



St. Asaph & District City Times



Issue No 26

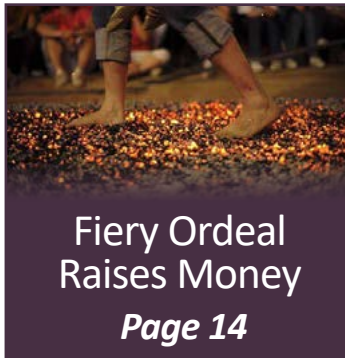
February 2024



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City Times Team

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We're always looking out for letters, items, reports or features relating to St Asaph. Or that special photo! The deadline for the April issue is Monday 18th March – but please submit well before to ensure publication as the paper fills quickly. Thank you.

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Revolutionary proposal for High Street!

A new proposal to make life easier for customers of our High Street takeaways has been put forward for consideration. Instead of having to park on the pavement, straddling double yellow lines with hazard lights flashing and simultaneously obstructing both the road and the pavement, it has been suggested that the drivers could actually drive their cars directly into the takeaway establishments themselves.

Whilst it might cause some initial damage to the shops, it would lessen the frustration of other drivers on the High Street and also enable the customers to pay for and receive their suppers without having to leave the comfort of their cars. It would however decrease the chances of our new and keen PCSOs earning bonus points for handing out fines to people unwilling to use regular car parking spaces.

Felicia in prime London position

Jo Cotton, on a recent visit to London, was delighted to see this plaster bust of St Asaph's very own poetess Felicia Hemans (1793 -1835) in pride of place in the entrance hall to the National Portrait Gallery.

In fact, there are no fewer than four portraits and two sculptures of her in the gallery's collection. She was much fêted for her poetry, including most famously her often misquoted *Casabianca* "The boy stood on the burning deck, whence all but he had fled..."

She must have been quite a head-turner in her day, and apparently from her home in what is now Richmond Hall on Chester Street would hang a sheet out of her window to invite her friends from Rhyllon (across Afon Clwyd) over to tea.

So quite practical too, and saves sending the groom out.



Felicia Hemans by Angus Fletcher (1829)



Kentigern Hall

An anonymous leaflet was circulated in St Asaph recently warning that DCC was planning to acquire Kentigern Hall, (the former Abbeyfield Home opposite the cathedral) and lease it to a company to accommodate "25-30 delinquent teenagers, mainly with behavioural issues". The leaflet went on to scaremonger about possible consequences.

A DCC spokesperson responded by confirming that it has been considered as one of several options to accommodate no more than six local young people that DCC are already supporting, allowing them to be closer to support networks. The spokesperson also pointed out that there were in fact only six bedrooms there. No decision has been made yet.

Some notes from the City Council meeting in January

Councillors shared greetings for the New Year.

The mayor reported on his recent activities, which included judging a talent competition in a local nursing home and dancing with one resident to **Showaddywaddy**. (*respect! Ed.*) The Christmas window dressing competition was won by **Samco Pet care**. Both the mayor and Cllr. Linda Griffiths have attended the weekly **Community Fridge** events in the Parish Church which have become very popular and which serve an important community and environmental purpose, the latter by decreasing landfill use.

Cllr Peter Scott reported on his ongoing negotiations with DCC about the planned **county-wide decrease in library opening hours**; in St Asaph this is from 22.5 to 13 hours per week; DCC have agreed to increase to 15 hours, including Saturday morning. St Asaph and Rhuddlan Councils make a contribution towards running the library which is a useful bargaining tool; why other councils do not contribute was discussed at some length. The original decision has been "called in" by a group of county councillors and will be re-examined on 11.1.24 (*Ed: the library decision has since been referred back to cabinet*).

Cllr Scott also discussed the **significant fiscal challenges** facing DCC, with a major deficit likely. He noted that social care takes up 70% of the budget, and also that our Council Tax only amounts to 25% of DCC income.

It seems that some people are still using the carpark behind the library for **all-day parking** which is not allowed.

The Mayor and Clerk are meeting with DCC to discuss the plans to **change recycling methods** in September.

In the absence of requests for elections of **posts on the City Council**, no elections are required, and Council is free to fill vacancies by co-opting. Notices about this will be posted on the City Council noticeboard: any one with interest can apply.

Council agreed to get quotes for **filling in the potholes** behind the surgery, even though it is not CC responsibility.

Following the fire at the Bowling Club shelter, the **insurance cover** for other CC assets was checked; some are not insured. It was agreed to seek quotes to add these to the current cover.

A **letter of peace and greetings** from the Lord Provost of Glasgow had been received; Glasgow celebrates the festival of St Mungo (aka St Kentigern) in the second week of January.

Full minutes of the meeting will be available online at www.stasaphcitycouncil.gov.uk once signed off at February's meeting.



Inside the Factory: Goodfish Group St Asaph

Matt Neale from Goodfish

The St Asaph site, acquired by The Goodfish Group in January 2020, stands as a pivotal achievement in the company's expansion. This specialised facility has become a symbol of manufacturing excellence, showcasing cutting-edge processes that add to the rich legacy of Goodfish.

Heading the operations at Goodfish North West is Gareth Jones. In his role as the Site Leader at the St Asaph plant, Gareth oversees all aspects of production, quality control, health and safety, as well as environmental matters at the site.

At the heart of the St Asaph site's capabilities are advanced manufacturing processes, such as plastic extrusion, plastic injection moulding, 3D printing, tooling and tool MRO. The site boasts a robust infrastructure, equipped with 18 extrusion lines, 26 plastic injection moulding machines, and two state-of-the-art 3D printing machines. A vacuum forming machine further expands the facility's manufacturing options. Precision in tooling and maintenance is guaranteed with a fully equipped on-site tool room featuring lathes, millers, wire erosion and sparking EDM machines.



In addition to primary manufacturing processes, the site features ancillary equipment and machines, including pick-and-place robots, 6 axis robotics, conveyors, heaters, coolers and compressors. Notably, two collaborative robots work seamlessly alongside human operators, automating repetitive tasks and emphasising the commitment to efficiency and automation.

The incorporation of 3D printing and collaborative robotic technology highlights Goodfish's commitment to cutting-edge solutions.

The versatility of the St Asaph site aligns with the broader vision of the Goodfish Group. By integrating various manufacturing techniques under one

roof, the site stands as a testament to adaptability and innovation, crucial qualities in an ever-evolving industrial landscape. Specialising in manufacturing plastic products for diverse sectors, including automotive, medical, housing, construction, energy, electrical, heating, POS (Point of Sale), security, defence and other plastic applications, the group actively works towards a green future. This includes incorporating electric vehicles in its fleet and reducing energy consumption across its sites. The Goodfish Group operates across three locations in the UK: Cannock, Worcester, and St Asaph. Each of these sites specialises in a range of advanced manufacturing processes, including injection moulding, 3D printing and various secondary operations like pad printing, foil printing, ultrasonic welding, heat staking, spin welding, pressure testing and assembly. To find out more visit our website at www.goodfishgroup.com



K&C Construction flying high

In November, K&C Construction of St Asaph was invited to attend the awards ceremony for the **Fast Growth 50 businesses in Wales**. As a privately owned construction and property development company with head office on the Business Park, the K&C group is familiar to St Asaph residents with the new Pure estate at Livingstone Place and Bryn Gobaith. Pure Residential and Commercial is part of K&C Construction. K&C are now building a sizeable estate across the road from Glan Clwyd hospital to include 108 residential properties.

This will be great news for staff at the hospital looking for accommodation in the area.



Ty Seren Care home—model

In addition, the K&C group has now teamed up with Dylan Southern of Star Units Ltd to take on the construction of a 198 bed care home (pictured below) on the St Asaph Business Park, alongside the TRB plant. Originally refused planning permission in 2020, Dylan, a former psychiatric nurse, argued that the proposed state-of-the-art care home would provide modern amenities at a time when the Covid pandemic demonstrated quite how important these are. It would also help relieve pressure on Glan Clwyd hospital by providing post-hospital care beds and expert rehabilitation for patients otherwise unable to be discharged. It will bring new employment opportunities to the area, and in due course may be a place with which some of us might become familiar! The revised planning application was accepted back in 2021.



Memorial Service for Sir David Watkin Williams-Wynne.

The cathedral was packed on 11th January for the memorial service for Sir David Watkin Williams-Wynne Bt. of Cefn , who died at the age of 83 on 18th November. The service was led by the Very Reverend Nigel Williams, and included a harp recital, items sung by the Trelawnyd male voice choir, poetry read by family members, reveille, and a moving and informative tribute given by Mr Philip Godsall.

Describing Sir Watkin as a remarkable man, Mr Godsall outlined key points and themes in his life, beginning with his birth in 1940. His father left on active service the following day and did not return for five long years. When he did return, it was with a large and bushy moustache, grown to intimidate the Japanese, but which was young David's first and somewhat alarming memory of his father.

He was sent as a youngster to a remote farm in mid Wales to learn Welsh, and although rarely to be heard speaking Welsh, he understood it well. After school at Eton, at which he "avoided getting into academic trouble" but excelled at sports, Sir Watkin enlisted in the Royal Dragoon Guards. He was posted as a young 2nd lieutenant to the seething trouble spot of Aden, where he found it practical in the baking heat to dispense with regular army dress and resort to local mufti on convoy escort duties. Never shy of a challenge, a subsequent posting to Singapore saw him, improbably, obtain a racing car and take part in the Singapore Grand Prix!

Taking over the responsibilities of Cefn estate, he gained further experience and understanding in matters agricultural, and was always ready to learn from those more experienced including of course estate workers and tenants. His knowledge of farming was prodigious, such that he was not always willing to accept advice from wet-behind-the-ears farm advisors! His judgment was sound and well respected, leading to a number of roles on national bodies. He was a steadfast supporter of the Cefn community, particularly with respect to Neuadd Owen and St Mary's church Cefn. A man of great energy, he rode point to point, and was the master of both the Wynnstay and the Flint & Denbigh hunts. He will be greatly missed by his family, his friends, and neighbours and tenants on the Cefn Estate, one of whom clearly spoke for many when he remarked on leaving the service "You will not find a fairer man anywhere..."



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Celebrities walk the North Wales Pilgrim's Way

BBC 2 has chosen the North Wales Pilgrim's Way as the route for the 6th series of **Pilgrimage**, with the first episode to be shown on Good Friday. Seven celebrities, whose names are a closely guarded secret, walked the route during 15 days of filming in September. As in previous series, they apparently come either from different faith backgrounds or from none, with the focus being on how they deal with a shared challenge.

The NWPW was originally conceived by Chris and Jenny Potter (former Dean of St Asaph cathedral, and co-founder of Jacob's Ladder respectively) after they walked the Camino de Santiago in France and Spain, and thought that the astounding beauty of North Wales also deserved a long distance walk.

Together with local ramblers and other walkers they devised a 134 mile route from Basingwerk to Bardsey island, wandering through the villages and green lanes of the *cefn gwlad* (Welsh countryside), past ancient churches, prehistoric sites and post-industrial mountain quarries, and down the stunning coast paths of the Llyn peninsula.



Mike Costello, who leads the annual group walk in May, was recruited by the 30 strong production team as guide and mentor for the filming. The filming involved a certain amount of "smoke and mirrors", and strayed from the NWPW on several occasions, including a day's walk up Snowdon, and a visit to a Buddhist retreat centre in Criccieth. Sections of the NWPW were walked, whilst other parts were missed out; multiple takes were required to achieve the appropriate level of apparent spontaneity! Mike spent a fair bit of time waiting around while conversations were filmed, and then running to get out of the drone shots with the producer wanting just the celebrities in view! His greatest concern was for the camera crew frequently walking backwards up rough and stony paths to film frontal close-ups of the walkers; they needed a runner guiding them with a hand on their collar to prevent falls.

The programme should be a great advert for North Wales, for the Pilgrim's Way, and just possibly for St Asaph! Look out for it Friday 29th March BBC2.



Standing room only at Christmas services!

In the parish church, the crib service was again combined with the chringles service and drew a huge number of people on Christmas Eve. Fr. Rex Matthias led the service, while the children brought the figures of the Holy Family, the shepherds, the wise men and of course the animals up to the crib without mishap. The singing was impressive, the candles on the chringles burned brightly, and the service brought Christmas joy to all, with much greeting of friends and families afterwards.

In the cathedral later that evening, the service of nine lessons and carols was equally packed, and the choir's singing under the inspirational leadership of Paul Bolton soared above all present. Another great gathering of friends and acquaintances to put us all in the festive spirit. A good turnout for Midnight Mass was also reported by those hardy souls who stayed up to welcome Christmas Day!



Santa's visit to the Co-op

Alan Duke

Generous St Asaph shoppers were more than willing to contribute to the Christmas appeal by the Rotary Club of Rhyl when Santa and his float visited the Co-op for two days prior to Christmas. More than £2,000 was donated to the range of charities supported by the club, including 'Young Carers' and 'Blossom and Bloom' which helps new deserving young Mums from North Wales.

St Asaph-based Rotarian John Dicks commented: "A number of Rotarians from the now dissolved St Asaph Rotary Club have joined the Rhyl Club and it is a pleasure to be back among old friends, helping Santa to raise funds for so many worthy causes".

Tony Thomas, the current President of the club added: "Shoppers in St Asaph have been particularly generous and we are grateful to the managers of the Co-op for allowing Santa to visit and also for their very generous donation. Funds are still coming in but it looks as though this will be a bumper year for the collection, with over £2,000 raised already. Thank you to all contributors from St Asaph. We wish you a very happy and fruitful New Year and hope to see you again next year".



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Library Opening Hours—the ongoing saga

Jo Cotton

In December DCC announced their decision to reduce library and one-stop shop hours across the county by 40%, to release an expected saving of £360,000. Following a strong response to the public consultation with over 4,500 residents voicing their predominantly negative opinions, the Council had amended their original proposal, adapting the proposed opening hours to ensure that more libraries are open to accommodate children after school and that most libraries are able to continue to open on Saturday mornings. For St Asaph this meant going from 22.5 to 13 hours per week.

Cllr Peter Scott negotiated 2 extra hours of opening at St Asaph subsequently, and the original decision was referred back to Cabinet after a “call in” meeting on 11th January. However, as one former county councillor remarked “Don’t hold your breath on this...” As residents we must remember the ‘use it or lose it’ rule in these difficult financial times as the library service is clearly vulnerable.



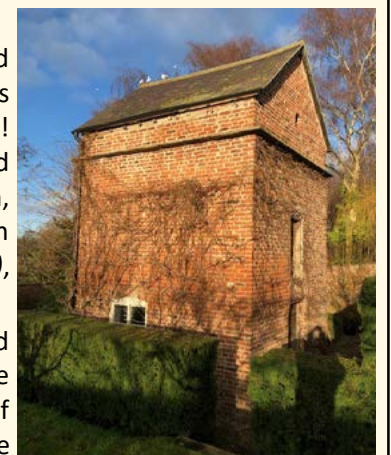
A flutter in the dovecots

No doubt many will have wondered about the strange building at Bodeugan Farm, on the left after coming down Rhualt hill. It is in fact a dovecot, which would have housed hundreds of doves in the nestboxes built into the inside. Ladders were used to reach the nestboxes, which were often a few feet off the ground to avoid rats taking the eggs. In previous centuries, long before the advent of cheap supermarket chicken, the doves would have provided a ready source of fresh meat during spring and summer. The young doves (“squabs”) were particularly prized for the tenderness and delicate flavour of their meat, and many recipes involving them are to be found in medieval cookery books.

Dovecot at Bodeugan

There are at least three dovecots in and around St Asaph, at Bodeugan, Hen Esgobty and Gwernigron, with others locally at Gop Farm and Llanbedr DC. Doves in significant numbers nest in at least three of these—and many roost underneath the A55 river bridge also! Dovecots tended to be built by well-to-do landowners, or alongside monasteries and castles, and came in a wide range of architectural styles. At Gwernigron and Bodeugan, they are built with stepped gables, at the former with stone, and in the latter with brick. In Welsh, a dovecot is a *colomendy*, whilst they are also known as culverhouses (*Engl.*), columbaria (*Latin*) or doocots (*Scots*).

Not only were the doves a good source of meat and eggs, but their feathers would be used for pillows and the ultimate luxury of feather beds. More prosaically, their droppings were used as fertiliser, and remarkably, were also sometimes used in the production of gunpowder as they contained a significant amount of saltpetre (*potassium nitrate*). The droppings were also used in leather tanning and cloth dyeing. Many also believed that pigeons and doves had medicinal properties and so were used in various cures ranging from the plague to baldness. However, covering one’s head with white feathers is unlikely to fool most people, in case anyone is tempted.



The restored dovecot at Hen Esgobty, built around 500 years ago, could house hundreds of doves.



Gwernigron dovecot

Is a dove simply a white pigeon? Whilst they belong to the same family taxonomically, doves tend to be smaller than pigeons, with different tail feather arrangements. Doves and pigeons have different numbers of chromosomes such that although they can potentially mate, the offspring is sterile. Remarkably, both male and female birds produce “crop milk” from a pouch in the throat to feed their young for the first few days of life.

And of course doves have a better public profile—having been symbols of peace since the Old Testament story of the dove returning to Noah’s ark bearing an olive branch in its beak as a sign that the floods were receding. Doves mate for life, and as symbols of lasting love, are often released at weddings. They also have a claim to gentleness (“therefore be ye as wise as serpents and as gentle as doves”), a quality apparently also of major importance for soap and deodorants. By contrast, pigeons are often regarded as grubby birds or even vermin—unless you are a pigeon fancier. There are few more beautiful sights than a flight, or *arc*, of doves wheeling together in bright spring sunshine; our thanks are due to those that look after these ancient buildings, homes to such striking birds.

SWAYNE JOHNSON Solicitors present: Lasting Powers of Attorney

A belated Happy New Year to all! In the last City Times, Sarah noted the perils of DIY Wills. In this edition, I shall discuss the benefits of preparing Lasting Powers of Attorney.

What is a Lasting Power of Attorney? A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) is a legal document that allows you to appoint the people you trust the most ('Attorneys') to make decisions for you if you need support in the future. This could be due to a physical illness, injury or incapacity. There are two types of LPAs, one for financial decisions, and another for health decisions. You may prepare one or both. Your Attorneys essentially step into your shoes and act as if they were you (regarding any financial decision or health decision depending on which document you have prepared, and if you have limited their powers in any way).

Why do I need an LPA? Your next of kin do not have any legal rights to access your bank accounts, buy or sell property, or to make decisions for you without an LPA.

It can be very stressful for family members trying to help a loved one with their affairs when they have lost capacity and have not prepared an LPA. In this situation, an application to the Court of Protection for a Deputyship would be required. This causes huge delays and is more expensive. Accounts can be frozen during this time, and family members out of pocket (having stepped in to pay the bills) until matters can be sorted.

Decisions about your health and welfare may be made by your medical team or social services unless you appoint Attorneys to make such decisions for you. Your Attorneys would then be able to access your medical records, make decisions about where you live, and the level of care that you require. They may also be able to provide consent or refuse consent to life-sustaining treatment on your behalf.

LPAs are therefore vital to ensure that your affairs are all in order. The sooner they are prepared, the better!

If you have a question and think that I could help, or you would like to book an appointment to discuss the preparation of Will and/or LPAs, then please let me know by calling 01745 586834 or by emailing me: brownno@swaynejohnson.com Our team will address a different legal topic during each City Times issue.



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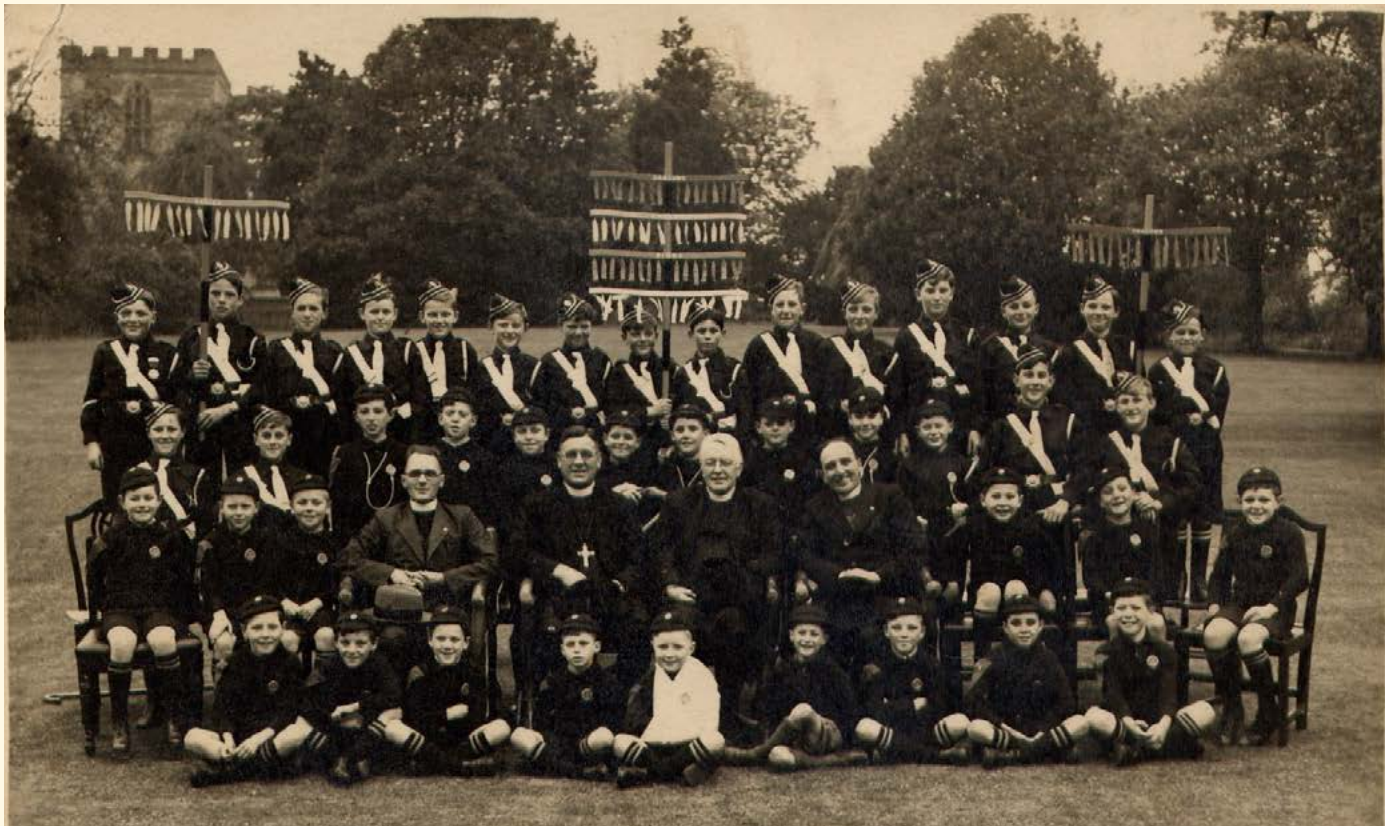
With the demise of St Asaph Rotary, the absence of the Christmas tour of their brightly lit carolling float was felt keenly, not least on social media. Michael Howie and the crew from the St Asaph fire station decided to take action. Within a day, they organised a Christmas run for the firefighters and tender round St Asaph, with sirens blooping, bells ringing, lights flashing, Santa outfits and general jollity. They had a warm welcome and a good turn-out despite the cold and dark. There were treats for toddlers, as always entranced by the *nee-naws* in their full glory. Fortunately there were no shouts during the event, and they raised £385 for the firefighters charity. A much appreciated gesture!



Photo: Laura Rasmussen

St Asaph Boys' Brigade and Life Boys, Bishop's Palace c 1937

Gwyn Jones



4th Row Thatched Cottage Draper Tyddyn Gas L.
David Jones(Cacanjam) Trefor Martin. Hugh Jones Peter Guns Anon. Ken Pierce. Elwy Pierce.(Slap) Wilf Nixon. Sonny Jones.(Gemig). Dai Davies. Ray Nixon. Ronald Jones(Keens Row). Teddy Parry. Ray Nixon. John Jones.(next door Gemig).
3rd Row Frank Jones(Cacanjam) Fred Watkins. Eric Price Jones.(Lower St). R Clwyd Jones.Rod Thomas. Robert Deed (Caradoc Terr)
Richard Marquis. Ken Davies (Taxi)
George Knight(Crescent). Trevor Pierce. Tom Watkins. Freddy Roberts. (Glan yr Afon Cott)
2nd Row Don Vernon. Brian Guns(Tyddyn Gas Lane). Peter Thomas. Vic Astley. Bish Havard.
Dean Dubbisson. Vic Thomas. John Harrison. Derek Jones. Merfyn Jones.
1st Row Percy Jones.(→5 Tomcat) Tom Marquis. J Hugh Jones. Teddy Evans(Australia). Geof Vernon(Forge Cross Keys). Bob Evans(Forge Cross Keys). Len Nixon.
Jack Doyle(Cae Bryn) Gerald Hughes.

Gwyn Jones writes: "This seems to contain all the St Asaph boys of various denominations. I was in this Brigade in the 1940s. We had a new vicar, and he threw out all the non-conformists and Roman Catholics. This decimated the Brigade and it never recovered. Three of my brothers are on this picture."

Ear Wax Removal

If you are experiencing hearing problems, Micro Suction may be the answer.

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Kentigern Guild: Llysfasi College

Elin Roberts, principal of Llysfasi College was the guest speaker at the Kentigern Guild in December. She gave a lively and informative presentation on the college, which celebrated its 100th birthday during the pandemic.

Llysfasi lies around three miles south of Ruthin and is part of Coleg Cambria. It caters for 250 learners, and offers courses in agriculture, countryside management, forestry and agri-engineering. Learners traditionally came from farming families, but Elin reported that many now come from non-farming backgrounds. There are also a further 40 school link learners from local schools who take courses in agriculture equating to 2 GCSEs.



Elin Roberts



Montbeliardes

Llysfasi is a working farm of 970 acres, ranging from grade 1 agricultural land to hill land above 1200 feet. There is a dairy herd of 220 that milk all year round, predominantly Holstein with some Montbeliardes. There are 650 ewes and 12 suckler cows for beef.

Llysfasi College teaches financial viability in farming, and whilst there is emphasis on high output of quality product, there is also a strong focus on conservation and sustainability, as well as on innovation. Technology now allows "Precision farming" whereby there is targeted intervention. She provided three examples:

- GPS on tractors allows administration of fertiliser just to those areas requiring it rather than full coverage of fields.
- Sheep are microchipped and are weighed automatically on a weigh-pad when they go to the water trough, so it is possible to monitor their growth very accurately and identify those not thriving.
- Advances in reproductive technology means that it is now possible to sex-select semen from bulls to increase the yield of heifers to dairy cows.

The session finished with an online quiz for the audience (won by Tim and Maureen Maitland) and John Solbe thanked Elin on behalf of the Kentigern Guild. A very entertaining and informative afternoon!

Kentigern Guild: Update on Llannerch bridge

The Kentigern Guild were given a detailed update on progress with the replacement of the bridge at Llannerch in their January meeting by James Elson, County Councillor for Trefnant and Cefn. The 200yr old bridge collapsed during the floods of Storm Cristoph in January 2021, when an oak tree next to it was washed into the river, undermining the bridge. DCC have committed to replacing the bridge; Balfour Beatty have been given the contract and have completed the process of "optioneering" or examining different options.



One option: a single carriageway "priority" bridge with culverts on the eastern side

There are many considerations to take into account; the new bridge will need a wider span, to be flat rather than humpbacked, and will need culverts built into the approach road for future floods. There is a risk that pilings for the foundations will cause problems for the large underground aquifer from which water is extracted at the nearby plant, and careful assessment of the river dynamics has been required. Currently they are part way through the design phase which will be followed by a request to Welsh Government for funding of the chosen design. Costs may be in excess of £9 million. Spades in the ground by early 2025; completion by spring 2026. James fielded a barrage of questions very ably, and was thanked for his clear and detailed presentation.

The Kentigern Guild meets on the first Wednesday afternoon of the month at the Parish Church at 2.30. All are welcome; the February meeting will be Katie Jordan on "Working with Willow". Further details from Rosie Solbe on 01745 583313

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Fiery ordeal raises almost £8000!

The St Kentigern fundraiser Firewalk was held after dark in Ruthin Rugby club back in October, sponsored by **RN Williams of St Asaph**. It was organised superbly by the hospice fundraising team, who ensured the evening ran smoothly for the 20+ participants.

One of the brave souls reported: *"After a briefing from Time4Change Firewalk about the technique and mindset needed to conquer the coals, we headed outside to feel the heat from the flames that awaited our bare feet. With shoes and socks off, there was one final check before we made our way across the burning embers. The whole experience was over in a flash and definitely left you wanting another pass across the coals"*

"Whilst the firewalk experience was definitely something to tick off your bucket list, of course, the main aim of the event was to raise much needed funds for St Kentigern Hospice, which was most certainly achieved."

A hugely impressive sum of nearly £8000 was raised at the event.

How do they do it? The secret of the firewalk lies in the low thermal conductivity of the embers and short contact time between the person's feet and the hot embers. There must be grey ash on the charcoal, which has to be allowed to burn down. In the past, firewalking had a strong religious or spiritual component and was used as a rite of passage to test an individual's strength or religious faith, often being part of purification and spiritual healing. But it is not to be undertaken lightly— a mass firewalk at a Tony Robbins motivational event in San Jose went badly wrong for 21 people who suffered significant burns...!



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City of Music—Plygain

Fiona Shand

The plygain service is one of Wales' oldest traditions, thought to date back to the 13th century. In rural north and mid-Wales it dates back to the Catholic period, when these special services were held on Christmas morning. In Welsh, the word 'plygeiniol' means 'very early morning' (Latin 'pullicantio' or 'cockcrow') and a plygain service would commence at any time between 3.00 and 6.00am. Now, most plygain services take place in the evening. The Anglicans, followed by the Nonconformists, later adopted the plygain tradition.

The person presiding over the plygain service opens the event with a word of welcome followed by a congregational hymn, a reading and a prayer. The long awaited words '**Mae'r Plygain yn awr yn agored**' (*the Plygain is now open*) are said, meaning that anyone who wishes to present a plygain carol may get up and sing. It is a spontaneous carol service – there is never a programme - with unaccompanied singing by individuals, duets, or a small group singing in close harmony. A varied evening is ensured as no two soloists or duets follow each other. The pitch, or 'note' of the plygain carol is found by using a tuning fork. There is no conductor or leader to this informal singing and the second half of the service follows the same order as the first, with no carol being sung twice. Some twelve to fifteen items are usually heard during a service which on average lasts two hours. When the service comes to an end, the men who have participated during the evening are called forward to sing together '**Carol y Swper**' (the Supper Carol) . Light refreshments follow for all who are present.

A Plygain Service is held annually during January at St. Asaph Cathedral. It will sadly have taken place before you receive this issue of the City Times, but there's always next year....

www.plygain.org

City of Music—Songwriter sessions in the Barrow

The Barrow on St Asaph High Street hosts regular **Songwriter Sessions** on the 4th Friday evening led by Jude Lane of **The Lighted Stage Music Events**.

Jude says: *All are welcome to listen or perform; original material is encouraged but there is also room for seasonal covers if the mood takes you. Sessions start with discussion on various aspects of songwriting, from ideas to process, then we play some of our songs. There is a chance to discuss each song, what inspired and shaped it, and to engage with the lyrics and the melody. We have occasional talks on related subjects or feature sets of original music from one performer. The Lighted Stage Open Mic and Songwriter Sessions for 2024 will start in February - check Facebook*.



George Frost
Telephoto 2023



Wendy and Ian: Moonflower

City of Music (and pottery...) — CanCan and Moonflower

New Year's Eve found Wendy and Ian from Earthworks Pottery in **Tyddyn Llan**, the acclaimed Georgian restaurant and hotel near Corwen. It wasn't for a special celebration, but an annual booking for them as the acoustic duo **Moonflower**, Wendy providing vocals to Ian's guitar.

In November, they appeared at the **Kildare Jazz Festival** as part of **CanCan**, a four piece outfit comprising vocals, accordion, guitar and double bass specialising in cafe style music from France, Europe and Latin America - as well as swing, Bossa Nova and beyond. It sounds to have been a memorable event in the great Irish tradition of music making!

Wendy studied creative arts at Wrexham, whilst Ian studied ceramics at Leeds. But it was not a love of working with clay that led to their paths crossing, but a jazz and acoustic session in the Talardy at which Ian was playing. Their tastes in music are broad and eclectic, with a particular love for Latin American artists; Wendy's current favourite outfit is **Pomplamoose**. Intriguingly, she says that she can't listen to music whilst working at the potter's wheel as it is too distracting—but listening to audiobooks is not a problem. Moonflower and CanCan are available for bookings for all sorts of occasions: check out Facebook @handsungmusic and listen to their music there. Email at cancanband@btinternet.com or contact directly at Earthworks pottery. www.earthworks-pottery.co.uk

Moonflower are just one of several local artists and outfits that would be keen to see the return of Fringe events at the 2024 North Wales International Music Festival. City Times will continue to profile local bands & artists in subsequent issues.

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DIARY OF EVENTS Activities listed are correct at time of going to press. For listing in the Diary of Events in the April issue, please submit items to editorsact@gmail.com before the deadline shown on page 2.

Regular weekly events

Day	Time	Details
Monday	6-8pm 7.30-9.30	Open Access Youth Club run by Denbighshire County Council at the St Asaph Community Church, High Street. (term-time only) St Asaph Choral Society in the Parish Church. New members welcome. For further information please contact choralsocietystasaph@gmail.com
Tuesday	9.30-11.30 2-3pm 3-4pm	Aros a Chwarae. Free toddler group for preschool children and their parents/carers. Meet at Llanelwy Community Church. See www.facebook.com/stayandplayllanelwy/ Tai Chi at the Parish Church. Contact Ann Sim on 07852 321502 Qigong at the Parish Church. Contact Ann Sim on 07852 321502
Wednesday	9.30-5pm 6pm 6-7pm	Warm Space welcome in the Library: WiFi, free internet access, papers, refreshments Informal running group; meet at the Cathedral car park. 5k run, wear high viz gear. Contact Ian Jones on 07775 684171 or Julie Roberts on 07900 188222 Exercise with Liz in Parish Church. Facebook: Rhuddlan Clubbercise and Fitness with Liz
Thursday	1.30pm	Cash bingo at Llys y Felin
Friday	9.30-5pm 2.30pm	Social Mornings in the Library: WiFi, free internet access, papers, refreshments Cash Bingo at The Old Palace.
Sunday	9.30 11.00 4-5.30pm	Eucharist in the Parish Church. All welcome Choral Eucharist in the cathedral Community Fridge in the Parish Church. All welcome. Stay after for coffee and a chat.

Regular monthly events

1st Sunday	11am	Messy Church in the Parish Church. All ages welcome, lunch provided.
1 st Monday	12-3pm	PROBUS club in Oriel Hotel. Contact Andrew: afaulkner@btinternet.com or 07542 022391
1st Tuesday	10am	Litter pick: Start at Council Meeting Rooms. Afon Elwy Environmental Group
1st Tuesday	7pm	WI meet at St Asaph Parish Church, info at stasaphwi@gmail.com
4th Friday	7.30pm	Songwriter Sessions at The Barrow discuss songwriting, share original songs/music.
4th Saturday	10am	Litter pick: Start at Council Meeting Rooms. Afon Elwy Environmental Group
3 rd Sunday	3-5pm	T Club at the Parish Church. Details on church website. Contact Marion on 01745 590960
1 ST , 3 RD Sunday	9.30 am	Eucharist, St. Mary's Church, Cefn. All welcome.

One-off events

February		
Tuesday 13th	9.30-12.30	Messy Church Half-term holiday club, includes lunch. Free. Meet at the Parish Church.
Wed 21st	2-7	Mares Interconnector consultation: Open Meeting Neuadd Owen, Cefn
29th		Merched y Wawr. Dathlu Gŵyl Dewi gyda'n gwraig wâdd yr awdures Rebecca Roberts, Prestatyn. Ystafell y Cyngor am 7.00.
March		
Friday 22 nd	6.30-11	Pop up Bar Neuadd Owen Village Hall, Cefn. All welcome
Sunday 24th	1.45	Palm Sunday Procession with donkey from St. Mary's, Cefn to Cathedral arriving for Even-song at 3.30 p.m. Join us along the way. Lunch beforehand. Details: 01745 540345
Monday 25th	7pm	Cefn Meiriadog Community Council meeting. Chapel Vestry, Marli. Residents of Cefn Meiriadog are encouraged to attend. (Bi-monthly)
Friday 29th		Bach's St. John Passion. Tremerchion Bach Choir in the Cathedral, conductor Trystan Lewis. Contact Mair 01745 583543/ 07768630055; e-mail: mair.dowell@btinternet.com
April		
4th		Merched y Wawr "Crwydro" yng nghwmni Cath Williams, Llansannan. Ystafell y Cyngor am 7.00

Denbigh & District Probus: Regenerative Farming

Gareth Foulkes was the invited speaker at the December Probus meeting. His topic was regenerative farming, about which he is clearly passionate. His main concern is to avoid degradation of the soil, which he feels is a major issue for agriculture in the UK, and he took his audience through the science behind his reasoning, and his own practice.

Ploughing soil releases significant amounts of carbon, otherwise stored safely in the ground, and also reduces CO2 uptake in the soil for up to a month afterwards. He advocates cutting back on ploughing wherever possible, replacing it with direct drilling. He tries to maintain living roots in the soil year round, and keeps soil covered whenever possible; crop monoculture will degrade the soil and will leave the soil uncovered after harvesting, so he advocates maximising crop diversity.

He has not used fertiliser nor herbicides for some years now, and is gradually noticing the benefits in terms of crop health and yields, and is less stressed about weeds than he was previously! He allows grasses and weeds to grow somewhat more than most farmers, and lets cattle onto pasture when grass is long – 12-36 inches. The cattle will trample some of the grass down as they graze; the trampled grass feeds the soil. His message? Regenerative farming is the way forward!

The Canadians in Kinmel Camp

In the January meeting Celia Drew of the Flintshire Historical Society spoke about Kinmel Camp in WW1. It was the largest military camp in Wales, built by McAlpines in 1914, and measured 2km long, with a rail link to Foryd station in Rhyl. It was predominantly a training camp, but also housed convalescents, interned aliens and “conchies”. At the end of WW1, it was used to house a large number of demobbed Canadian troops; tragically 80 died in the 1918 influenza pandemic which swept across Europe during the harsh winter. Conditions were basic, troops were forced to do meaningless exercises, and repatriation was repeatedly delayed. The men became increasingly frustrated, and on 4th March 1919, looting and disorder broke out. A troop of 60 cavalry were brought in to quell the unrest, and during a major confrontation on 5th March, 5 men were shot, 31 were wounded and 78 were arrested. There were 41 court martials, but by summer, all had been repatriated. It was a most absorbing and poignant presentation.

Denbigh and District Probus Club welcomes new members for monthly meetings held at the Oriel Hotel where they enjoy lunch, friendship and a talk from a guest speaker. Further details available at www.denbighprobus.com and on page 17..



Gareth Foulkes



Rows of graves of Canadian soldiers at St Margaret's church; mostly influenza victims.

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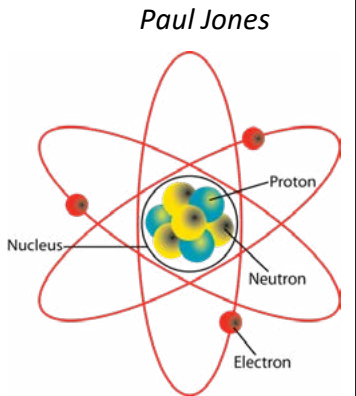
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Science Corner



Generating Electricity from nuclear power

Energy and mass are related in Einstein’s famous equation $E = mc^2$, where E represents energy, m is mass and c is the speed of light; because c is a very large number (300,000 kilometres/second), a small mass could potentially produce a colossal amount of energy. Nuclear power is generated using this relationship, by altering material structure at an atomic level. The major constituents of an atom are shown opposite



Paul Jones

Nuclear power can be generated using either nuclear fission or nuclear fusion. Neither process results in greenhouse gases.

Nuclear Fission: Fission involves splitting atoms, transforming heavy elements (usually uranium or plutonium) into lighter elements. This can happen spontaneously or by bombardment with energetic neutrons. Once a neutron is captured, the nucleus becomes very unstable and splits into two roughly equal ‘daughter’ nuclei, together with two or three free neutrons. These neutrons can collide with other uranium nuclei, which also split, resulting in a chain reaction.

In fission, some mass is converted to kinetic energy (speed) of the daughter nuclei. This surplus energy is used to heat water to produce steam to drive an electricity generator.

Source material and waste products are mostly radioactive.

Nuclear Fusion: Extremely high energies are required to initiate nuclear fusion, making the process difficult to establish. All atoms in whatever form (solid, liquid, gas or plasma) possess kinetic energy related to temperature.

Fusion uses material in the form of a gas plasma. An atom normally has an equal number of electrons (negative charge) and protons (positive charge), and is thus charge neutral. An atom with an electron deficiency is called an ion, and an ionised gas is called a plasma. Extremely powerful electromagnetic fields are used to accelerate and contain gas ions in a vacuum chamber. Ion speeds with an equivalent temperature of 150 million °C are required to achieve fusion; when ion collisions occur, some of the mass is converted to energy. Source materials are seawater and lithium; there are no radioactive waste products.

(Editor notes: Currently there are no plans to build any nuclear facility, even a small modular reactor, in St Asaph)



Your task: describe the difference between nuclear fission and nuclear fusion to someone without looking at the article again....



Coverglass: from 50 to 500 microns thick for satellite solar cells as below

To boldly go into space.....from Bodelwyddan

John Oliver

Many locals are aware of the major defence work undertaken by Qioptiq Ltd, part of the Excelitas group, on Glascoed Rd, St Asaph. However Qioptiq has also been a major player in a specialised area of the space industry for over 50 years. Their Space Technology Business Unit in Bodelwyddan is the world’s leading manufacturer of very specialised thin and coated glass used on satellites. There are two main products. “Coverglasses” protect the satellite’s solar cells from the extreme temperatures and harmful radiation found in the harsh environment of space, and “Thermal control mirrors” transmit heat from the satellite into space.

Both types of the space components utilise unique specially formulated glass types produced in a glass melting facility located in Bodelwyddan. Here about 5 tonnes of glass is made each year. This is done with a raw material batch mixing process and using an electric glass melter.

They have supported projects such as the International Space Station and the Hubble Space Telescope. Qioptiq’s technology is also on Mars - on the **Ingenuity** helicopter, and on the Mars rovers.



Mars Rover Opportunity

There are currently around 3000 satellites in orbit with some predictions estimating that number growing to 30000. So next time you look at the night sky, there’s a good chance that there will be technology up there in a satellite that’s made in a factory in nearby Bodelwyddan..... Thanks to Dr John Russell, Programme Director Advanced Optronics for providing information for this item.

Breaking News: The North Wales Ambition Board has approved the full business case for Wrexham University’s Enterprise Engineering and Optics Centre (EEOC). The Growth Deal will fund £11.55m of the total project value; the project will deliver a specialist centre for research and development, business collaboration and skills development in optics, photonics and composites as lightweight alternatives for manufacturing. It will also integrate hydrogen as a substitute fuel source contributing to sustainable practices in industry. The project will be delivered across two university sites – the OptIC Centre at St Asaph and Plas Coch campus in Wrexham.

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Denbighshire County Council—finances

Following a meeting on 23/1/23, DCC cabinet are recommending to the Council that the Council Tax should rise by 9.5%.

Denbighshire has received the highest settlement in Wales of 3.7% from Welsh Government, but nevertheless there is concern about the possibility of a major deficit—of up to £25 million next year.

Accordingly, they propose to increase Council Tax as above. This includes 1.3% attributable to the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, over which they have no control.

Councillor Brian Jones, Conservative, declared the situation to be due to “financial incompetence” within DCC, whilst the Labour leader Jason McLelland countered by asserting that Wales’ overall budget was £1.3 billion less in real terms as a result of the mismanagement of the nation’s economy by the Tory Government, in particular Liz Truss causing a “car-crash” to the economy.

Acknowledging that the proposed council tax rise was significant, Mr McLelland reported that the rise was necessary to maintain key services including education and care services. Decreasing library opening hours across the county had been one measure proposed, but as noted elsewhere, this proposal has been sent back to the drawing board for review.



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Transforming Towns programme

Ben Ross

You may not know that Welsh Government has committed to making £100 million available across Wales between 2022 and 2025, with £22 million earmarked for the 6 local authorities in North Wales. While St Asaph is home to many thriving businesses, you don't have to look far to find a naked shopfront. In fact, according to the Regenerating Towns in Wales report, published by Archwilio Cymru in 2021, as many as 1 in 7 shops on Welsh high streets is empty.

This may be understandable when so many of us shop online these days, but there are plenty of examples where savvy people have put unloved buildings to good use. Take our own Central Buildings, which are on the way to becoming a smart HQ for local marketing agency, Rowe and Bear.

Money is often the barrier to progress, which is exactly where the Transforming Towns programme could help.

Taking the form of an interest free loan administered by the relevant local authority, applicants can secure funding to bring their business plans to life:

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Once the loan is repaid, local authorities are instructed to re-invest the money to back further projects – aiming to circulate the funds 2-3 times over a 15-year period. The by-product for us all is more investment in vibrant town centres and communities across the land. Interested? Learn more at: denbighshire.gov.uk



Work starts on the roof at the Central Buildings, the former Farm shop.

Proposed Over 55 Living Accommodation development at former HM Stanley site

Pure Residential have published a proposal for a development of age-restricted living accommodation on the former HM Stanley hospital site. Planning permission had been previously been granted for a C2 use class 75 bed assisted living facility, but Pure are now asking to substitute this and instead develop a block of 51 one and two bed apartments and 5 houses as a C3 use class. The apartments would be restricted to occupancy by persons aged 55 and over, whilst the houses would be available for general occupancy.

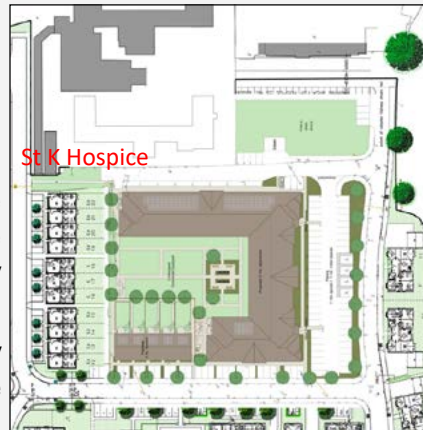
This is a **pre-application proposal** and full details are available online at <https://pureresidentialconsultationportal.uk/livingstone-place-st-asaph/>

In the event of any problems accessing the information, please contact consultation@grimsterplanning.co.uk or 07506 279147.

This gives the opportunity to comment directly to the developer on the proposed development prior to the submission of a planning application to the local planning authority; it will still be possible to comment in the usual way when a formal planning application is submitted.

The development would be on the “brownfield” site currently surrounded by blue painted hoardings and used as a construction compound. Parking will be predominantly on the western side of the apartment building.

The deadline for comments on the pre-application proposal is the 9th of February.



The design of the proposed apartment building on the right echoes the restored façade of the hospital on the left.

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Daffodils!

Chris Jones



The sight of daffodils beginning to flower is a sure sign that spring is on the way and as one of the most recognised and easy flowers to grow they are a valuable and cheery asset to any garden, pot, roadside verge or grassy area, big or small. The daffodil belongs to the genus *Narcissus*, the botanical name for all the daffodils and there is a huge number of varieties, grouped in approximately 13 divisions identified mainly by their flower characteristics and size. The largest flower sizes are the trumpet daffodils, whose flower size can range from 3-6" eg Arctic Gold. The smallest are the miniature (flower size 2"); some of these may have multiple flower heads on each stem and are very well suited to growing in a pot or an alpine garden e.g. *Jonquils Medway Gold*, *Tete-a-tete* or *Narcissus Minnow*.

Narcissi are perfect for early spring colour in the borders, and whatever your preference, there is a daffodil type to suit you. *Narcissus Thalia* is a favourite of mine; it is a pale delicate lemon which has two or three flowers per stem and a delicate scent. *Narcissus Pheasant's Eye* is one of the oldest daffodils to be cultivated, unusual in that its trumpet (flower cup) is darker. *Cheerfulness* is another favourite. *February Gold* is a very traditional daffodil flowering early with large golden yellow segments and slightly darker trumpets.

Daffodils thrive best in free draining soil which does not dry out. They can be planted in clumps to appear more natural (but not like soldiers in a row!); they are trouble free and will last and flower well for years in your garden as long as you remember to pinch off the flowers and seed capsules as they fade. Never knot the bulb foliage as this restricts resources to the bulb, but always leave the stems and leaves to die back naturally as they will continue to feed the bulb in readiness for next year. Leave a minimum of six weeks after flowering before cutting back the foliage, and before mowing areas of grasses and lawns in which bulbs are planted. In order to flower well a bulb needs to be of a certain size, and should be planted three (or even four) times the depth of the bulb. Shallow planting is often a cause of failure to flower.

Historically the leek (cenhinen) was the national symbol of Wales but the daffodil (cenhinen Pedr) was added at the beginning of the last century when David Lloyd George suggested that they should become the national emblem. It was used at the investiture of the Prince of Wales at Caernarfon Castle. It is always displayed and worn on St. David's (Dewi Sant) Day 1st. March.



Daffodils have also been used medicinally for many centuries from Roman times. Nowadays a substance which can be extracted from daffodil bulbs, Galantamine, is being produced for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

The flowers of the daffodil can brighten even the dullest winter days and can be cut and displayed in the home, but this should be done separately to other blooms as Daffodils do not mix well in a vase with other flowers as their sap is toxic. William Wordsworth famously admired the "host of golden daffodils" "in the Lake District and in Wales we can enjoy them and associate them with our patron saint as well as knowing that the Tenby daffodil was actually that original native daffodil. The daffodil has long been associated with good luck and hope and if you give a bunch of daffodils to someone it is a sign of friendship and goodwill.

St Asaph Allotment Association

Jo Cotton

St Asaph continues to have a very active allotment group down at our sunny site on the common by the banks of the Elwy. We had a busy and productive time last year with lots of challenges from the weather extremes and the local wildlife. However, there is nothing like the pleasure of taking home fresh produce that you have grown yourself, whether it's fruit, vegetables or flowers. The taste and smell of home-grown produce reminds you that a lot of our shop bought produce, whilst safe to eat, has been harvested some time ago. Growing your own brings flavour to your food and can help with food budgets.

Very sadly, one of our members, Ken Hipkiss, died suddenly at the end of last year. Ken was a member of our working party and was responsible for building our raised bed accessible plot. This plot is for anyone who has mobility difficulties and wants to try and grow some produce. Ken was passionate about growing and spending time out in the fresh air at the allotments and he will be very sadly missed.

This is the time of year that we look at plot allocations and if anyone fancies the challenge - and enjoyment - that having a go at 'growing your own' will bring please get in touch with the membership secretary for more information and an informal chat.

Email: Jo.stasaph@gmail.com or leave a message on 07801 431001.



In memory of Chris Smith

Neal Smith walked the 63 miles from Denbigh to Old Trafford over 3 days from 19th January in memory of his brother Christian (Chris) who died suddenly in December. Chris’ death was a devastating blow to parents John and Sandra Smith, long-standing residents of St Asaph, and to his brothers Adam and Neal. They have expressed heartfelt thanks for the huge support and care shown to them by the wider family, friends in St Asaph and further afield, and even people they barely knew.

“ Chris was the kindest, most generous and honest person. He grew up in St Asaph, went to Denbigh High School and was a massive Man Utd fan, never missing a game on TV. Through his life, Chris endured difficulties with mental health which meant his dream of watching a live match in person could never be a reality for him. Always caring for others throughout the struggles of his own day to day life. He enrolled in theatre classes, drama sessions, independent plays and even small budget films. He was reaching his life’s dream”



Chris Smith



Neal, who works with people living with dementia, undertook his walk as a fund-raiser for MIND, the “wonderful mental health charity”, but mainly as a tribute to Chris, and also a time to remember, reflect and to grieve. Although many people offered to walk with him part of the way, he chose to walk unaccompanied. It was challenging weather, with storm Isha blasting in, and a steep climb up over the snow-covered Clwydians to start. His eventual arrival at Old Trafford to be greeted by his mother, his wife Lizzie, and supporters was an overwhelming moment.

The fund-raising target was initially set at £1000, but within a day, donations had almost reached £2000; the target was revised upwards as donations poured in and at the time of writing has reached over £5300. Neal’s involvement with Wrexham football club as an organiser of music by local bands and musicians to be played over the PA system before matches meant that he had numerous contacts there. With Wrexham’s international profile, donations came in from the States, Canada and Australia; the level of generosity and words of support from donors was deeply moving to Neal and the family.

You can donate to Neal’s fundraising page in support of MIND on [Justgiving.com/page/chrismartinsmith](https://www.justgiving.com/page/chrismartinsmith)

Catrin of Berain (1534-91) The Mother of Wales

Chris Southern

Influence and intrigue has historically been the province of men throughout the ages, but one local woman who broke the mould was Catrin of Berain. Sometimes called ‘Mam Cymru’ or ‘Mother of Wales’, Catrin was a Welsh noblewoman noted for her links to Henry VIII, espionage during the reign of Elizabeth 1 and her own four marriages and extensive network of descendants and relations.



Berain

Born at Berain, near Llanefydd, her parents were Tudur ap Robert Vychan and Jane Velville. Her maternal grandfather, Sir Roland de Velville, was Governor of Beaumaris Castle and is said to have been a natural son of Henry VIII by a Breton lady (also called Katheryn) who was heiress to the Berain and Penymynydd estates in Denbighshire and Anglesey.

Though she lived as a child in relative obscurity, by the age of 22 she had married John Salusbury who came from a wealthy neighbouring family. This was probably an arranged ‘child marriage’ and the year of the marriage is not known.

However, a letter written by John while at Westminster School mentions his wife. The couple were married for nine years and had two sons.

Thomas, the eldest son, was a staunch Catholic which it is said led him to involvement in the notorious Babington Plot - a conspiracy to aid a Spanish invasion of England and put Mary Queen of Scots on the English throne and/or to assassinate Elizabeth I. He was convicted as a traitor, along with six other suspected conspirators and was hung, drawn and quartered in September, 1586.

John, the younger son, was by contrast a staunch Protestant and was noted for his ‘ostentatious loyalty’ to Queen Elizabeth. John was appointed ‘squire of the body’ to the Queen and in 1601 was knighted by her for suppressing the Essex rebellion. He became the MP for Denbighshire and a poet. Shakespeare’s poem ‘The Phoenix and the Turtle’ was dedicated to John.

Catrin’s first marriage to John Salusbury lasted until his death in 1566. It is said that as she was walking from the church following John’s funeral, Maurice Wynn of Gwydir proposed to her – but she refused as she had already accepted an offer of marriage from Sir Richard Clough on the way to church! She did promise that ‘in case she performed the same sad duty (which she was then about) for the knight’ Maurice might depend on being her third husband!’



Plas Clough, above, and Bach y Graig Farmhouse below



Reader, Catrin did marry Sir Richard Clough. The son of a Denbigh glover, he had a fine singing voice and was dispatched from the choir of Chester Cathedral to serenade the court in London. That led him to a career as a merchant in partnership with Sir Thomas Gresham and untold riches. Richard divided his time between North Wales, London (where he was one of the founders of the Stock Exchange) and Antwerp, from whence he provided important information for Sir William Cecil, Queen Elizabeth’s spymaster. In 1567 he built two houses, **Bach y Graig** (Tremeirchion) and **Plas Clough** (Denbigh Green) which were constructed in the Antwerp style by Flemish craftsmen and were the first brick houses in Wales.

Catrin and Richard had two daughters: Anne, who married into the Salusbury family and Mary, who married into the well-known Wynn family.

Within six years of their marriage, Sir Richard Clough died in Hamburg aged forty, amid rumours that he was poisoned because of his work as a spy for Queen Elizabeth I. True to her earlier promise Catrin then married Maurice Wynn of Gwydir. He was by then High Sheriff of Caernarfonshire and the couple had two children; Henry who married Blanche Vaughan and Jane who married Simon Thelwall.

When Maurice died Catrin had become an extremely wealthy woman and married her fourth and final husband Edward Thelwall of Plas-y-Ward. Catrin of Berain died on 27 August, 1591 and is buried at the parish church in the village of Llanefydd, near the farm where she grew up. After her death 13 elegies were written in her praise, eight in Welsh (including one by the Welsh poet Robert Parry), three in English, and two in Latin.

Catrin’s story might have ended there, but in the next issue you can find out how Catrin became famous for a second time....



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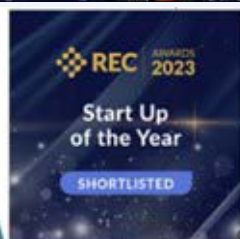
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Monique Davies Director, Silver Award Welsh Business Woman of the Year 2023

Trustpilot review: "I've been with placement staffing for a year now and they are a great company to work for. I've been in the care industry for many years and these are by far the best I've worked for. A very fair company that look after all their staff and all their service users, it's great to work for a care company that truly do care".



WI Llanelwy

Denise D'Albertson

In November we held our Annual Meeting, which was followed by an informative talk from **Louise Cunliffe** about the work of **The Cinnamon Trust**. The Trust helps elderly and terminally ill people with their pets, which includes dogs, cats and other animals. The Trust was founded in 1985 by Mrs Averil Jarvis and its primary objective is to respect and preserve the treasured relationship between owners and their pets.

WI Llanelwy held a **No More Violence Against Women & White**

Ribbon event at St Asaph Cathedral, which was very well attended. The President of Llanelwy WI started by giving an overview of the campaigns, which was followed by the Mayor of St Asaph, Cllr **Colin Hardie**, who spoke about becoming a White Ribbon Ambassador and encouraging the St Asaph City Council to do the same. He said that it is through campaigns such as this, that awareness will be brought to the issue and reduce the abuse of women.

Our next speaker was **Mike Taggart** MBE of North Wales Police and a Trustee of **White Ribbon UK**. He explained why the campaign is aimed at men and the role they should play in stopping abuse against women. Men should make a stand because men can talk to men as a brotherhood to try to change behaviour. Next were **Lisa Harbour** and **Rhiannon Compton** from **Swayne Johnson Solicitors**, St Asaph. Rhiannon wanted everyone to be assured that they subscribe to a strict code of confidentiality throughout the company. The solicitors can work with victims on a variety of injunctions to provide a level of safeguarding for the victim and property, and a normalisation order that prohibits contact both physical and verbal.

Our last speaker was **Katrina Jones**, **North Wales Women's Centre**, Rhyl who spoke about the services that they offer. The centre supports women not only from the fallout of abuse, but also financial, accommodation and emotional issues. They also offer personal development courses and counselling. An excellent open floor discussion followed. Finally, members walked down a white ribboned St Asaph High Street to draw attention to the campaign.

If you would like to know more about Llanelwy WI, please email stasaphwi@gmail.com



ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS HOWEVER BIG OR SMALL

WHAT A HOOT!
Why did the owl invite his friends over? He didn't want to be owl by himself.

FIND THE HIDDEN WORDS

H	S	Y	H	C	E	E	R	C	S
N	N	N	O	A	T	Y	L	J	O
E	W	W	A	L	B	O	V	T	J
D	B	A	R	N	O	V	E	L	O
T	S	T	Q	E	N	I	E	L	E
R	T	T	I	E	N	I	E	L	E
O	R	D	G	A	A	L	A	I	A
D	E	A	R	F	N	N	H	T	R
E	E	T	M	N	R	H	S	T	E
R	V	F	A	U	S	R	P	L	D
A	M	O	T	N	T	A	I	E	C
E	U	C	F	O	F	B	A	D	K
G	O	I	G	R	U	F	F	J	D
N	E	L	R	I	H	S	E	G	R
O	A	P	A	O	P	T	A	H	A
L	A	N	E	S	T	Z	R	A	M

BARN
TAWNY
LITTLE
SHORT-EARED

LONG-EARED
SCREECH
NOCTURNAL
NEST

COLOUR IN THIS LITTLE SCENE



DID YOU KNOW?
5 species of owl are found in the UK. Tawny owls are most common, while long-eared owls are the rarest.



BARN



TAWNY



LITTLE



SHORT-EARED



LONG-EARED



Ysgol Cefn Meiriadog

The Nursery admissions window for September 2024 closes on the 16th February.
Apply for your child's place now at <https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/education-and-schools/school-admissions/nursery-places.aspx>

If your child turns 3 before the 31.8.24 you are eligible to apply for a place.

We would love to help you make the right decision for your child, if you would like to book an appointment to come and see our lovely school in action and to find out more about our offer please get in touch on 01745582224 or via e mail at cefn.meiriadog@denbighshire.gov.uk

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Thursday 9:00am-1:00pm



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citizens advice Denbighshire

Registered charity number 1109852



Ysgol Glan Clwyd

Talwrn y Beirdd

Llongyfarchiadau i'r criw barddol ar ennill y gystadleuaeth Talwrn BBC Cymru yn erbyn Ysgol Maes Garmon mewn rhifyn arbennig a ddarlledwyd ddechrau Ionawr. Cafodd y criw gyfle i weithio dan arweiniad y prifardd Rhys Iorwerth a fu'n fentor arnynt gan gynnal sawl dosbarth meistr yn y cyfnod yn arwain at yr ymryson. Go dda chi!

Meryl Pierce

Techno-seren

Dathlwn hefyd lwyddiant arbennig Jake Chow, bl13 ar ennill gwobr arbennig wedi'i dyfarnu gan CBAC am ei gampwaith wrth greu diwygiwr poteli plastig. Derbyniodd ei wobwr mewn seremoni arbennig yn y Senedd, ym Mae Caerdydd. Nid dyma'r tro cyntaf i Jake ennill gwobr o'r fath ac mae'n amlwg fod ganddo dalent arbennig ym maes technoleg.

Tipyn o gamp!

Mor falch ydym o ddwy o'n disgyblion sydd wedi ennill cap i Gymru wrth chwarae yn nhîm pêldroed y merched. Enillodd Annie Davies, blwyddyn 11 ei chap cyntaf tra bod Megan Galeandro, blwyddyn 12 wedi ennill ei phumed cap. Mae cyrraedd safon o'r fath yn gofyn am gryn ymarfer, ymrwymiad a dyfalbarhad heb sôn am yr holl deithio yn ôl a blaen i Gaerdydd. Gwych, ferched!

Llongyfarchiadau arbennig hefyd i Mason Parry bl11 ar gael ei ddewis i sgwad pêldroed bechgyn Cymru yn ddiweddar. Pob lwc, Mason.



Tim Talwrn y Beirdd



Jake Chow



Annie Davies a Megan Galeandro



Mason Parry



VP School: Super Stars in the making ... Lights, Camel, Action !

Kate Langford

We had an amazing Christmas at the VP with all children taking part in Nativity productions. We were delighted to be able to perform in St Asaph Cathedral this year and would like to thank the Diocese for their generosity. The Cathedral provides a beautiful and special setting for many of our services and parent share events – diolch. A huge well done to our children who made us immensely proud during their performances.

Cynefin

Did you know as part of the New Curriculum at the VP we develop Cynefin? The school recently won the Welsh Heritage award for the effective way we develop the Welsh language and Welsh culture at our school. We are developing the learners' identity as children who live in Wales, can use Welsh language and love where they live. In March we will be hosting a joint service in the Cathedral with Ysgol Esgob Morgan to celebrate our Welsh identity. Heads up... if you're coming along to the service you need to get practising your singing – we are looking forward to sharing our performances of the Welsh National Anthem, Sosban Fach and Dau Gi Bach and hope you will sing along with us too!

Nursery applications for September 2024

A polite reminder to any families with children born between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021. Your child is eligible to attend Nursery class from September 2024, so apply for a place at our Nursery using the Denbighshire website. The **closing date for Nursery applications is 16th February 2024**. We do have waiting lists for some of our classes so families are advised to apply on time.





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Welsh idioms

“Gwyn y gwêl y frân ei chyw.”

Often shortened to “Gwyn y Gwêl...” In English, “the crow sees its chick as white”. There is no pithy English equivalent, but the mother watching her son on parade says “Everyone’s out of step apart from my Johnny...”

www.learnwelsh.cymru



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Gogledd Ddwyrain North East

Cylch Meithrin Llanellwy

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[f cylchmeithrinllanellwy](https://www.facebook.com/cylchmeithrinllanellwy)

07775 455375
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Stride to 5k programme—massive uptake!

There has been an enthusiastic uptake to the running programme launched by the St Asaph City Striders group, with an extraordinary 41 people turning up for the first Tuesday session. There are three leaders from the Striders who have undertaken specific training to lead this UK-wide recognised programme, designed to lead people gradually into a running habit. It starts with a mix of running and walking to gradually build up your fitness and stamina, with week 1 involving running for only 1 minute spells. The programme covers clothing, shoes, warm-up, and health issues, and also proved an enjoyable social event for participants!

It may be too late to join this Stride to 5k programme now, but if you want advice about starting to run, or returning to running, you are invited to ring SACS leaders Ian Jones on 07775684171 or Julie Roberts on 07900 188222.

Apart from the Stride to 5k programme on Tuesdays, the Striders have their weekly run on Wednesday evenings at 6pm, starting in the cathedral carpark. There are three groups—fast, medium and “modest”! Contact Ian or Julie as above.



C'mon you saints!

Despite losing our first team manager and his team of coaches to tier 2 club Prestatyn the **first team** have continued their fine run of form and recorded their highest league win of the season when they defeated Conwy Borough 5-1 and maintained their third place in the League. The **Reserves** are also having a good season and although they lost their last league fixture 4-2 to Pwllheli they are also third in their league. The Under 19s league was divided into two leagues of 8 teams based on results before Christmas. After playing two matches under the new structure the **Under 19s** are top of their league.

While our junior teams have had a break from league fixtures over the Christmas period a number of them have taken part in various tournaments.

It was a perfect end to 2023 for our **Under 11 Lightning** team as they lifted the Championship Cup at the Aura Tournament in Flint. Terrible weather could not dampen their spirits and they clinched the trophy after a penalty shootout in the final.

Following on from that success they recently took part in a Kick it Sports Festival which they won in fine style. At the end of the event one member of the team was awarded Player of the Night by the Referees and organisers of the event.

Our **Under 10 Llewod** put in an exceptional performance at the Aura Tournament, winning every match against some of the area's strongest teams on their way to the Premier Cup final, before unfortunately missing out on the trophy in a close match.

The final success of the Aura tournaments when the **U8s Flames** beat Flint 5-0 in the final.

John Roberts



A Gazza moment in the Reserves fight back against Pwllheli!



Under 11 Lightnings



Under 10 Llewod

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