we are continuing each month with one situated in the middle of the churches, one in the Painscastle group and one in the Erwood group.

We are meeting in Llandeilo, Bryngwyn, Aberedw and Gwenddwr.

At the moment these churches are able to be readily maintained with respect to the regulations and have the space for safe social distancing.

Hopefully we may be able to open up more of our churches in the future.

However, it is quite a responsibility and people, though willing, cannot always be available for the necessary cleaning and monitoring. Who knows what the winter will bring - things may change anyway.

Safety is still so important - so less has to be more at the moment. It is lovely for us all to meet but remember - there is no pressure to attend - please go on your instinct.

In some respects, the year has passed so quickly. As regulations have eased, I hope that you have been able to spend some precious time with those you love.

Continued blessings be with you all at this strange time.

God keep you safe and well.

Fr. Paul and Carolyn. XX

catherine hughes

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Isolation Diary

So where was I - ah yes it is Today! Nothing to do today so I am desperate and therefore will do the ironing while watching Father Brown. I have always planned to do Mastermind with a Specialist Subject of Alcoholic Drinks. This plan has now morphed into either Hercule Poirot, Jane Marple, Father Brown, Lewis, Endeavour or the Barnaby family of Midsomer! At the moment Hercule is just nosing ahead. This expansion of my knowledge of these topics is due to the multiple repeats available during lockdown!

Oh dear - I have not mastered the Pilates roll up although my piano playing has improved, but only slightly.

Our beautiful Cherry Blossom has been in bloom for about a week - but with the wind beginning to pick up we shall soon have cherry blossom 'confetti' all over the lawn.

The House Martins have returned and are building their nests in the eaves of the house. We will soon have lots of little messages all over the patio! We have noticed plenty of nests in the garden trees and shrubs and Kites circling above the garden. A family of rabbits live in the garden and we see the baby out and about quite a lot; the dogs have a new sport trying to catch it. This lock down has given us the opportunity to notice and to appreciate so much more around us. And tonight, May 5/6, there will be an meteor shower which should be visible in our clear skies.

We haven't spotted a Buzzard nest in the trees opposite the house yet, as in most years a nest is visible from our bedroom. Our trusty old friend, the late John Abberley, explained to us that Buzzards return to the same nesting site for 3 years and then move on. But we always have a Buzzard family visiting each year but in different nests every 3 years. But none so far this year. They must be self isolating!

May 7th Great excitement today as we have had a new oil tank installed. The old one had started to leak just after the latest delivery of oil! So HOORAY - who would have thought that we would have been so uplifted by the arrival of an oil tank.

May 9th - Saturday morning is bed changing day and I quickly stripped the bed for washing while the weather holds. Mel helps me make the bed as my arthritic fingers and hands are a problem. While we were doing this the post had arrived and Mel told me it had been delivered by a leprechaun — well the funny farm is closer than I thought!!!! What next I wonder—superman, gnomes, fairies, barber shop quartet?

Today the last bits required to make cushions from my damaged Welsh blanket arrived - delivered by leprechaun of course. I have no excuse not to get on with the cushion making.

Today is Blursday, half past May. Not much going on - We now have different days. Wednesday is definitely Wednesday as it is Sainsbury delivery day. All other days are today, yesterday and tomorrow or otherwise Blursday.

Rocco has had a hair cut - lucky boy! My hair is just becoming that shade of guano which is more like pigeon droppings!!!! and it has grown so that I look like Wurzel Gummidge. A very good look - like an ageing scarecrow.

Pilates on Wednesday morning was interrupted by the arrival of a House Martin in the bedroom. It missed its own front door and come in through the window. Rocco tries to join in Pilates but I am afraid either Mr or Mrs House Martin was not interested and eventually flew out into the landing and downstairs, with a little bit of help, and then out the front door. Mail was delivered today by a Penguin.

Some of you will have heard of my Too Good For Guests drinks cupboard, aka the bread oven, in Llewetrog Hall. This cupboard houses spirits and champagne which are restricted to our personal consumption only. We also have a Wine Store - also too good for those guests who do not appreciate fine

wines!!!! Last week we opened and enjoyed a very fine Brouilly 2003 and this week an excellent Pouilly-Fumé 2008.

Disaster strikes - hearing aid has stopped working!!!!!! Desperate for a repair, I was offered; a postal service which would take up to 3 weeks; wires to be sent to me to repair the faulty hearing aid myself - no way; OR, a visit to one of Boots Hearing Centres, either Swansea or Llandudno.

So off I drive to Swansea! It took 1.5 hours for my driving and so 1.5 hours back. My appointment at the hearing centre took 5 minutes. But HOORAY I can hear again.

More excitement when we had an additional radiator fitted to the sitting room. Good heavens - such excitement and entertainment. The next day post was delivered by a cowboy.

Had my haircut and coloured - goodbye grey 'Mallen streaks' and hello more like normal hair. What an uplifting experience.

Even more drama— Mel had been experiencing pains in his chest for a few days. It must have been serious since he spoke to the nurses at the surgery. He was given an appointment that morning and off we went to the surgery in Hay. I waited outside in the car as Mel went in for his appointment wearing his trusty mask. He must've been there for about 2 hours during which time I listened to the radio and twiddled my thumbs. Eventually I went into the surgery to find him sitting on a bed fully clothed for the outside world waiting for an ambulance to take him to Neville Hall, aka Neville Hell or Evil Hall. I went back to my car to discover that the battery was flat - holy moly - I was stuck outside the surgery and without a working phone. Went back in to borrow Mel's phone and called the RAC rescue service. Off Mel went to Abergavenny once the ambulance had arrived but now without his phone. Two hours later the rescue service arrived and fixed my battery. Mel remained at Neville Hell for 4 days for various tests, including a visit to the Heath Hospital at Cardiff.

Eventually I was able to collect him but a long road works managed to delay the collection time. What a nightmare this had all been but at last he was home with a prescription to ensure that the chest pains did not return and strict instructions to take it easy!

Today there was a very loud and excited dog noise, eventually traced to a corner of the garden next to a shed. Rocco and his pals found a family of hedgehogs and were getting really excited and they scared the poor hedgehogs. Mel to the rescue and the little family - there were six- were carried off in a dustbin lid to the safety of the field just over the lane. More hedgehogs appeared the next day but we weren't sure if they were the same ones returning - you know they all look alike. We did find another adult which was whisked away in the dustbin lid to join the others and so far no further visits!

I didn't realise that making jam was so easy. I decided to use fruits from the garden rather than waste them. Made delicious blackcurrant jam but, since I can't eat jam, I donated them to other worthy causes.

Rocco has had his second haircut and looks very handsome even if a bit bald.

So life is beginning to return to a different 'normal'. I still have not mastered the Pilates roll up and my piano playing has not improved. I have always considered that having a structure to your life was a healthy way to live. This, together with focussing on the next task ahead, has helped me to survive these strange times. I do need a diversion regularly so I usually have 2 projects on the go at the same time. Or I can fit in a crossword or pilates to keep me entertained! I am thankful that we live in such a quiet and peaceful place with lots of good neighbours and friends. And in a house that allows 2 people to live separately when necessary. So Isolator's Diary is now closed.

Carole Gibbs

POWYS PRATTLES

by County Councillor James Gibson-Watt

What a topsy-turvy world we live in. Not much seems to make sense and no doubt the coronavirus pandemic has been at the root of that 'topsy-turviness'. Across many countries, including Wales, the biggest silver lining to the pandemic's dark cloud has been the revival of community cohesiveness, something we all want to sustain. But in others, such as the USA and Belarus, the result has been the opposite – anger and often fatal division that threatens the fabric of their societies. While we may watch those distressing scenes and think 'thank goodness I live where I do', we none of us know what stresses and strains the coming winter may bring if it also brings an increase in Covid-19 infections and localised lockdowns.

More evidence of the 'topsy-turvy' has been abundant since the 'lockdown' was eased. While our country towns and local tourist spots have been packed with visitors, road traffic is heavy again and our kids and young people are returning to school and college, the community activities that are so important to our quality of life and social life still cannot happen. Demand for properties in rural areas like ours has boomed while many inner-city areas have been described as ghost-towns, to the extent that the UK Government has felt the need to strongly encourage people to 'get back to your workplace'. Given that so many people have discovered that internet technology has made suffering a long, expensive and uncomfortable commute back and forth to work unnecessary, one wonders if many people will take any notice. Their employers have discovered that their staff productivity has actually increased since they started working from home! Goodness me, why do we need all those expensive offices they say, paying exorbitant rent and rates?

Similarly, as a county councillor, I and my council colleagues have not been to a meeting in County Hall since early March. Many council office staff are still working from home. Yet we have developed ways of working and holding meetings on-line that makes me wonder whether Powys county councillors ever will need to trek to and from County Hall, some of them over vast distances, to attend meetings. The downside is that access for the public to council offices for advice and support is still restricted. On the health front, many people would say that the change to the way our GPs operate has gone too far, with a reliance on telephone and on-line consultations still restricting patients' access to face-to-face consultations. While GPs themselves have welcomed the ability these changes have given them to reach more patients and reduce waiting times, they too worry a lot about the risks of misdiagnosis. All these changes have far-reaching consequences.

At least for now we have some return to normality, with pupils returning to school, which is so important for their well-being and future life chances, even if the way schools will have to operate has an element of the topsy-turvy about it!

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

Chairman, David Nicholls, Castlefield Close
Vice-chairman, Sian Powell, Lletycoed
Jenny Smith, Penrhiw
Becky Miles, The Cwm
Iris Lloyd, Caemawr
Andrew Ritchie, Castle Brook
Bruce Evans, Lower Pentre

Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of the month.
Agendas and minutes for meetings are posted on the notice boards in Painscastle, Rhosgoch and Llandeilo Graban.
Clerk: Marion Hughes, Waun y Pentre 01497 851628
Minutes are also on the Painscastle-Rhosgoch website:
www.painscastle-rhosgoch.co.uk

ASSEMBLY NEWS

It is always pleasing when local organisations are successful in gaining funding from the National Lottery to improve their services and the lives of local people. So, I am delighted that the National Lottery Community Fund has awarded £7,100 to the Radnor Federation of Young Farmers Clubs (YFCs) to upgrade its Llandrindod Wells HQ toilet and hand-washing facilities, provide additional seating and funds for extra cleaning costs following the COVID-19 outbreak, and to boost the publicity budget for all Radnor YFCs. Meanwhile, Presteigne Festival of Music and the Arts will receive a £5,990 grant to run a creative writing project, reaching people impacted by the isolation and loneliness caused by the pandemic.

YFCs and initiatives like the Presteigne Festival make major contributions to the quality of life and strength of our communities and enhance people's skills and self-confidence. As we rebuild our economic, social and cultural lives after the pandemic, they and organisations like them will be more important than ever. I congratulate all those involved in securing the grants.

I know very well that access to high speed broadband is an issue which is still frustrating to many constituents and, with so many more of us working from home, it has now become a necessity. I am aware that residents in Painscastle are looking into the viability of the Community Fibre Partnership for the village. More information can be found at communityfibre.openreach.co.uk. It is worth anyone who does not have access to fibre broadband registering on this website. If this is something that communities wish to pursue, then there are grants available to help towards the cost, up to £3000 for each home that is able to connect and up to £7000 for each small business.

At the beginning of August, the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs launched a consultation seeking views on proposals for agricultural support for Welsh farmers, from 2021. The proposals seek to put in place an interim framework following the UK's exit from the European Union and in advance of the transition to the proposed Sustainable Farming Scheme. The future of Welsh agriculture is of utmost importance to our communities. Please read the consultation and make your views known. The consultation will close on 23 October 2020 and can be accessed at: <https://gov.wales/sustainable-farming-and-our-land-simplifying-agricultural-support>

Finally, the viral transmission of COVID-19 thankfully appears to remain low and stable in Wales, but we have seen an increase in cases in other UK nations, in Europe and in other parts of the world. The priority this month for the Welsh Government is the safe and successful reopening of schools in Wales, from the start of September, building on our successful experience in June and July. I would like to wish anyone returning to school, or starting a new school, all the very best and hope that you enjoy seeing your friends and teachers, and resuming face to face learning. Please contact me anytime at Kirsty.Williams@senedd.wales or on 01874 625739 if I can be of assistance.



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NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER

September to me feels like a breath of fresh autumn air. The world is turning and after the warmth of the summer back at home, it's time to get back to the office.

Slowly – too slowly – the cloud of Covid is beginning to lift. Students are going back to school and people are getting back to work. Even sport is returning; as an avid cricket fan, I've spent the summer keeping my eye on the series between Pakistan and the West Indies. Visitors are back in Mid Wales, enjoying a tasty dinner out thanks to the Chancellor's inventive Eat Out To Help Out scheme. Life is starting to look a bit more like it used to.

I used the summer break to get out and about in the constituency and meet as many business owners as I could. One highlight was meeting the Williams Coaches who operate the cream and brown coach company which runs throughout the constituency. The entire Coach industry has been hit hard by Covid – both by the resulting fall in coach tourism and by the school closures. With no children to take to school, Williams's coaches are parked up in their forecourt in Brecon. Following our meeting, I met with the Department for Transport to put pressure on them to support firms like Williams and I will continue to do so. It's imperative that local firms are given every possible support.

The Welsh Government could of course support firms like Williams if it chose to do so. It could implement the same scheme that the UK Government has created in England where local authorities are provided with specific funding to help children get to school. However, instead we have seen school routes cut – meaning that students cannot travel to college in Hereford or Merthyr Tydfil. Once again, the Labour Government in Wales turns its back on rural areas.

Another business ignored by the Labour administration in Cardiff is the Fedw Equestrian Centre in Trecastle. The owners contacted me in despair when they were told by the Welsh Government that their enormous outdoor shed was classed as an indoor gym and so unable to reopen for two months. When we were finally able to get the site reopened, I was delighted to invite the Prime Minister to join me on a visit there in August. On the day, he met the owners who have invested heavily in their businesses after diversifying their livestock farm. The Prime Minister also met with the local vet and tried his hand at shoeing a horse – with some expert help from the local farrier.

Welcoming the Prime Minister to Brecon and Radnorshire (the second time in a year) was a real highlight for me. It emphasised the importance of the United Kingdom and how the 'broad shoulder' of the Union is helping us weather the Covid storm. Throughout the pandemic, the UK Government has made £4 billion available to the Welsh Government. But this money never seems to make it out of Cardiff – earlier in the summer, I argued for the Royal Welsh Show to be given support but, despite a £59 million cheque from the Government, there is still nothing for Europe's premier agricultural event.

However, I won't give up. This time of year always gives me a fresh spring in my step. I'm back in Westminster this year with shiny new shoes and a fresher determination to fight for a better deal for rural areas like ours.

After a long closure, we are at last reopening the office in Llandrindod Wells. However, to ensure staff are safe, we will need to keep our doors locked and only admit those with an appointment. Please do get in touch if you would like to arrange a meeting or to discuss anything by virtual surgery.

I can be reached on Office 029 2233 8545 Mob 07515034124 or Email Fay.Jones.MP@parliament.uk Please stay safe. Fay Jones Member of Parliament for Brecon and Radnorshire

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Thursday Oct 15th Emma [2020]
Thursday Oct 29th Official Secrets
Thursday Nov 12th Little Women [2019]
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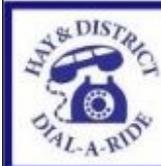
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PAINSCASTLE RECYCLING & RUBBISH COLLECTION

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Sept 28th Oct 19th Nov 9th Nov 30th

Garden waste is collected every fortnight on Tuesdays from March to November for an annual fee, next collections:

Sept 15th Sept 29th Oct 13th Oct 27th



FAY JONES MP

Member of Parliament for Brecon and Radnorshire

The constituency office is now open with social distancing guidelines in place. Surgeries, telephone calls and virtual meetings are by appointment only.

To make an appointment please email me or call my office.

Keep in touch!

Constituency Office
Leamington House
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Powys
LD1 5DU

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Gloucester in 1175, when Henry II confirmed Welsh rule with Einion and Cadwallon each pledging 500 marks to the Crown for recognition of their rights in Elfael and Maelienydd.

Relationships between the two brothers were clearly fractious at times: in 1160, Cadwallon had seized Einion, sent him prisoner to Owain Gwynedd, ruler of Gwynedd, who in turn transferred Einion to the Anglo-Norman Marcher lords, who imprisoned him in Whittington Castle. Einion, however, managed to escape. In 1177, when Einion Clud was killed by unnamed Normans, his brother seized all his lands. Cadwallon, though, survived for only a further two years. In 1179, whilst returning from the English Court with a safe conduct, Cadwallon was set upon and slain by the adherents of Roger Mortimer of Wigmore (d.1214). Control of Elfael reverted to a son of Einion Clud – Einion o’r Porth (d.1191), who was one of the Welsh princes who met Archbishop Baldwin and Gerald of Wales at Radnor in 1188 at the start of their tour of Wales to recruit soldiers for the crusade to recapture Jerusalem.

Sibling conflict opens the way for Anglo-Norman Conquest

By 1190, the Welsh of Elfael and Maelienydd were at their most powerful, but after Einion o’r Porth was killed by one of his brothers in 1191, a period of inter-family feuding and violence started. At the same time, the reign of the crusading king, Richard the Lionheart, saw a change in royal policy towards Wales. When the Anglo-Normans launched a Crown-sponsored Marcher attack into Wales in 1195, the invasion in the central Marches was led by Roger Mortimer (d.1214), Hugh Say of Richards Castle (d.1197), and the de Braose family of William (d.1211), his wife Maud St Valery (d.1210) and their son, William (d.1210). It was probably Maud who led the forces that approached Painscastle in 1195, where she was credited with slaughtering the Welsh, rebuilt the castle and renamed it Castell Maud. Within a year, though, Lord Rhys of Deheubarth led the fightback. He captured Colwyn (Glan Edw) in upper Elfael, burning the castle before moving on to sack Radnor, then defeated a Marcher army between Radnor and Painscastle.

Lord Rhys laid siege to Painscastle, forcing it to surrender but then came to an agreement with William de Braose – William agreeing to withdraw from his attack on Ceredigion and Lord Rhys withdrawing from Painscastle. Soon after, in April 1197, Lord Rhys was struck down by the plague, quickly followed by Maelgwn ap Cadwallon of Maelienydd and other Welsh nobles of the region. As the sons of Lord Rhys began to fight bitterly amongst themselves for the spoils of their father’s principality, the Marcher Lords prepared to strike back again.

First, though, in 1198 Gwenwynwyn ab Owain (d.1216), prince of southern Powys, in an attempt to fill the gap in national leadership of the Welsh, led an army into Elfael to besiege the de Braose troops in Painscastle. To the astonishment of the chroniclers he did so without siege engines or catapults, thus



An effigy, now placed in New Radnor Church, which could be of Einion o’r Porth, ruler of Elfael 1179–91 © Philip Hume



Colwyn Castle probably built by William de Braose (d.1211) to replace the castle at Glan Edw. © Paul R Davis

the siege dragged on for three weeks. The king’s justiciar, Geoffrey fitz Peter (d.1213), led a force to relieve the siege inflicting a crushing defeat on the Welsh, with substantial numbers killed, including many members of the Welsh ruling families of Elfael and Maelienydd.

Painscastle and southern Elfael remained in the hands of the de Braose family, though Elfael Uwch Mynydd to the north remained under Welsh control – but not for long. In 1200, King John granted to William de Braose the right to conquer what he could from the Welsh to increase his barony of Radnor – a license possibly to regain the old Tosny lands in northern Elfael, which it appears that he accomplished. At the height of his power, William de Braose held Colwyn and Painscastle castles, and thus all Elfael, by right of conquest from the Welsh to the exclusion of the former Tosny lords. He probably started the construction of Colwyn Castle to replace the castle that had been destroyed at nearby Glan Edw.

Philip Hume

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RHOSGOCH TO CAMBRIDGE

At Rhosgoch Primary School I never excelled academically. I had appalling handwriting, a rambling ultra-descriptive writing style (please see a number of Gossip articles I wrote at the time) and a tendency to zone-out when teachers were speaking.

Nevertheless, on results day I was fortunate enough to find myself on the right side of the government's algorithm, having achieved 4 A*s at A-level and securing my place to read law at the University of Cambridge. Clearly, a lot can change over the course of an education (handwriting aside).

The Cambridge selection process involved a self-aggrandising personal statement, nerve-racking interviews and a demanding aptitude test which I muddled through successfully with the right combination of hard-work and luck. Indeed, I nearly missed my first interview on account of a delicious full-English breakfast which was very nice and very nearly clashed with my interview slot. In any case I got in, and am now preparing to move to Cambridge this coming October.

Going to Cambridge University from a rural area was always going to be a daunting prospect, but this year the Covid-19 has added more nerves and uncertainty into the mix. The course has been tailored to minimise the spread of Covid-19 using "blended learning", which basically involves a mix of online lectures and face-to-face tutorials where possible. Similarly, participating in clubs and socialising looks set to be very different this year – even involving a digital freshers week. Regardless, I still hope to learn a lot from and enjoy my socially distanced university experience.

Mo, hope you don't have to spend too long editing this one and thanks for putting up with me all those years ago!

Lewis Ball
Congratulations Lewis, and also to older sister Morven who is going to study Medicine in Southampton later this month. Rhian, the eldest, has just started a Geography PGCE course in Worcester having graduated from Exeter University last year. It will soon be very quiet in the Ball household in Rhosgoch.

It is so nice to have news of ex-pupils of Rhosgoch School. Congratulations to Jade Davies (Aunt Edwina's granddaughter) who despite difficult conditions due to Covid 19 has gained her degree in English and Creative Writing at University of Wales (Lampeter). Well done Jade.



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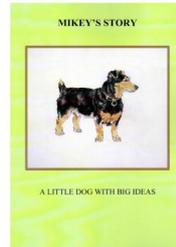
EDITOR'S NOTES

I hope you enjoy this edition of the 'Gossip'. Thanks to so many people who have sent contributions in during this difficult time. Please continue to send articles, news, etc, all comments are gratefully received. Deadline for next issue [Nov/Dec 2020] - 31st October 2020. [mlloydlyndy@outlook.com or 01497-851609].

It is good to see some things approaching the 'new normal' as the community provides support and encouragement for local people.

Articles are the opinion of the respective writers. All errors and omissions excepted (E&OE).

MIKEY'S STORY



MIKEY'S diaries are now published in book form. This is a record of an adventurous terrier and his family from 2007 to 2019. The book which is suitable for adults and children costs £8 or £10 if posted. All

profits will go to Painscastle Hall. For more information:

email: mlloydlyndy@outlook.com or
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In The Garden

The countryside has by now taken on a mature feel.

Colours are more subdued, yet to take on the rich tones of autumn. Those lucky enough to have had swallows this year may see them lining up, gossiping amongst themselves, ready to depart. Look out for mushrooms,



and perhaps colchicums. These can be seen in profusion in one field on the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust's Birches Farm reserve near Kington, and are an amazing sight.

In the garden, courgette mountains are beginning to subside, and the wonderful task of digging the maincrop taters beckons. Cutting the tops off a few days before lifting helps set the skin and aids storing. Those able to grow and harvest sweet corn can expect rewards now. It freezes very well and beats the tinned stuff anyway. Slice it off the cobs (always very freshly picked for maximum sweetness – the sugar turns to starch once cut) and freeze – no need for blanching.

Many of the later flowers are attractive to insects, such as the ice plant, Sedum Spectabile, which seems to be a particular magnet to Small Tortoiseshell butterflies. At the time of writing, it's been quite a good year for these, and indeed for butterflies in general.

Tree fruit now begins to come to harvest. The excitement of sinking your teeth into the first homegrown ripe apple is one of life's great pleasures. There's a wealth of varieties from which to choose.

Discovery is perhaps the best early. It's very resistant to disease, a reliable cropper, and the bright red fruit is a picture, delicious straight off the tree. Of the later cultivars, James Grieve seems to do well round here, as does the December maturing Ashmead's Kernel. There are many fascinating local varieties that have been saved by the Marcher Apple Network, a valuable source of information, although how palatable some of these are is perhaps debatable! Some do, perhaps, have the ability to crop well in less favourable, higher altitude situations. Buying from a specialist nursery ensures that you can get the right rootstock for your planting requirements. Bare root specimens are by far the best, and maiden trees – just one season's growth post-grafting – often get away almost as quickly as two or three year olds.

May the butterflies be with you.

John the Gardener

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Due to Covid there will be no Coffee Morning this year.

Jane Nicholls

HERMON CHAPEL NEWS

There's something about the Chapel. Maybe it's the atmosphere, a build up of generations of good people who come to pray, to celebrate, to mourn or just reach out to God for comfort and conversation. The Hermon Chapel at Rhosgoch is a humble building which has served thousands of local people since it opened in 1849. It is part of the Welsh Congregational Federation, an organisation that promotes the idea that it is the congregation that rules their place of worship.

In times like today's the Chapel is even more relevant as it seems often to be the only place where a person can find comfort in the face of adversity. Recently, lock-down has meant public meetings, including worship, have been banned. That has changed and under a strict set of guidelines it is now permissible to meet for worship. At Rhosgoch we are fortunate to have a minister who has long experience in health and safety. Rev. Geoff Cable has meticulously prepared the Chapel so that it is fully compliant with the regulations for both social distancing and required facilities such as hand sanitising and the provision of masks using the guidance of the Federation which is regularly updated with relevant legal information.

What does that mean to us Christians? Every Christian knows that they are in God's presence all of the time, but there is something about meeting together to pray, to sing hymns and to listen to a good sermon that makes a difference. The joy of fellowship is very fundamental to the way we worship. The pleasure of being with other Christians in the sight of God is profound - we know we are part of the same thing.

To replicate that togetherness has tested many worship leaders. We have been part of the cutting-edge of AV technology using the remarkably effective Zoom system. At one trans-Welsh gathering there were nearly 30 worshippers both online and using the telephone. In fact, some services are conducted using just telephones and these have proved very popular with rural congregations. Bethesda Chapel, in Hay on Wye, has created an excellent online range of activities including services that can be simply viewed over the internet and does not require participation other than viewing (go to the Rhosgoch and Painscastle community Facebook for more details). All of these ideas are excellent and allow the worshipper to be amongst their fellow believers, but they are not "the real thing" as they lack the pure pleasure of conversation and togetherness.

At our Chapel we have had a public service, open to all, for the last three weeks. During the service, every legal requirement is observed to make sure everybody there is safe. Composed of readings and prayers by individual members of the congregation, there is no singing or music played. Apparently singing helps to spread the virus, likewise for wind instruments such as our organ.

There is no need to book a place, we will be delighted to see you.

Mike Head, Deacon, Hermon Chapel

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RHOSGOCH AND PAINSCASTLE TOTS GROUP

It feels like a very long time since we last met for playgroup back in early March. We have missed playgroup so much. As schools return this month, we would love to say that Tots will be doing the same, but unfortunately we are unable to make plans to reopen for now, as it simply isn't safe enough to at this stage. In the meantime, our little people keep on growing, playing, exploring, and filling our days with a whole rainbow spectrum of emotions. This long time at home with small children and without the routine of playgroups and childcare is not always easy, so remember, be kind to yourself, you're doing a brilliant job! Playgroup we miss you! Keep well everyone.

Sarah Emmerson, Chair

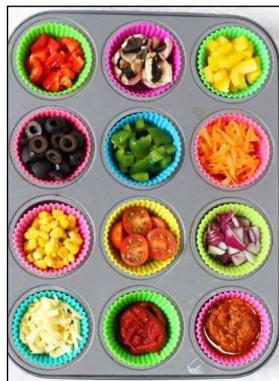


Contact Sarah Emmerson 07931701840 Facebook - Rhosgoch and Painscastle Toddler Group

Easy DIY Pitta Bread Pizza For Kids

INGREDIENTS

- Mini pitta or naan bread
- Pesto
- Tomato puree / tomato paste
- Any topping you like, including:
- grated cheese
- red onion
- tomatoes
- sweetcorn
- grated carrot
- green, red and yellow peppers
- olives and mushrooms



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line a muffin tray with silicone muffin cases or paper cases. Fill the cases with the pesto, tomato puree, cheese and veg-ies.
2. Place this tray onto the kitchen table or another surface, along with the pitta breads or naan breads and let the kids make their own pizzas.
3. Bake the pizzas on a baking or pizza tray in a preheated oven (180C / 350F) for 4 – 5 minutes.
4. Allow to cool for a couple of minutes before cutting and serving