

Rhosgoch Gossip

Volume 24 Issue 3

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£1

NEWS FROM RHOSGOCH MILL

The Mill is now encased in scaffolding, a definite sign that things are happening. Sections of the masonry have been repaired and the doors and windows have new lintels and sills.

Inside, the archaeologists have been looking for evidence of the earlier building on the same site - and what they have discovered is interesting.

In December, the existing floors were removed; flag-



The mill encased in scaffolding

stones were lifted from the front, as well as the concrete floor from the old kitchen. At the front of the house - the end that faces the road - they discovered two sections of flooring. One section looks like a farmyard or barn floor, the other, larger, section a domestic floor. At the mill end of the building, the archaeologist discovered a wall beneath the old kitchen floor, evidence that there were once two adjacent wheel pits. This means that there were once two mill wheels rather than the one that exists today.

This must be why the Mill (singular) was previously known as Rhosgoch Mills. Once the archaeologist had recorded everything, we were able to continue to excavate prior to laying a new floor throughout.

The carpenter is due to begin work on repairing the timber structures in the near future.

Janet Russell



Two older floors beneath the previous flagstones.

GARDENING CLUB

Photos from Rhosgoch Gardening Club Annual Dinner. Edwina Griffiths and Gaynor Price presenting Joan Hughes with the vase for the most points gained in the year.



February 14th is Penny Williams, a talk and slide show .

March 14th Dick Alford from Kington , ex policeman.

April 13th is our Easter bingo night at the Golf Club.



Rhosgoch Mill encased in scaffolding

YFC NEWS

After a busy few months of competitions and fund-raising it was time to have a bit of fun. We started with an afternoon clay pigeon shooting, kindly organised by Huw Morris. Everyone enjoyed themselves with a wide range of abilities having a go, the clays were re-usable after Aaron Nicholls' turn!

Moving on to the county pool and darts competition on home turf at Rhosgoch Golf Club, it was the first time in years that we haven't had the current county and national male darts champion, James Poulton, representing us. The Rhosgoch YFC competitors were well up to the task with all classes entered and Mollie Gibbons winning the women's darts competition and Charlie East winning the men's pool competition.

We then had an interesting talk from a local policeman about the legal requirements and the law regarding driving agricultural vehicles and towing trailers. It was a very successful evening with past and present members as well as the local community learning a lot and many questions to do with some grey areas were answered.

Next up a pantomime trip to Cardiff to watch the



Beauty and the Beast. Yet again, a big turn out with 53 of us young farmers and parents getting on a coach and venturing down to the capital. Christmas

shopping was done, mulled wine and hot chocolate tasted at the Christmas market and lots of booing and hissing at the panto. Due to the club's successful fund-raising, we were able to pay for the bus as a Christmas treat for the members' hard work over the last few months.

The last event on the 2018 calendar is the YFC



carol singing. We warmed our voices up on the first night in Painscastle and broke our voices on the second night in Rhosgoch. Everyone had fun and I'd like to thank everyone who invited us in for mince pies and mulled wine. I wasn't sure whether people were donating for the singing or to stop the singing; however, we raised a staggering £427 for St Michael's Hospice.

Thomas Lloyd

PONIES STRAY TO LLANBEDR HILL

Following reports that a herd of new horses had appeared on Llanbedr Hill and were posing a threat to riders and walkers, the Hill Graziers Association contacted Trading Standards with a view to resolving the issue. Only graziers with common rights are allowed to put animals on the hill. These rights are tied to the surrounding farms, and are an ancient right tracing back to before medieval times. Llanbedr Hill, part of Ireland Moor, has a long tradition of Welsh Mountain pony herds and the intrusion of non-native animals can pose a serious problem.

A group of 8 large ponies/small horses has been on the hill for a few months and their owners have not yet been traced. With the relatively mild weather up until now, they have not suffered too much, but there is concern for their welfare if the weather deteriorates. The hill was gathered on Saturday, January 26th and the ponies were checked and sorted; several other strays were identified. They have all been returned to the hill while further checks of ownership are carried out. If anyone has any information please contact the Graziers' secretary, Maureen Lloyd 01497-851609 or mlloydlundy@outlook.com.



FARM FOCUS

My haylage business was started back in 2004 following a conversation with my physio, Dave Smith. He was buying wrapped bales for his horse but couldn't get an all year round supply. As I already had all the hay making machinery, the purchase of a wrapper was all that was needed. A McHale mini wrapper was purchased; I sat at the controls while Dave and other press-ganged friends and family put the bales on and off pallets. 1500 bales that year grew to 2,500 the next.

In 2007 a self-loading Tanco 406 wrapper was purchased and this enabled me to do the whole process myself (other than the stacking), so bale numbers increased. Then, in 2010, I spotted a Tawi 100 twin spool wrapper on You Tube. Wrapping small bales in Europe is very popular. A call to Holland to Jan Gebrknoll, the manufacturer, with me playing the paraplegic Welsh hill farmer card, resulted in a deal. Now my wrapping speed doubled from 35 bales an hour to 75!

I have now up-graded that wrapper to a Tawi 250 which is slightly quicker and collects and drops the bales in threes. This

made things much easier as I can now pick up with a grab on a loader.

I am presently harvesting 130 acres, which includes 30 acres second cut; 70% are 3 to 5yr ryegrass leys and the remainder are meadow type. Production at present is 5000 small bales and 750 big 4 ft wrapped bales. Along with the haylage, I also sell 3000 bales of Burly Bed miscanthus bedding. All but 10% are delivered to customers within a 40-mile radius all year round by me.

From being in a wheel-chair in Oswestry Hospital 16 years ago to now, it's been quite a journey. Thanks to my physio Dave, thousands of green bales and some really great customers, I am walking on sticks. Every morning Helen enquires as to which of my horsey girlfriends I am having coffee with today. So, as well as becoming more mobile, I've got good at drinking coffee too!

Mark Haines



Thank You to Rhosgoch Golf & Leisure Club

A great night was enjoyed by all who attended the New Year's Eve party at the Golf Club. The Prize Draw was very well supported, and the money raised plus a donation from the Golf Club has been shared between Macmillan Cancer Support and Myeloma UK..

Each charity has received £180

Jane Nicholls and I, Trisha East, would like to say

THANK YOU to the Golf Club and all who bought tickets.

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LIG VISIT TO THE RADNORSHIRE MUSEUM

On a cold January morning, fourteen members of the Local Interest Group gathered for a visit to The Radnorshire Museum in Llandrindod Wells. We were greeted by Phillip Jones, who had come to talk to us in November about the men who had lost their lives in WW1. He introduced us to Will Adams, the curator of the Museum, who was to be our guide for the visit.

Will started by showing us around the ground floor. Here the museum has a large number of geological specimens, all collected from Radnorshire. The county is rich in fossils, mainly dating from 465-455 million years ago, which was the Ordovician period. He pointed out some fossil sponges, and we also saw brachiopods and a very large and impressive ammonite. In the same room, Will showed us a very important artefact, a Sheela-na-gig which came from the old

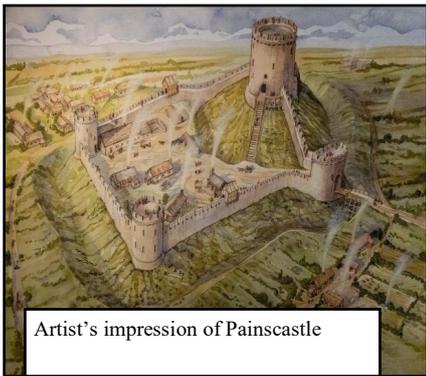


medieval parish church in Llandrindod, but which may at one time have been located somewhere else. It dates from the early Middle Ages

and is one of only three which have been found in Wales. It is incredibly well preserved.

Also in the downstairs galleries was a collection of items from Roman times. Close to Llandrindod, at a place now called Castell Collen, there are the remains of a large

Roman fort and the museum has a very good model of the site so that it is easy to appreciate the scale and layout. The adjoining room housed a very interesting computer simulation of the history of the Walton Basin. Although Will explained that this is



Artist's impression of Painscastle

a little dated in terms of the technology used, it is still well worth looking at as it explains all of the extremely important sites found in this archaeologically very rich area. All along one wall, in the same room, we were shown the Llandrindod Log Boat. This had been found in the River Ithon in the dry summer of 1929. Apparently, children had been using it as a diving board, blissfully unaware of its importance. Originally, it was assumed that the boat was from Roman times, but it has been dated using dendrochronology and found to be from about 1200. The boat was made from a single trunk of oak and it is a very impressive sight, though no-one knows why it was in the River Ithon, which is not a particularly big river. This last downstairs room also houses some interesting and old artefacts related to agriculture.

The large room upstairs accommodates quite a mix of items, including a display relating to the town's past function as an important spa. Another very impressive and important item in the museum's collection is a Welsh triple harp that belonged to a man called John Roberts, an accomplished harpist who had once played for Queen Victoria. It has recently been restored and sounds wonderful when it is

played. Close to this, there are two small paintings by a famous local artist from Trefonnen, Thomas Jones (1742-1803). The museum is extremely pleased to have these in its collection.

Moving on through this upstairs room, we saw some interesting displays about the natural history of Stanner Rocks, Llandeigley Rocks and Aberedw, Llanfair and Gwaunceste Hills. These focused particularly on the flora of these sites.

The last major display in this room is a large number of items on loan from the Kilvert Society's collection. This



proved of great interest to one of the members of our group; Evelyn Bally pointed out that one of the portraits was of her Great Grandmother, Mrs Henry Crichton, and another showed her Godmother's mother as a child.

Lastly, Will took us into the room housing the WW1 display that has been put together by Phillip Jones, and about which he had spoken when he came to talk to us. This is a most impressive display and represents the amazing amount of research and interpretation that went into putting it all together. There are many artefacts on display, but the most impressive items are probably the short biographies of many of the local men who lost their lives fighting for the freedom of our country. The aim is to record as many of these as possible.



The museum staff had very kindly laid on coffee and tea for us at the end of a most enjoyable and informative tour and we are most grateful to Will Adams for giving so generously of his time to show us around and for telling us so much about many of the items on display. As one of our members remarked, "the museum has something for everyone", and we can definitely recommend a visit. Many thanks also to Mo Lloyd who organised the trip for us; these visits would not happen without her!

A story, with some help from the Reverend Kilvert's Diary 1879

The late Richard East's grandmother was Elizabeth Gurmin (nee Hyde) born 1862 in Crafta Webb, Bredwardine. Richard's brother Syd was researching the East-Gurmin Family Tree; at the same time I was reading the third volume of Kilvert's Diary 1874-1879. I came across the name Hyde.



June 1st 1878

"Afternoon visited Joseph Gwynne and Sarah Lewis. I found poor unfortunate Bessie Hyde at home alone and spoke to her sadly and solemnly about her dreadful fall." - I said to Syd, maybe she had broken her leg and he

enlightened me. There was no trace or talk of a child in the family, but a record of Clara Hyde aged 5yrs at Bredwardine School, then nothing. Maybe she was adopted?

January 16th 1878

"Gave a lecture at Crafta Webb, Ester and Tom Hyde walked up with me, there were 23 at the lecture."

February 22nd 1878

"There was a notice in the Journal of me having seen two pretty little girls sweeping the room after school one named Apperley (a mistake no doubt for Abberley) the other named Hyde (a sister of Ester or perhaps Ester herself) mentioned the subject in class this morning and asked if any of the girls remembered my coming to school on that day, Lizzie Abberley said she recollected me and my visit."

March 22nd 1878

"Annie Abberley. I told Annie Abberley I had discovered that Lizzie and I were old friends 'yes she said when Lizzie came home from school and told me what you had told her, I reminded her of what she said 'years ago a gentleman had come into school one afternoon and found her and Elizabeth Hyde sweeping the room and how he had shown them the way to sweep and told to put their hats on or they would get their hair dusty."

April 9th 1878

"School, and there I missed one of my little lambs, dear, little Ester Hyde, and went up the mountains to find her."

June Day 1878

"After visiting Joseph Gwynne and Sarah Lewis, I found poor unfortunate Bessie Hyde at home all alone, and spoke to her sadly about her dreadful fall."

January 21st 1879

"I gave presents to choir boys. Knives to James Carver and Tom Hyde."

February 4th

"School. Visited Harper Carver and Emily Williams, Pricilla Price and Mary Hyde all ill."

1883

Bessie Hyde married George Gurmin in Handsworth Birmingham, had three children then moved to Woonton, Almeley and had five more children. Her husband was a blacksmith. Next to it she kept a village shop and Post Office (recorded in Kelly's Directory). The eldest boy George joined the army. He was killed at the Battle of the Somme 11-11-1916. Her Husband died 1924, Bessie died 1933. Both were buried in Almeley Church Yard .

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Quotes from The Strange Laws of Old England (Nigel Cawthorne).

Feudal Law

Until Henry III began to record and reorganise the laws of the land, the law was pretty much what those in power said it was. Under Saxon feudalism, lords ruled over the peasants with a rod of iron - for the slightest offence, a master or mistress might order a servant to be tortured or even beaten to death. For breaking a dish or spilling wine, a servant might have his or her ears cut off, nose slit or lose a hand, according to the whim of the lord or lady. While murderers and thieves could find sanctuary in a church, this privilege was not extended to servants, who could be dragged forcibly from the altar.

In Saxon times, a man could beat his wife without incurring a penalty and whipping slaves was thought of as no worse than whipping animals. A slave had no real value and would be mutilated or killed at his owner's pleasure.

Canute was the first King of England to introduce something like a code of law, including the law of 'Englishry'. After he invaded in 1014 he sent most of his troops back to Denmark so that 'the rest should be safe in life and limb ... any Englishman who killed any of them should suffer punishment. If a murderer could not be discovered, the township or hundred was fined.

William the Conqueror (1066-1087) preserved the Saxon legal system, including the courts of the shires and hundreds, as a way to control his barons, and an excellent means of collecting taxes.

During the Victorian era politicians were fond of passing new railways Acts, while nowadays there is legislation covering every aspect of motoring. But since the time of Queen Anne the form of transportation that has attracted the most legislation is the Hackney carriage—the good old black taxi. There have been over 37 Acts regulating the taxi in that time, and many of them are still in force.

The London taxi

It is, in fact, illegal to hail a cab while it is in motion - technically you should go to a rank or 'place appointed'. No other vehicle is allowed to park in a taxi rank which is required to have a water trough so the horses could take a drink.

The cabby is supposed to ask each of his passengers if they are suffering from any 'notifiable disease such as smallpox or the plague'. As carrying sufferers is illegal, he should carry out an on-the-spot medical examination and if the passenger were to pass away during the journey he would be committing another offence as it is illegal for a taxi driver to carry corpses or rabid dogs. The cabby is also required to carry out a thorough search of his vehicle before allowing a fare to go on its way—it is the cabby's responsibility, not the passenger's, to see that nothing is left behind.

The law requiring a cabby to carry a bale of hay on the roof of his cab to feed the horse was repealed in 1976, and they no longer have to carry a nosebag on the side of the vehicles or a sack of oats.

A cabby who drives too slowly or holds up the traffic can be prosecuted for 'loitering'; one who goes too fast can be prosecuted for 'furious driving'. And whether furious or not, it is expressly forbidden for a driver to make 'insulting gestures'.

Speed restrictions.

The Locomotives Act 1865 required that any vehicle—other than those which relied on animal power—travelling on the road should be preceded by a man on foot carrying a red flag at a distance of not less than 60 yards; any such vehicle should employ at least three people to drive it; a maximum speed of two miles an hour was allowed in town and four miles an hour in the country; and the vehicle had to stop instantly if a horse rider or the driver of a horse-drawn carriage raised their hand. The fine for any such offenses was a maximum of £10. These provisions were repealed for light vehicles in 1896 and the top speed was raised to 14 mile an hour. On 28th January 1896, Walter Arnold of East Peckham, Kent, became the first man to be prosecuted for speeding when he was caught doing eight miles an hour in a built-up area by a traffic policeman who pursued him on a bike. In 1903 the speed limit was raised to 20 miles an hours on the open road, ten in town. In an effort to crack down on reckless drivers, policemen were stationed behind hedges with stopwatches and bicycles.

Swearing

During the interregnum (1649 to 1660) swearing was banned, penalties being 30 shillings for a lord, 20 shillings for a baronet or a knight, 6s 8d for a gentleman and 3s 4d for 'all inferiors'; the fine was doubled for a second offence. Failure to pay up would earn the offender three hours in the stocks or, if they were under the age of 12, a whipping. For a tenth offence, the perpetrator, irrespective of rank or status, would be adjudged a 'Common Swearer or Curser' and be bound with 'sureties to good behaviour'. If the bad language continued the culprit's good and chattels would be seized and sold, any default in payment earning six hours in the stocks. Under a law of 1650, if a woman was arrested for swearing the penalty would have to be paid by her husband or, in the case of a widow or single woman, her father.



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Also required for charity are good handbags and shoes as well as old batteries, AAA, AA, C & D.

YFC are collecting old mobile phones. All these items can be put in the box in the bus shelter in Painscastle.

CULINARY COLUMN

The Boat Inn, Whitney-on-Wye

Christmas is over and here we are, fresh with promise at the start of a new year. Perhaps you have embraced a new healthy eating regime. Perhaps you are still wading through the last festive treats, because of course it is a well-known fact that before you start eating healthily you have to eat every last piece of nice food in the house- including all the children's chocolate. Unfortunately, eating healthily can make eating out rather dull. There is no point in going out for a meal to have to use cast-iron willpower and stick to a salad. You may as well eat a salad at home not surrounded by temptation. What you need is lots of protein and vegetables to fill you up, and that they taste so good that you won't even feel as though you are missing out.

Big portions are something that The Boat Inn at Whitney on Wye are very good at. The restaurant is overlooking the River Wye and is a beautiful spot in the daytime. At night it wasn't particularly busy, with quick and friendly service, and there is a bar next door which was reasonably lively on a Friday night. The place probably comes into it's own on a summer's afternoon when canoeists stop off for a bite to eat, and the river sparkles through the large windows. There is a wide variety of dishes on the menu but their excellent reputation locally is built on the size and quality of their steaks. I chose a sirloin cooked rare, and my Gentleman Friend chose a mixed grill. These arrived with mountains of chips and boiled potatoes, onion rings and vegetables. The mixed grill was like Noah's ark, with two of each cut of meat, and everything cooked very well. There was no chance of anyone going away hungry!

In the interest of healthy eating we had coffee and pudding at home, but there looked to be a very fine selection on offer. Often I find that puddings don't quite hit the spot; it would have had to be a very special pudding to top the steak as the lasting flavour. This is a place to return to in the summer, when healthy eating has probably been forgotten and we can have chips and a pint in the sunshine by the river.

Food ** Service *** Value **** Atmosphere ****
The Boat Inn, Whitney-on-Wye HR3 6EH. Telephone number 01497 831223.

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- 400g fat-free natural Greek-style yoghurt
- Zest of 1 orange
- Fresh raspberries to decorate

Method

- Melt the chocolate and stir until smooth.
- Sift the cocoa powder into a bowl, then mix the yoghurt and orange zest.
- Whisk the yoghurt mixture into the melted chocolate.
- Serve straight away, divided between 4 ramekins and decorated with fresh raspberries.



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CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations and best wishes to Elizabeth Bowkett and Gavin Stephens on the birth of a baby girl Elsie Ann Stephens on 18th December 2018. A first grandchild for Geoffrey and Yvonne Bowkett, The Cwm, Llanddewi Fach.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Mon Feb 4th— Sat 9th Breconshire Drama Competitions at
Theatr Brycheiniog
Sat Feb 9th Race Night at Painscastle Village Hall
Fri Feb 15th Erwood YFC Concert Erwood Market Hall
7pm
Mon Feb 18th Bronllys Well Being Park Public Board
Meeting at Royston Memorial Hall,
Bronllys 7pm
Thr-Sat Feb 21-23rd KADOS pantomime, Puss in Boots at Lady
Hawkins Community Hall, Kington
Sat Feb 23rd Bingo at Rhosgoch Golf Club 7.30 pm
Tue Feb 26th—Sat Radnor YFC Entertainment Competition
Mar 2nd Albert Hall, Llandrindod Wells
Sat/Sun May 4/5th Flower Festival at Llanbedr Church

HERMON CHAPEL RHOSGOCH

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Fri April 19th Good Friday service Rev M Powell 7.30pm
Sunday School every Sunday morning 10 – 11 am

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Feb 10th Rev Brian Reardon
Mar 10th Penny Robinson
Mar 24th Brian Lopez
April 14th Joint meeting with LG Church
April 19th Good Friday Sankey Evening 7pm
Services Sundays at 2.30pm

ERWOOD & PAINSCASTLE CHURCHES

Dear All,

The treasured time of Christmas and Epiphany has passed so quickly. Naturally, a big thank-you for the thoughts, prayers and work of all within our flock that helped to create joyous, warm and beautiful churches during the Christmas season. We have welcomed many at our services who wished to share their spiritual journey with us at this wonderful time of the year.

February is a month of transition. On the first Sunday of the month, we celebrate the **Presentation of Our Lord** in the Temple at his tender age of forty days. This celebration also includes an acknowledgement of the visit of Mary to the Temple to be purified after childbirth in accordance with Jewish custom. 'Candlemas' may also be seen as a closing of the glorious festival of light that is the Christmas and Epiphany Season.

Ash Wednesday falls on the 6th of March and so, during the remaining days of February following Candlemas, we turn our attention toward the dark days of Lent.

In this time between the two emotional periods of Christmas/ Epiphany and Lent/Easter, it is well to recognise that the two events of the birth and passion of the life of Jesus are united elements in the single event that is the Incarnation of our Lord God. He is always Emmanuel; God with us for all time. The Christ was born to live and die for us, to ascend to heaven and release the Holy Spirit to live within us so we might be his body continuing in the world. Ponder on this and already our faith will begin to deepen in preparation for the cleansing and reflection that is our Lenten journey toward Easter.

All love and blessings.

Father Paul. XX

Sun 3rd February Candlemas

9.30am	Llanbadarn	Eucharist
11.00am	Gwenddwr	Eucharist
11.00am	Llandeilo Graban	Eucharist
11.00am	Newchurch	Holy Communion

Sun 10th February 4th Sunday before Lent

9.30am	Crickadarn	Eucharist
9.30am	Aberedw	Morning Prayer
11.00am	Llanbedr	Eucharist

Sun 17th February 3rd Sunday before Lent

9.30am	Llandeilo Graban	Eucharist
11.00am	Gwenddwr	Eucharist
3.00pm	Llandewi Fach	Eucharist

Sun 24th February 2nd Sunday before Lent

9.30am	Bryngwyn	Eucharist
9.30am	Crickadarn	Morning Prayer
11.00am	Aberedw	Eucharist

Sun 3rd March Next Sunday before Lent

9.30am	Llanbadarn	Eucharist
11.00am	Gwenddwr	Morning Prayer
11.00am	Llandeilo Graban	Morning Prayer
11.00am	Newchurch	Holy Communion

Wed 6th March Ash Wednesday

7.00pm	Llanbedr	Eucharist with the giving of ashes
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9.30am	Crickadarn	Eucharist
9.30am	Aberedw	Eucharist
11.00am	Llanbedr	Eucharist

Sun 17th March 2nd Sunday of Lent

9.30am	Llandeilo Graban	Lambing Service
11.00am	Gwenddwr	Eucharist
3.00pm	Llandewi Fach	Eucharist

PAINSCASTLE MOTHERS UNION

21st February – Wave of Prayer at Llanbedr Church

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Monday afternoons Aberedw Church Hall 1.30 to 5 pm.

Tuesday morning 10 am to 12 noon Clyro Village Hall

Wednesday afternoon 3 pm to 5 pm Clyro Village Hall

Wednesday afternoon 3pm to 4 pm Gladestry Village Hall

Thursday morning 9 am to 10 am Gladestry Village Hall

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On Fridays NatWest Bank Van also visits Builth Wells from 10.30—11.30am and Hay-on-Wye from 12.15—1pm.

BRONLLYS WELL BEING PARK (CLT) LTD Newsletter Jan 2019

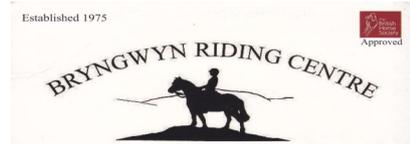
Our newsletter highlights progress and updates which we aim to provide you with bimonthly or more often. If there are significant developments. We will continue to update our website and hope very much you are able to attend our public meetings, the next being in Royston Hall, Bronllys at 7pm on 18th February.

Please feel free to contact us for more information.

Jacqui

Jacqueline Wilding RGN BN (Hons) TD

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EDITOR'S NOTES

I hope you enjoy this edition of the 'Gossip'. Most of our regular features are included. The Farm Focus is on page 3, Culinary Column (P7), reports from lots of the local groups and clubs. Mikey does not want to be left out, (P13)! Thanks to everyone who has contributed in any way to this issue. Please continue to send articles, news and events, all comments are gratefully received. [m.lloyd1@btconnect.com or 01497-851609]. ML (Editor).

The Rhosgoch Gossip is available at Clyro Filling Station & Painscastle Farmers Buying Group. It is available by annual subscription (due in Sept), £6 for delivery in Rhosgoch and Painscastle and adjoining areas, £12 post-ed.

'The Rhosgoch Gossip' is not responsible for the contents of this issue. Articles are the opinion of the respective writers. All errors and omissions excepted (E&OE).

Old issues are put on the community website www.painscastle-rhosgoch.co.uk

The community website continues to reflect the local area. However, there are still gaps with some local groups not represented. If anyone would like to contribute in any way please get in touch either directly to the webmaster or to me at m.lloyd1@btconnect.com

POWYS PRATTLES

by COUNTY COUNCILLOR JAMES GIBSON-WATT

There have been lurid warnings in the local press about cuts to Powys County Council's services to come from April this year. The need to save millions of pounds to cover a huge funding 'gap' and set a balanced budget in 2019/20 has been widely reported in the media. That 'gap' of about £14 million will have to be filled and so a hefty increase in Council Tax of up to 12% is on the cards, plus severe cuts to spending on services. The council's Cabinet has of course been indulging in a bit of 'kite flying' – leak a proposal, see if it 'flies' and drop it if the public (and council members') reaction is too severe. But the financial problem is very real.

How on earth has it come to this? Put simply, in this financial year (2018/19) Powys County Council will spend about £247 million. Next year the council's ruling Cabinet is proposing to spend just less than £263 million. Why such a whopping increase? Well, in this and previous years departmental overspends have been covered by the council drawing on its reserves. Problem is that overspending has not been on one-off items, as would normally be the case, but on day-to-day things that will still have to be funded day-to-day in 2019/20. So the overspends have become part of the base budget. You may think that this is not very sound budget management and you would be right. Now the chickens have well and truly come home to roost, so to speak, and the 'gap' is actually largely self-inflicted.

But we who live in Wales should be thankful. The situation in England is much worse. While the Welsh Government has managed to somewhat protect funding to Welsh councils, the UK Government has mercilessly cut funding to English councils, by as much as 50% over the past 8 years. The impact on vital services such as social care there has been severe.

Every year since I was first elected to Powys County Council (in 1996), councillors have complained that the Welsh Government doesn't treat the county fairly. Now is no different. Cabinet members have been trying the blame game at full bore. But it won't wash. The truth is that Powys is a county experiencing depopulation and sharp falls in school pupil numbers in recent years. So, the local government funding formula is bound to deliver less money to the council, although these reductions have thankfully been limited by the funding 'floor' for Welsh rural councils negotiated by Brecon & Radnorshire's AM, Kirsty Williams, a few years ago. As a result, Powys's grant funding will fall by just 0.3% in 2019/20. It could have been so much worse.

If I sound gloomy it is because I am. It's mid-winter, dark, dank and cold. Brexit chaos and uncertainty reign. The UK and many other western nations appear to have societies deeply divided over a whole range of issues. People naturally look to their national and local politicians for answers. At the moment those politicians, me included, are too often found wanting. But thankfully our communities locally are strong and mutually supportive and in the end that's what matters most. It's what will help see us through the good, bad and indifferent times ahead. Spring will come and the world will look less hostile, even to a grumpy old geezer like me!

Happy New Year!

Please contact me anytime on 01497 820434 or 07971048737 or at cllrjgw@powys.gov.uk

James

WEDNESDAY LUNCH CLUB

We meet between 12:30 and 1pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, usually at the Rhosgoch Golf Club. The dates of the next meetings are :- February 20th & March 20th. For further information contact Jeanette Cruse 01497-851756

ASSEMBLY NEWS

By the time you read this it is possible that the she-nanigans at Westminster over the dreaded 'B' word will have been sorted out. But somehow I doubt it.

Now, I know that talking about this issue is likely to make you want to scream, but for me that itself is the greatest tragedy of this whole saga. Something that will have such an impact on so many people's lives, both here and abroad, has been turned in to a kind of bizarre circus, which has in turn bored and then maddened the British people. Those that govern us at Westminster are completely at odds with each other and MPs have been unable, at the time of writing, to reach a consensus on how to get us all out of this mess. The UK is more divided and anxious now than it was at the time of the EU referendum in 2016. A tragedy indeed. For that, I fear the Prime Minister must bear heavy responsibility. She adopted a position from the start designed to appease the many MPs in her party who want a total break with the EU and its Single Market and Customs Union. Ironically, the agreement she reached did not appease them, as they voted en masse against her proposals. For them the agreement did not take the UK far enough away from the EU. Hence the political chaos and the heightened anxiety that the UK may end up leaving the EU without an agreement of any sort. No trade deal, no security deal; and the UK separated from our closest allies and by far our largest trading partners. Belated attempts by the Prime Minister to reach out to the other political parties are very late. She should have done that from the start.

Some people say that 'no deal' does not matter. We'll be fine. It'll all sort itself out. Well, if that's so, why have every major UK trade and business association, the NFU, FUU, TUC and a whole host of professional bodies all said that 'no deal' should not be tolerated. They are right, it should not be. It should never have been. 'No deal' will hurt the UK and its people a lot, as it will many people in the other 27 EU countries, especially in the Republic of Ireland. But why would we want to harm the Irish and risk re-opening the divisions of the past in Northern Ireland by the imposition of a 'hard' border there, an inevitable consequence of 'no deal'?

Closer to home, unless this mayhem is settled sensibly, areas like Radnorshire will be badly affected. Farming and our network of small businesses on which our rural communities depend are at high risk. As a Welsh Assembly politician I am aghast at the mess that UK Ministers and MPs at Westminster have made of this, the most significant moment in our history for decades. Is it any wonder that there is a growing clamour for the people to be given another vote? Whatever one's views about Brexit, this is not what people voted for in 2016.

Please contact me at any time on 01874 625739 or at kirsty.williams@assembly.wales if I can be of assistance.

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NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER

I hope everyone in Brecon and Radnorshire had a fantastic Christmas and New Year, as I did with my family. January is a month filled with fresh ideas for the coming year. Most people create New Year's resolutions for their personal and working lives and I am no different.

2019 is a year I am feeling extremely positive about. There will be challenges, with Brexit continuing to dominate much of my Parliamentary work. Over the coming weeks votes have and will continue to take place and every vote will be extremely close with the Government having no overall majority.

So in the next few weeks I will be fighting Brecon and Radnorshire's corner. Our Constituency voted Brexit, Wales voted Brexit and the UK voted Brexit. I will continue to ensure this vote is respected and we make the most of the global opportunities post-Brexit.

However, even with Brexit continuing to dominate much of my parliamentary work, my team and I are working on hundreds of cases for people in Brecon and Radnorshire who have come to me in order to help them resolve an ongoing issue. These can be personal issues or wider national issues they care passionately about. My office is always available to help any constituent resident in Brecon and Radnorshire.

If you would like to book an appointment to discuss any issue or topic with me then please contact my office at chris.davies.mp@parliament.uk, 6 Market Street, Builth Wells, Powys, LD3 7SX. Or visit my website for details at www.chris.davies.org

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Vice-chairman, David Nicholls, Castlefield Close
Becky Miles, The Cwm
Iris Lloyd, Caemawr
Sian Powell, Lletycoed
Andrew Ritchie, Castle Brook
Bruce Evans, Lower Pentre
Deri Jones, Portway

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

PAINSCASTLE RECYCLING & RUBBISH COLLECTION

Recycling every Monday, and the next rubbish collection dates are:

18th Feb 11th Mar 1st April 22nd April

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Start 2019 by considering how you might fit into our vital family of volunteers. We are looking for part-time drivers for our minibus and VW plus passenger assistants to assist our service-users in day to day journeys. If you don't want to drive our vehicles, then perhaps our Community Car Service is for you. This means using your own vehicle for journeys, which are reimbursed at 45p per mile. No experience is necessary and we provide all the training and induction you will need. We are used to working around busy people's commitments and as little as one day per month will make a difference. Phone us today! All appointments are subject to references, DBS and other checks.

St David's Day Fundraiser Dinner at The Swan – tickets will be available from the office. See separate advert.

Call us 01497 821616.

St David's Day Dinner

A Welsh Themed Evening



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7pm for 7.30pm

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- Mon Apr 1st Pilates - the benefits—Emma Towersey
- Tues May 7th OPEN MEETING Cavalry of Heroes by Catherine Lovatt

Meetings are held in Painscastle Village Hall, at 7.00pm, unless otherwise stated. Visitors and new members are always welcome. Please contact Mollie Moore (851296) or Edwina Griffiths (851824) for more details.

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MIKEY'S DIARY



Hi all of you, Happy New Year. I hope you survived Christmas safely without too many disturbed nights and too much inappropriate food.

The pup's name has now been settled, he is called Sweep, not that he answers to it, but perhaps he will before too long. He is very big, well compared to me, but not compared to Joe. He does look a bit like Joe although they are not related and Joe is not over fond of Sweep. They had a fight one day which upset Sweep, he lay down and cried, but when Mo found him some food he soon recovered.

Joe thinks he is king of Lundy farmyard, and he guards the quad bike. Secretly he thinks it is another dog, a very big one but, when it goes to the fields to go around the sheep, he races it and then when it stops for a rest he lies underneath it waiting for it to start up again. I like the quad as well and if someone will lift me onto the front carrier that is where I like to be, but Abbie often steals my seat. Also they put bags of sheep feed on there and then there is no room for any of us.

If Mo is feeding the sheep she will let me have a lift. The other day Gyp had a lift as well, I am not sure that she should be allowed to ride, she has much longer legs than me so she could walk. As Gyp is quite young she sometimes asks me about things, especially after last time when she heard I had been making a study of sheep intelligence. Her job is to help Mo by holding the sheep back when she is trying to put the feed in the sheep troughs. She told me the other day that she is finding it very hard to deal with one group of lambs, they have no respect for her and she gets a bit frightened. The other day she had to jump up on top of the bike to get away from them they were so disrespectful. I didn't really know how to help her, I try and sneak through them without them noticing me, but that wouldn't help Mo much. She said she did want to help Mo, but she needed a bit more bravery, and did I know where she could buy some so she could train those ignorant sheep?



TD is now back at work, he did some practising on the log cabin, probably just in case he had forgotten how to get plaster onto walls. He seems to have done it ok because they have been painting it, or perhaps they paint it to hide it? I don't really know, it all seems to be a lot of effort. I don't really worry about walls, as long as I can have my bed in front of the Rayburn I think that is the most important thing.

The babies (Paige, Oscar and Sweep) are all six months old but Paige and Oscar don't do much, they can't walk, run or talk while Sweep is very energetic, he runs around and barks. I suppose this is because humans are a lot slower than dogs? It does seem strange as Paige and Oscar are carried everywhere, I am sure Gyp (Sweep's mum) is glad she doesn't have to carry Sweep as he is al-

most as big as she is. I do like Sweep although he is a lot bigger than me now and he runs around like a wild thing, but he is very friendly and likes to play games with me. Sometimes we go to look for a bit of a snack, either under the grain trailer where the sheep feed comes out, or perhaps to help with the pig feed. Occasionally we have a bit of luck and a bag of dog food is located within reach. I only have limited reach because I am small, but I am trying to train Sweep to help open the bags, or to be more accurate to make a hole so we can try the contents!

Of course sometimes there is other food around, sheep have a natural tendency to die and usually I can get there quicker than Ken (assuming it is one of our sheep). I have noticed that humans do not seem to locate a possible feast as quickly as us dogs. In fact I don't think their noses are very good at locating dead sheep until they have been there a few days. We can sometimes have quite a picnic, but all the rules and regulations about fallen stock does restrict our activities in that department. Mo gets very cross because I come home smelly, I am banned from the house, and several baths are arranged so sometimes I even wonder if it is worth it.

Lately Mo was trying to befriend some new horses on the hill, so I went with her to see if I could help. First time she took some nuts, but they didn't know what they were so I thought I would try and show them as I quite like the taste of sheep nuts. Mo said she hadn't invited me to steal the horses' feed so I had to go back to the car. The white car is quite a good little thing, we went up on the hill to try and get nearer to the horses to see if they wanted some haylage. Lately I have had several rides in the car, I have my own seat with a pretty blue and white cover so that I can clean my paws if I have got them dirty. Mo gave Roy a ride the other day when they were playing with the horses and he sat in my seat. He told Mo to thank me and he liked my seat cover. I don't mind anyone having a ride, but if it is only me and Mo, when we stop I usually sit in the driver's seat to wait for her return and she quite likes coming back to a warm seat.

It seems that there is snow on the way so remember to stay by the fire and keep warm. Mikey

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The Night Sky

Amateur astronomers are always moaning about the weather and the lack of clear skies for observing the wonders of the night sky. Justifiably so in the early morning of Monday 21st January when the total lunar eclipse was obscured by cloud cover over Painscastle. The next time we will get a chance to see this will be 16th May 2022. So, here's a photograph taken of the 2015 lunar eclipse, it gives an idea of what we all missed!

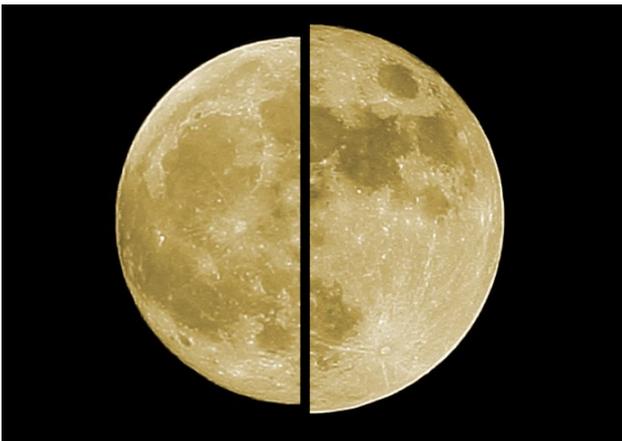


Lunar eclipse 28th September 2015

Luckily, with weather permitting, the opportunity arises in the coming months to view a supermoon and some interesting astronomical conjunctions.

Supermoons - 19th February and 21st March.

A supermoon is a full or new moon which coincides with the closest distance the moon comes to the Earth during its monthly elliptical orbit; at these times the Moon appears larger and brighter by a factor of 10 - 15%.



Comparing the apparent difference in size of the average full moon and a supermoon.

Boxes of DVDs

There are boxes of DVDs located in the Bus Shelter in Painscastle, all in good order, Free to a good home.

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Astronomical conjunctions – In astronomy, a conjunction occurs when any two or more astronomical objects (the moon, asteroids, planets, or comets) appear close together in the sky. During the next couple of months there are three rather nice examples of Moon and planet conjunctions.

10th February – Moon/Mars. Look south in the early evening and Mars will appear above the waxing crescent Moon.

27th February – Moon/Jupiter. Look low in the east just before dawn and Jupiter will appear a little above and to the right of the slender waning crescent Moon.

2nd March – Moon/Venus. Look low in the southeast just before dawn and Venus will appear to the right of the slender waning crescent Moon.



Conjunction of the Moon and Venus on 26th February 2014.

Our thanks to Sue and Dennis Boon for this article and I am sure they would be happy to answer any questions about forthcoming events.

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PAINSCASTLE LOCAL INTEREST GROUP

Next year's programme is:-

- Thur Jan 31st Great-grandmother's diaries - Cherry Williams
- Thur Feb 28th History of trades & services at Pendre Farm - Wendy Ozols
- Thur Mar 28th Kilvert - Ann Dean
- Thur Apr 25th Drovers - Bruce Smith & Christine McCann
- Thur May 9th Visit to Cwm Byddog reserve led by Stephen Mullard

Please note our May meeting the first of the summer outings will be to Cwm Byddog on May 9th we have chosen an earlier date in order to see the reserve at its best. Winter meetings are held at the Adullam Hall, Painscastle at 7.30pm on the last Thursday on the month. During the summer we have evening visits, meeting in Painscastle at 7pm.

Everyone is welcome.

CAROLS AT PAINSCASTLE CHAPEL

A lovely Christmas Service was held at the Adullam Chapel when the local children entertained us with songs, poems and piano recitals. The Chapel had been beautifully decorated with greenery candles and Nativity Scenes. Mrs Edwina Griffiths gave a warm welcome to everyone and to our President, Mrs Jenny Smith, and our accompanist, Mr John Meredith. We are always grateful for Jenny's warmth, encouragement and help at these services and indebted to John for his willingness to come and play the piano on these occasions.

Edwina opened the service with a poem telling the Christmas story. Children taking part were Eva, Mollie & Nancy Lloyd, Charlotte, Rupert & Annie Lewis, Abbie Lloyd, Griff & Alys Lloyd & Iwan Evans.



Solos by Catherine Hughes were much enjoyed by all as was the singing of Carols by the congregation who were in good voice. To conclude the service a poem was given by Megan Lloyd and the children accompanied, by John on the piano, sang a very lively "Jingle Bells" and "We wish you a Merry Christmas."

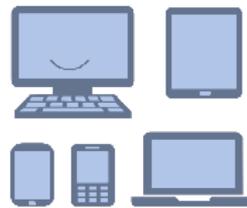


Edwina thanked all for their contributions and invited everyone to stay for a cup of tea, refreshments and a chat.

RHOSGOCH CHAPEL NEWS



A very successful Carol Service was held at Rhosgoch Chapel on Sunday December 23rd.



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On Saturday

9th February

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