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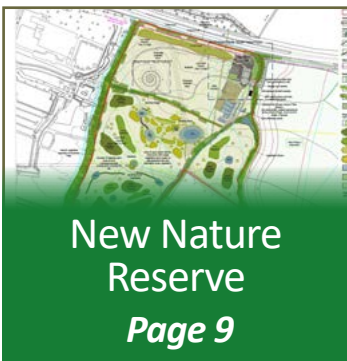


St. Asaph & District City Times

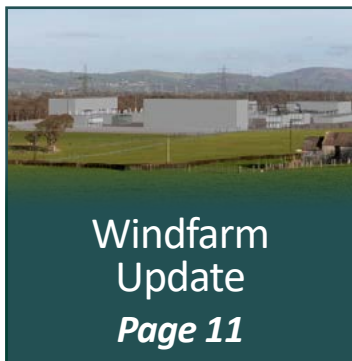
Issue No 31

December 2024

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TAKES A BREAK
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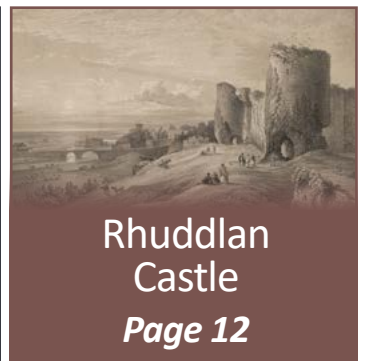
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**This issue is kindly sponsored
by St Asaph City Council**



City Times Team: Duncan Cameron, Lian Crierie, Chris Southern, John Oliver, Jo Cotton, Chris Jones, Fiona Shand, Ben Ross, Janet Cameron and Will Evers-Swindell.

Editorial

Duncan Cameron

At the time of writing, this seems likely to be the last issue of the St Asaph and District City Times, at least for the foreseeable future. The current team have produced 31 issues of the paper over the last 5 years and are grateful to all those who have contributed items, photos and articles over this period. We are indebted to the many local businesses, organisations and individuals that have sponsored and advertised in the City Times—without their generous support it would not have been possible. We are likewise grateful for grant support from Gwynt Y Môr and from Active Communities/Denbigh Leisure. The paper is a non-profit organisation, and has been produced and distributed solely by volunteers. The wonderful 30 strong team of distributors have between them delivered over 62,000 copies of the City Times in fair weather and foul! We are also grateful to Emyr and Alec at Fineline printers in Ruthin, who have been immensely helpful.

Denise Hodgkinson and her team produced and developed the original St Asaph City Times for 23 years from 1994 to 2017—a remarkable record the current team cannot begin to match! From 2017 to 2019, there was a period without the City Times, until we restarted it. It may well be that new volunteers will come forward in due course to resurrect the paper, possibly in a different format.

We live in a great community, set in the beautiful Vale of Clwyd, with the prospect of the new Clwydian Range & Dee Valley National Park at our doorstep. For a small city, we have a huge number of groups, organisations and clubs, and energetic and effective residents. Whilst there have been some recent closures, there are many thriving businesses, particularly in the Business Park. There are of course significant challenges for St Asaph and the surrounding district, many of which are nationwide problems, but there are many people beaver away to address the challenges and contribute to life here.

We hope that the paper has also contributed, and above all, we hope that you, the readers, have enjoyed the City Times! For my part, one of the highlights has been the team meeting — occasions full of enthusiasm, laughter, reflection, interesting observations and a well-spring of local information. There is some serious writing talent within our team and amongst our contributors. Occasionally a little gossip also—not all stories can be told! The team has had other members over the years, most notably the late and much missed Sue Scott. Our thanks to them also.

Although we are independent of the City Council, we have worked closely with them on many occasions and are grateful for their encouragement and support. We are fortunate to have Council members ready to give time and energy.

Back copies: Copies of past issues can be found in the library, or online at stasaphcitycouncil.gov.uk A hard copy of each issue is also being sent to the National Library in Aberystwyth to gather dust until disturbed by some diligent researcher in years to come.

Letter

"I'm sure many of you would like to join with us in giving heartfelt thanks to Duncan Cameron in his commitment as editor in chief of the St Asaph City Times over the past 5 years, and also sincere thanks to the excellent team that work with him" Valmai and Derfel Williams, Mount Road.



City Times Editor honoured.

John Oliver (who will miss writing items in the April issue..!)

We are pleased to let you all know that our retiring editor, Duncan Cameron, has been granted the "**Commoner's Freedom of the City of St Asaph**". This honour, although not well known and rarely awarded, dates back to 1658, and was granted to any common citizen who had provided "*a long service of well being to the local community without reward*". Freedom of the City gives the right to a commoner to "*trade herfe*

faddlef and whips on a funday" on what is now the cathedral carpark "*freely drive on foot up to twelve sheep down the high street on market day without hindrance*" and to claim a "*half jug of mead at every hostelry on the way*".

Cheers everyone!



St Asaph horse fair by the cathedral



Duncan driving sheep followed by City Councillors and dignitaries



Selected notes from the City Council meeting on 13/11/2024

Police Report: Dave Jones PCSO reported that Bonfire night and Halloween, often associated with antisocial behaviour, were both manageable, with only a few incidents.

In response to the report of the headless dipper in the last City Times, a member of the public had contacted the City Times. He had witnessed youngsters damaging the head, and had subsequently rescued it and kept it safe until it was collected by the police. The dipper has a splitting headache (pictured opposite), but looks forward to being restored.

The North Wales Police's annual operation to catch drink-drivers will start on December 1st.

There had been a theft of heating oil in Tremeirchion, and appropriate security measures are advised.

Dave Jones has been involved in running sessions on knife crime in schools and youth clubs.

Mayor's report: Cllr Hardie has had a busy time with multiple attendances at events in addition to his usual responsibilities. Amongst the events were civic services, charity events and pumpkin judging—always a tricky task. He was delighted to visit Ysgol Esgob Morgan for their excellent William Morgan Bible event.

County Councillors' reports: Both emphasised that the finances of the County Council are under severe pressure. Cllr Scott reported that as part of his duties as chair of the County Council, he had attended flag raising services, climate change and ecological emergency working groups and Citizenship ceremonies. Cllr Hogg Had been pleased to hear the Business Park described as the "jewel in the County's business crown". He drew attention to the improved drain arrangement on the Upper Denbigh road. It remains to be seen how it will perform in heavy rain.

Cllr Hogg noted that updated proposals to turn the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley into a new National Park are out for consultation until 16th December (*search Wales' New National Park Proposal Consultation*). He had been pleased to hear that the Clwydian Range scored very highly on the Dark Skies project, reminding us that 50% of pollination occurred at night, and that outdoor light can seriously disrupt that.



Great crested newt

He had visited the new nature reserve site (see page 9) and was intrigued to hear that in some areas sniffer dogs are now used to locate the endangered great crested newts. Once located, newts are removed from construction sites and relocated in suitable habitats—such as the nature reserve. The construction sites are then encircled with plastic sheets to prevent return.

St Asaph sign: Cllr Morton pointed out that the St Asaph sign on the Upper Denbigh Road and the planters had not been replaced after recent work there. This will be addressed.

Waste collection from public bins: One of the current contractors for waste removal had been unreliable, and had left the overhead barriers open. The Council agreed to seek a more reliable and better priced contractor.

Insurance: There was discussion about insurance for the Bowling Club buildings. Insurance for the buildings is covered by the Council, but not the contents which belong to the club. Cllr Roberts confirmed that the football club pays its own contents and public liability insurance; the Council insures the football club building and fixtures.

Meeting room: The Council meeting room on Roe Plas has been used regularly this year providing useful extra income.

Solar Panels: With respect to planning application, no objections were made regarding the revised proposal for solar panels on the Translators' café roof.

Flagpoles: The annual inspection of flagpoles had taken place.

Mill Race meadows. There is a public footpath across the meadows. Walkers must keep to it, and keep dogs on leads at all times as there are sheep there. Funds to put up waymarker posts and signs on the path were approved.

Santa: An increase in funds to purchase gifts for Santa's grotto was approved— apparently the big man in red had run out of presents at the previous event.



Translators' tearoom

Full minutes of the meeting will be available online at www.stasaphcitycouncil.gov.uk after the draft minutes are signed off at the next meeting. E-mails to the Council should be addressed to clerk@stasaphcitycouncil.gov.uk



An accident waiting to happen. There have been multiple reports on social media about a youth riding what appears to be an electric dirt bike around St Asaph in a dangerous and irresponsible manner—on the wrong side of the road, cutting across cars, riding at night in dark clothing with a balaclava and no lights. Not only does this cause alarm to drivers and pedestrians, but it surely is a major risk for the young person concerned. Advice to all such riders is to get lights, wear bright/reflective clothing and beware of other road users. Just stay safe...



John Smith (Royal Military Police), Major Brad Percival and Bill Taylor (Royal Artillery)



Elias and Jacob (U7s team) with coach Seth Williams lay a wreath on behalf of St Asaph Football Club



Remembrance Sunday

One of the largest crowds in recent years gathered for the Act of Remembrance at the Cenotaph on November 10th. In the Remembrance service at the cathedral, the choir sang the quietly beautiful anthem *"So they gave their bodies for the commonwealth and received praise that will never die"* and Canon Michael Balkwill gave a powerful address. The parade to the Cenotaph was led by Major Brad Percival, and following the Last Post and the two minutes silence many organisations and groups laid wreaths. It was as always a moving ceremony, particularly with current conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East. It was also an opportunity for civic pride with such a turnout from our small city.

Trelawnyd Male Voice Choir

have kindly nominated St Kentigern Hospice as their chosen charity for their annual carol service which will be held in St Asaph Cathedral on Sunday 15th December. This is one of the highlights of the Christmas season. All tickets sold out early on.



Hockey keeper's kit in memory of Austin

Earlier this year, the hockey community was saddened by the loss of David Austin Savage, an iconic Welsh and GB goalkeeper who made an indelible mark on the sport. Known for his passion, skill, and commitment, Austin's influence extended far beyond the pitch. Proud of Austin's achievements, the Savage family has honoured his legacy by donating a goalkeeper kit to Ruthin Hockey Club. The club was chosen as the first recipient due to the family's ties to the club; the club's commitment to youth development and its bilingual online presence further reflects the family's values and Austin's spirit as a passionate, fluent Welsh speaker.

The Savage family and Savage Field Hockey intend to make this donation an annual tradition, supporting a North Wales club each year to aid in the development of young goalkeepers. Hoci Cymru extends its heartfelt thanks to the Savage family, Savage Field Hockey, and Mercian Hockey for their generosity and enduring support of Welsh hockey.



Kyiv September 2024

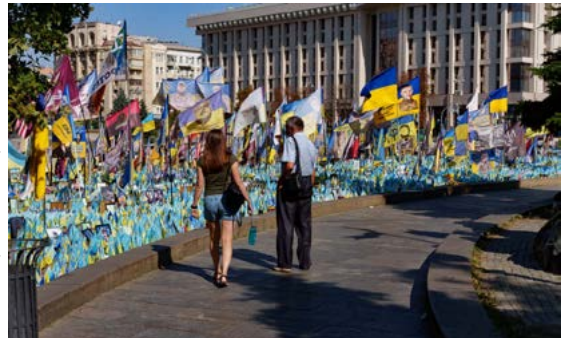
Anthony Harrison

Having grown up in Great Britain in the 80s and 90s I have not experienced war; the Troubles in Ireland and the Falklands were very real but did not encroach upon the tranquillity of life in North Wales. I never imagined that I would encounter some of what previous generations had endured in the World Wars, but this trip was about to change that, with the sound of air-raid sirens and rockets being intercepted in the skies above me. My partner is Ukrainian and in the 2 years we have been together I haven't visited her homeland due to the ongoing war, however meeting her family and seeing her home became a must, the risk outweighed by the desire to understand her and her heritage.



On arrival in Kyiv, we disembarked the train to the sound of our first air-raid siren; people moved quickly along the platform to the underground. Parts of the overground station close when there is an air-raid warning, but technology now helps the residents know with a degree of accuracy where the danger is. People around us all check their phones and realise that we are safe and life returns to normal. NORMAL!? It is so surreal to see that life goes on here in the face of constant danger, but I am reminded that this is not the frontline. Kyiv is well defended; living in cities such as Kharkiv or elsewhere on the frontline is a very different matter. One evening as the sun was setting, our apartment was flooded with the light of a warm autumn sunset, a basket of vegetables illuminated on the windowsill, a fragile and tranquil moment that alluded to a time before this conflict.

Over the next 5 days I travelled around the city, mainly by underground that runs very efficiently. It is busy with commuters, shoppers, students and soldiers returning home on leave. At first glance it could be mistaken for any large Eastern European city, but then you notice the difference in demographics. It is mainly women, children and the elderly that surround you. Men are here but in much reduced numbers. I captured an image of a woman at a café sitting at a table next to an empty chair, the chairs the colours of the country's flag, a poignant reminder of how so many women and men feel as their partners are away at war or lost to it. In the city centre installations have been created that carry the images and stories of some of the people killed in this conflict, together with a space for families and friends to place flags for fallen soldiers. There are thousands. It is sobering and heartbreaking, and the true cost of this conflict.



What I would see on a journey to Irpin, a town that was invaded at the start of the war, would shock me even more. We pass a multitude of billboards blazoned with an eclectic array of advertising, until one in particular grabs my attention, a black background with one word in white, **Чому?** - which I recognize with my limited knowledge of Ukrainian, as **Why?** When our car stopped at a car park on the outskirts of the town that question rang loudly in my head. Cars and vans of civilians that tried to flee the invasion were piled on top of each other, burnt out and riddled with bullet and shrapnel holes; a horrific demonstration of the brutality of this war.

When the time came to leave, I was conflicted about my experience. I was happy to see that for so many life was going on; I saw several marriages and christenings, and spent precious time with family, and was made to feel welcome with such warmth and generosity. But seeing even a small fraction of the human cost of this brutal war was hard to take and it was harrowing to see at first hand the toll this is taking in lives, and on those left behind. I hope for peace.

Anthony Harrison is a St Asaph resident and a professional photographer. You can see more of his extensive portfolio of work at www.anthonyharrison.co.uk There are some stunning images.



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Gill German Member of Parliament for Clwyd North

“Since being elected as MP for Clwyd North in July, it has I must admit been something of a whirlwind. To represent and speak for this most beautiful part of north Wales where my family and I live is an immense privilege. I have met already with constituents and businesses from St. Asaph and surrounding towns and villages, who remind me enthusiastically of the potential this area has for growth and employment. That will be one of my biggest drivers for Clwyd North. If my role as MP is anything, it is to help keep places like St. Asaph places where we choose to live, work, and call home. Encouraging and supporting local businesses to thrive, grow and offer sustainable employment for local people is one of my key ambitions.

I am grateful to have this opportunity to introduce myself as your MP in the St. Asaph City Times. I know how much hard work goes into its creation and distribution and I offer my thanks to Duncan and the team for their incredibly hard work over the past years.

Re-reading past editions, I am reminded of the wife of a former MP in this area, Catrin of Berain, often best remembered for stories about her marriages. I’ve always felt slightly disappointed that the life of ‘Mam Cymru’ is generally recalled through how many husbands she had. We are all so unique and have so much potential, I really am interested in what we can all individually contribute.

If we can work together to grow our local economy, make sure that young people have the opportunity to stay here and lead fulfilling lives; if we can make sure our older people have the homes and care they need as well as frequent opportunities to socialise and enjoy family and friends; and if we can achieve the right balance between attracting the investment we need to build successful businesses and much-needed local facilities while ensuring we keep this part of the Vale of Clwyd as a place of outstanding beauty, then, like Catrin of Berain, we will have made much larger contributions than people may ever remember us for.

In November I held a surgery in St. Asaph and I hold regular surgeries across the constituency. I also hold weekly online surgeries so you can speak with me without having to travel if you prefer.

If you would like to attend one of these surgeries, notify me of a local issue or invite me to a community event, please email me at gill.german.mp@parliament.uk. You can also write to me at House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA or you can contact me through my website at gillgerman.org. I look forward to meeting and hearing from you soon.”

Qioptiq wins big order

The Ministry of Defence has just awarded a contract worth £120 million to St Asaph based **Qioptiq** to provide 10,000 **TALON** Fused Weapon Sights for our armed forces. **TALON** FWS is an extraordinary piece of kit which combines the image produced by an image intensifier with a thermal imaging system, runs on 2 AA batteries, and can identify targets at up to 1km





away. This will provide an extra capability to give British troops a significant tactical edge during night-time operations. The cutting-edge sights are compatible with the Army’s SA80A3 and HUNTER rifles, and can readily combine with other weaponry; **TALON** attaches to Picatinny or NATO accessory rails in front of the day sight via a quick-release throw lever.

The sights have been trialled by the 2nd Royal Yorks battalion, based in Chester, and have met with enthusiastic approval. The 7 year contract will help maintain up to 650 locally based jobs in the company.

Purple for Polio

Rhyl Rotary Club, based (and well represented) in St Asaph, continues to raise funds to defeat polio. Dean of the cathedral The Very Reverend Nigel Williams commented: "We are proud to be supporting World Polio Day on October 24th and the purple-lit cathedral will join other illuminated landmarks around the world to celebrate the virtual elimination of this crippling disease, thanks to the efforts of so many organisations led by Rotary International”.



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The new Green Gates farm Nature Reserve.

Duncan Cameron



The view from Green Gates farmhouse deteriorated somewhat with the building of the A55 just a few feet away, and the house would no doubt have shaken to its foundations as each ferry-bound HGV thundered past.

The farmhouse has been uninhabited now for some years, and along with the outbuildings and spoil from the creation of wetland habitat, it will shortly be bulldozed into a heap to form a viewing mound for the new 70 acre nature reserve being developed there.

County Councils in Wales are required to develop nature reserves, and as owners of the farm, it was decided to add Green Gates farm to the other St Asaph nature reserve sites—the field by the New Inn, and the reserve on the Glascoed road.

Habitat creation on this area will see the restoration of existing ponds, the

creation of new ponds, the creation of a wetland area with reedbeds adjacent to two small watercourses and creation of woodland and grassland habitat areas. The viewing mound itself will be set in a wildflower meadow. Some areas are designated for “self-generating scrub vegetation” - which presumably means letting it all grow wild.

Comment has been made on social media about the absence of parking. This seems likely to ensure that it will be first and foremost a nature reserve, and to avoid it becoming a venue for people parking overnight. It won't be too much of a leg stretch from St Asaph, or a swift spin on the bike. It will be within reach of the lunchtime walkers at the Business Park, and will be a great venue for site visits by local schools.

Inevitably there has been lively discussion on Facebook about the whole project—with many criticising the use of land in this way. A spirited and well argued defence of the nature reserve has been given by Cllr. Martyn Hogg.

Covering 70 acres, it is a large site, and will be a significant addition to habitat space in the county. It will surround the successful tree nursery, which is almost self-funding, and which currently is home to 40,000 young trees at varying stages of growth. Like the tree nursery, the nature reserve may offer opportunities for volunteers as well.

The project will be fully funded by a grant of £309k from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund' and £312k from the Welsh Government Local Places for Nature (LPfN) grant. The work should be completed by summer 2025.

For more information, and to learn more about volunteer opportunities, visit biodiversity@denbighshire.gov.uk

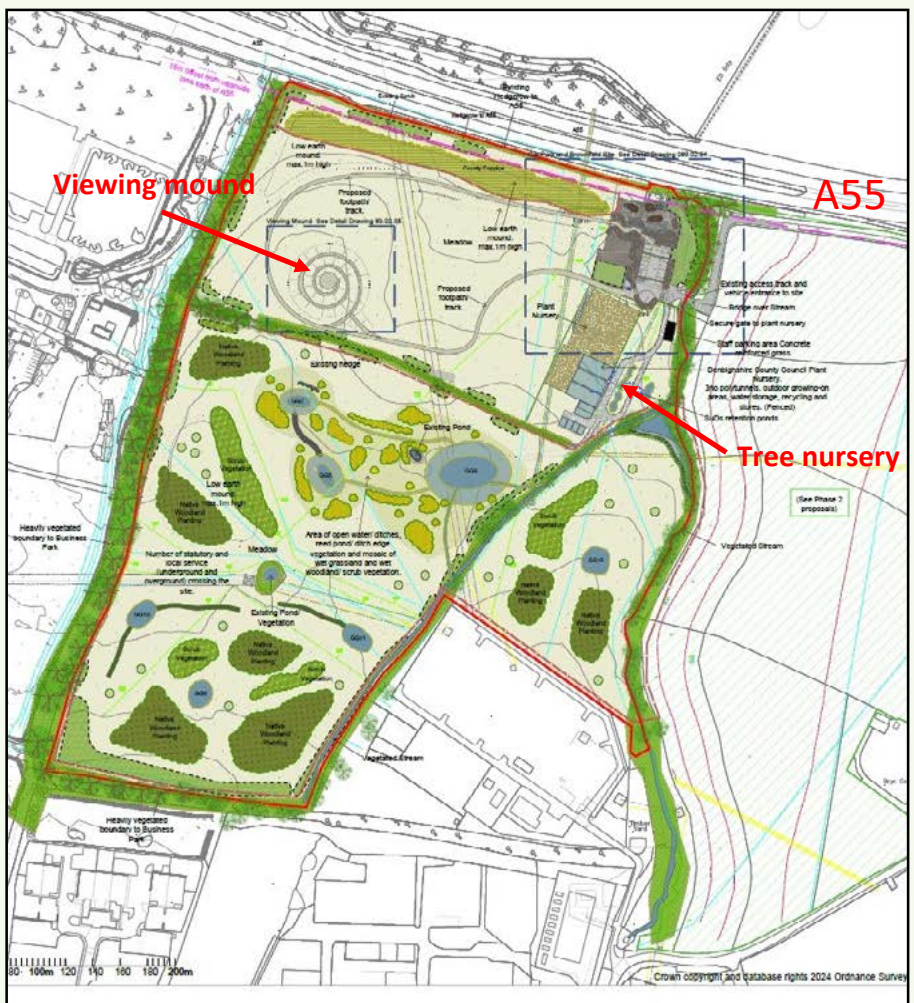


Photo: Daily Post

Blue Ribbon for White House!

Congratulations to the White House Hotel Restaurant & Spa who kindly sponsored the October issue of the City Times. The restaurant has been awarded a prestigious 'Blue Ribbon' at the recent Good Food Awards. The awards celebrate culinary excellence across the UK, and are largely based on customer feedback/votes and online reviews. The Blue Ribbon and Gold Seal honours are awarded to establishments that show “exceptional food quality, service, and value”. Well deserved recognition!

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Merry Christmas!

Happy New Year!



The Cathedral Clock 1794

Mike Parry-Jones

Back in my schooldays, along with everybody else, I saw history lessons as an exercise in remembering dates. I’m not sure I saw the point in that. It seemed that much of education was a routine of being tested but without any reward other than the avoidance of criticism or even ridicule. I’m sure things are different now.

The date on the clock can tell us the simple fact that it’s been there for 230 years. The date is also useful because it helps us to learn other things. Going back to history lessons again we can also tell that we had a king on the throne and he was George III who reigned for the better part of 60 years. During his troubled time on the throne there were periods when he wasn’t capable of reigning effectively owing to illness which gave him the nickname of Mad King George.

When the clock was installed the American colonies had won the War of Independence some 10 years earlier, and George Washington was the incumbent president. He was the president, who as a child , it is claimed could not tell a lie. This would seem to be a good qualification for people of high office both at home and abroad, both then and now.



Closer to home, in France their revolution was well under way (5 May 1789 – 9 Nov 1799) and the year before our clock was installed King Louis XVI had fallen victim to the excesses of that revolution and the egalitarian guillotine. The “Terror” was in full swing.

In a more peaceful St Asaph, the Elwy bridge was 24 years old having been opened in 1770. There had been a wooden bridge a little further downstream and the closest image we have of it is in the John Speed map of Flintshire printed in 1620 (opp). It is difficult to know if this image is a true representation. It looks quite large, but may well have been suitable for foot passengers rather than horse and cart that had the option of crossing by the fords close to where the 1770 bridge stands. It would need a further 13 years before the Old Pont Dafydd would be upgraded.

Update on the Mona Windfarm project

Duncan Cameron

The proposed Mona windfarm will be almost 30km from the Welsh coastline, and the 96 turbines, each with a “wingspan” of 320 metres, and around 300-350 metres tall, would together produce 1,500 megawatts of electricity.

Mona Offshore Wind Ltd have applied for planning permission to build the wind farm, undersea cables to a landfall by Llandulas, and underground cabling connecting to a new substation just to the south of the current Bodelwyddan National Grid substation which is behind Qioptic. As noted previously it is closer to St Asaph than to Bodelwyddan.

City times readers will remember the company considering 7 potential sites for the Mona substation, eventually choosing one after a detailed consultation process. With such a major project, it is considered a nationally significant development project, and as such is liable to an extremely detailed planning process.

The Planning Inspectorate have been holding a number of meetings open to members of the public as they examine submissions from all relevant bodies. As well as these, there have been accompanied site inspections. Going on such a site visit gives a much clearer indication of the scale of the proposed build, and all the related considerations. From an ecological point of view, the site would need, for example, to be cleared of any great crested newts who would be moved to new habitats locally. If a badger sett is found, the badgers would need to be caught and relocated. The access road would use the road to the National Grid substation, and would pass through an area of woodland where there is ash dieback – avoiding adjacent ancient woodlands.

A significant area would be required to house the temporary construction compound with areas set aside for construction machinery, equipment, building material, soil storage, offices, parking and so on. Much of this would later be returned to fields. Trees to replace any taken down and to limit the visual impact will be planted around the site.



A visualisation from the west of how the substation will look from behind Tyddyn Meredydd. The site is just south of the current substation, for which plans for expansion are also being prepared.

Archaeological trial trenches have been dug, and the material extracted is being examined for any significant findings. It is estimated that building the substation and the connecting cable would take 3-4 years.

As previously reported, there are also plans to expand the National Grid substation itself, and applications are pending for a battery park, an interconnector cable to Ireland, and a solar farm. Each of these would need substantial construction to join the National Grid substation. It could get very busy if all these schemes go ahead...

Search **Mona offshore wind farm** and **Infrastructure Planning Inspectorate** on Google for more details about the Mona substation and offshore windfarm.



Visualisation from the minor road south of the proposed Mona substation

Some big windfarm numbers!

Gwynt y Môr (operational) is 576 megawatt (0.576GW)

Awel y Môr (under construction) 1,100 megawatt (1.1GW)

Mona (awaiting planning permission) 1,500 megawatt (1.5GW)

(one megawatt powers about 2,000 average UK homes)



Bones and old stones

Awel Y Môr’s recent newsletter describes geophysical surveys finding evidence of two Iron Age round houses, each around 10m across on the site set aside for their substation. The site is just to the west of the Business Park. Following up from these geophysical findings, trial trenches were dug. Animal bones, a small cup, and a stone with a hole in it (possibly for weaving) were found.

Rhuddlan Castle - part 2

Chris Southern

After centuries of unrest between the Welsh and English, Llewelyn ap Gruffudd was given the title of 'Prince of Wales' by King Henry – but Llewelyn continued to raid English towns. However, King Henry's successor - Edward 1st - was not a man to tolerate opposition and wanted to unify the British Isles. After two years of forbearance with Llewelyn's raids, Edward determined to enforce Welsh submission. By August 1277 Edward had moved with troops from Flint along the coast to Rhuddlan, backed by a sea force of 25 naval ships - and Llewelyn's surrender was inevitable.

Edward planned a new Rhuddlan Castle and it was during this period that the history of Rhuddlan and St Asaph collide. Edward's troops ran riot, committing the mortal sin of destroying the monastery at St Asaph by fire. Edward had never personally visited the monastery but, having heard of the atrocity and possibly fearing for his immortal soul, he wrote to Pope Martin IV, confessing all and drew the Pope's attention to the need to rebuild.

The plan worked. The monks had risked their lives to save holy artefacts and by 1281 the relics of St Asaph were once more enshrined in a newly built St Asaph Cathedral. Had Edward not intervened it is possible that the cathedral and the city of St Asaph might not exist today.

His conscience relieved, Edward continued with his plan to build a permanent castle at Rhuddlan, the remnants of which remain to this today and are visited by castle 'buffs' from all over the world who are interested in its unusual design. The concentric castle features a 'diamond' layout with gatehouses at the corners of the square baileys instead of along the sides. It has a three-sided dry moat with the River Clwyd as protection on its fourth side.



Painting: Carneycastle.com



lostincastles.com video

Work began in 1277 and took five years to complete under the builder James of St George. Plans involved re-routing the River Clwyd which was straightened and dredged for over 2 miles to allow ships to sail inland along a man-made canal. This meant that provisions and troops could reach the castle under any siege conditions.

The build affected the lives of families from a wide area. Hundreds of 'ditchers' were employed to re-route the River Clwyd and build earthworks. Many were press-ganged – men picked at random off the streets in England to provide forced labour, leaving behind destitute wives and families.

One can imagine that the castle was a busy and noisy place, alive with the sound of building, the voices of men and the clang of

weapons wielded by its English soldiers, the animals that provided food and the horses that carried men into battle.

Timber structures were created to house the men and families who built and would maintain the castle – timber black and white buildings (like those that can be seen in Chester) 'hugging' thick stone walls in its outer perimeter.

Despite the best efforts of the Welsh, the castle was completed prior to the rebellion of Llewellyn the Last in 1282. It featured a King's Hall, Queen's Hall, kitchens, private apartments, granary, stables and smithy. Large sums of money were spent on private apartments, including a chapel and workshop for the Queen's goldsmith.

Beside the castle and beneath its protection Edward established a new chartered borough which was the fore runner of the Rhuddlan town of today. High Street, Church Street, Castle Street, Parliament Street, Gwindy Street and their buildings still follow the planning lines laid down by Edward in 1278.

Despite all defences, the Welsh continued to wage war, and records show that parts of the castle had to be repaired in 1285.

Today Rhuddlan castle is an impressive if crumbling structure and a tribute to the skill of the craftsmen from the past, and marks the historic links that bind Rhuddlan to the St Asaph as we know it today.



Photo: Jonathan Webb



L to R Jon Garrod (youth worker), Ella Taylor, Cllr Hardie, Katie Hazel, Abi Roache (Youth Leader) Gerry Frobisher (Youth worker).

St Asaph Youth Club “Tea and Chat – Paned a Sgwrs”

Gerry Frobisher

St Asaph youth club members have come up with an initiative for the next few months of inviting prominent people in the community to visit the Youth Club for a cup of tea and a biscuit to chat about what their role is in the community and to meet the young people in the youth club. The first two guests were the Mayor of St Asaph, Cllr Colin Hardie, and Sian Alwena Jones, Denbighshire County Council lead officer for Education Engagement and Participation. Cllr Hardie chatted with the young people about issues that affect them in the City and so enjoyed the evening's discussion that he promised to visit again. Others being invited along to the Youth Club include the Bishop, a member of the fire service and a police officer.

DCC Youth Service facilitate Youth Clubs throughout Denbighshire. St Asaph Library now hosts our weekly youth club on Monday evenings from 6 to 8pm during school terms and is open to everyone aged 11 to 25 years of age. We offer social activities and opportunities to develop interests as well as help and support for anyone that needs it.

St Asaph can boast of having had a Youth Club for over 15 years. Some of the activities we offer on a weekly basis throughout the dark evenings include an X-Box and selection of games, a dance mat with in-built video games, arts and crafts, computers, cooking, conversation, tabletop games, music, all classed as an informal education. For the lighter and warmer evenings in spring we will be holding outdoor activities that include various sports, treasure hunts and much more.

The new community youth worker for St Asaph and Prestatyn (Tudur Parry) has also been consulting with young people in the area to provide feedback to the city council to highlight young people's opinions and needs. There is no cost to joining the youth club. Just turn up each week. On your first visit you'll be asked to fill an information form so that we can contact parents if need be. For details please visit - <https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/youth-service/youth-service.aspx>



Peter Scott's Civic Service as County

Chairman 2024-2025. Pictured: Mark Morris, Elaine Morris, Matthew Williams, Faye Williams, Elizabeth Williams and Peter Scott; in front Gracie Morris.



Walk this way please!

The Camino Trekkers raised an extraordinary £32,537 for St Kentigern hospice from their challenging walk in Northern Spain to Santiago de Compostella. The final day was particularly arduous with heavy rain. ¡Bien hecho equipo!



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Recycling and bin collections

Duncan Cameron



In Denbighshire County Council, discussions about introducing new systems for recycling household waste began back in 2018, and it has been a major project to plan and implement, especially given that there are around 46,000 households in Denbighshire. Wales and Denbighshire in particular have impressively high recycling rates compared to the rest of the UK.

At a DCC cabinet meeting in early October, Cllr Barry Mellor (*Lead member for Environment and Transport*) and Tony Ward (*Corporate Director: Environment & Economy*) outlined their plan for rectifying the major problems that occurred following the introduction of the Trolibocs recycling system. At the outset they reiterated apologies for the difficulties that arose for residents as a result of rounds not

being completed, leading to accumulation of uncollected garbage and recycling material. In the face of the gathering crisis, a decision was taken to hire extra vehicles, offer overtime shifts, take on agency staff and introduce Saturday catch-up collections. The situation has improved considerably since then. The projected additional cost for these changes over the full 24/25 financial year is around £1.2m. The council is in receipt of a one-off payment of £1.2 million from the North Wales Residual Waste Treatment Partnership which will be used to cover these costs.

Detailed analysis of the situation indicated that the number of rounds to be undertaken with the Trolibocs system would have to increase from 20 to 26-28 per day. As a result, they recommended expenditure of £1.3 million to purchase 8 new vehicles (including 2 electric vehicles), and to take on 8 new drivers and 11 new loaders. The Welsh Government was approached for funding assistance, and it appears that at the least they are prepared to support the purchase of two electric vehicles.

The ongoing revenue costs will amount to an extra £1 million per year, which includes repayment of loans from the prudential borrowing required to purchase the extra vehicles. This will be offset by no longer needing to pay the commercial company in Flintshire to deal with the co-mingled waste from Denbighshire, a cost which had increased significantly in recent years from £315k in 2017/8 to just over £1million in 2023/2024. Denbighshire now has its own Waste Transfer station (recycling site) on the Colomendy estate in Denbigh and is able to sell recycled waste; income from this will fluctuate according to the market. A further impetus is that failure to meet Welsh Government’s target of 70% recycling would result in fines for Denbighshire of up to £215k per year.

The cabinet approved the proposals.

At a DCC scrutiny committee meeting on 24th October the decisions taken and the background to them were reviewed. It was announced that new arrangement for collection rounds would begin on November 4th. Cllr Barry Mellor and Tony Ward were confident that this would be a successful process.

At the scrutiny meeting, two tough questions were asked:

- *What is the carbon footprint of purchasing the 8 new vehicles and providing all the new Trolibocs to the great majority of Denbighshire’s households?* An accurate answer to this complex poser was understandably not possible in the meeting.
- *Will the savings from no longer paying the commercial company in Flintshire for our recycling, and income from sale of recycled waste cover the increased ongoing revenue costs?*

Let’s hope so...

From Recycling FAQs put out by DCC prior to the changeover:
“The changes will cost a total of £21.9m, of which £12m has been provided by Welsh Government to help us deliver these environmental improvements. The remaining £9.9m has been provided by Denbighshire County Council, either from cash reserves (£1m) or prudential borrowing (£8.9m). However, the new recycling and non-recyclable waste collections service will be cheaper to run than the existing service, even after we consider the cost of the borrowing repayments.”



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25-26 FEBRUARY / 25-26 CHWFROR

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A night of revelry in the nave

Ben Ross

On October 18, Black Box Events North Wales staged their second Silent Disco at St Asaph Cathedral, which we're pleased to report was another great success.

From outside you could see that the interior of the Cathedral was beautifully illuminated by coloured spotlights. The only audible clues that a party was underway were the soft shuffle of feet on stone flags, and the muffled voices of revellers singing to music which we could not yet hear.

We were handed headphones on admission and the party really started, with two audio streams to choose from... one connected to a DJ playing '80s floor fillers, and another to a DJ spinning an early 2000s hit list. It was surreal, but also super-fun to see individuals enjoying two very different experiences under a single roof.

Many were waving glowsticks, or wearing illuminated shutter shade glasses – both available at what seemed like a very reasonable price. These really enhanced the experience, as well as the visual spectacle. I whipped my headphones off at one point, just to gauge the noise levels in the Cathedral with the event in full swing. Despite the fact that people were singing along to alternative songs, the level of noise was low, and the audible voices were surprisingly sweet... perhaps St Asaph is home to some hidden choral talent?!

At first, the Cathedral may seem like an odd venue for such an event. However, it was extremely well-organised, everyone in attendance was very respectful of the space, and it was great to see the Cathedral in a new guise – yet still serving the community and bringing people together in celebration (albeit with more booty shaking than usual).

Doors closed at 10pm, which also felt very civilised. No doubt the merriment continued at the pub for many disco divas, but we really appreciated an early-doors boogie before bed. Hopefully these events become a fixture of the St Asaph calendar for many years to come, alongside the concerts and other gatherings which enrich our lives and bring new people to the city. Party on, people!



Golden Wedding celebrations!

Congratulations to St. Asaph residents Sandra and Kelvin Hughes who celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on 19th October. The pair were married 50 years ago in Bistre Church Buckley, and Kelvin was well known as St Asaph's policeman for many years.

We wish them many more happy years together!



Llanelwy WI - AGM and castles...

Denise D'Albertson

Llanelwy WI's Annual Meeting was held in October. We had a financial report from our Treasurer, Tracy and a year recap from our Secretary, Rachel and we certainly did a lot! We are a very active WI with several sub-groups. We have local outings throughout the year, and we also had a day trip to Gwydir Castle, lunch and a visit to a garden centre. Our president, Denise, expressed the members' gratitude to all of those who made this year so run smoothly. The current board was re-elected and Denise continues as president. This was followed by an informative presentation from Louise about the subtle signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer. Check out www.targetovariancancer.org.uk for more information.

Dr Mark Baker joined us in November to give a fascinating talk on the history and restoration of Gwrych Castle. Mark told us that as an eleven year old child in 1996, he passed the castle daily and found the destruction so appalling that he went on to found the Gwrych Castle Preservation Trust at the age of 12. In 2018, the castle and estate was purchased by Gwrych Castle Preservation Trust, on behalf of the nation. Gwrych Castle was built between 1812 and 1822 by Lloyd Hesketh Bamford-Hesketh as a memorial to his mother's ancestors, the Lloyds of Gwrych. Winifred, the only surviving child of Robert Bamford-Hesketh had an arranged marriage to a Scottish nobleman, the 12th Earl of Dundonald. During World War One she founded two military hospitals entirely at her own expense which served to treat patients from all over the world. The history of this estate and the family that lived there was extremely interesting and very much enjoyed by the members.

Llanelwy WI meets on the first Tuesday evening of the month in the parish church at 7.30. Email stasaphwi@gmail.com





Music at the Kentigern Guild

Recent Kentigern Guild meetings have had a strong musical theme. In October, **“A Menagerie of Sounds”** was the title chosen by the speaker **Lucille Brain**, who has a passion for historical musical instruments. She brought with her a remarkable selection of old instruments including a trombomarine, a nun’s fiddle, a bone flute, bagpipes and a beautiful hurdy gurdy (pictured opposite)—each of which she played for the audience.

Describing the use, history and characteristics of each instrument, she led us a merry journey through medieval and ancient music, sometimes singing alongside playing. We learned that there are over 150 versions of bagpipes, and that Emperor Nero, as well as playing the fiddle while Rome burned, also was quite nifty on the pig’s bladder bagpipes. Most striking of all was her observation that the parish church would no doubt have echoed to the sounds of many of these instruments in years gone by. Quite a thought!

In November **Paul Booth** spoke on **“A Cathedral Choirmaster’s Lot”** describing the joys and challenges of running a choir. We are fortunate to have an excellent choir in St Asaph, with 24 choristers, including 7 lay clerks and 2 lay vicars choral. They sang 172 services last year and had 180 rehearsals; they now have a repertoire of around 100 anthems, motets and other pieces. A recent highlight has been their appearance in the music festival singing with the world famous King’s Singers.

The choir provides a unique path for learning musical skills, which for some will lead to careers in music, but for all a deep and lifelong love of music. Paul described the joy of watching youngsters develop their voices and singing in harmony—and the enthusiasm of the youngsters for the singing is evident in their performances. Cathedral Evensong is on Fridays at 6pm and Sundays at 3.30pm.

Visit sing@stasaphcathedral.wales for more information about joining the choir

*The next meetings of the Kentigern Guild is at 2.30 on January 8th in the Parish Church, when Kate Jordan will be speaking on **Working with Willow**. All welcome; refreshments provided.*



Paul Booth

Events at the cathedral in the run-up to Christmas

7 th	Salvation Army Concert	7.00	Free admission
9 th	Emergency Services Carol Service	7.30	Free admission
11 th	Salvation Army (outside tearoom)	11am	Free admission
13 th	Stepping Stones	7.30	www.steppingstonesnorthwales.co.uk/concert
14 th	St Asaph Choral Society		Contact Katie. By text: 07484 120123 or email: wolinam1979@gmail.com
15 th	Trelawynd MVC		SOLD OUT
18 th	Classic Christmas with Richard & Adam	7.30 and 9.30	www.showplanr.com/show/classic-christmas-with-richard-and-adamv
20 th	1000 Candles	7	Pay at the door
24th	Nine Lessons and carols Midnight Mass	7 11.30	Free admission Free admission



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DIARY OF EVENTS Activities listed are correct at time of going to press.

Regular weekly events

Day	Time	Details
Monday	6-8pm 7.30-9.30	Youth Club run by DCC at St Asaph Library (Note: term-time only). St Asaph Choral Society in the Parish Church. New members welcome. For further details please contact choralsocietystasaph@gmail.com
Tuesday	9.30-11.30 2-3pm 3-4pm 6-7pm	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 Stride to 5 running programme for beginners. Julie Roberts 07900188222
Wednesday	9.30-5 10-12 6pm	Warm Space welcome in the Library: WiFi, free internet access, papers, refreshments Friends of the Allotment : Try some planting, meet friends over a cuppa. Accessible venue 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
	6.15pm	Sung Evening Prayer in the cathedral
Thursday	1.30pm	Cash bingo at Llys y Felin
Friday	9.30-5 2.30pm 6pm	Social Mornings in the Library: WiFi, free internet access, papers, refreshments Cash Bingo at The Old Palace. Choral evensong in the cathedral
Sunday	9.30 11.00 3.30 4-5.30pm	Eucharist in the Parish Church . All welcome Choral Eucharist in the cathedral Choral evensong in the cathedral Community Fridge in the Parish Church. All welcome. Stay after for coffee and a chat.

Regular monthly events

1 st Sunday	11am	Messy Church in the Parish Church. All ages welcome, lunch provided.
1 st Monday	12-3pm	PROBUS club in Oriel Hotel. Contact stevetootell@gmail.com www.denbighprobus.com
1st Tuesday	2-4pm	Book Club in the Library
1 st Tuesday	7pm	WI meet at St Asaph Parish Church, info at stasaphwi@gmail.com
4 th Friday	7.30pm	Songwriter Sessions at The Barrow discuss songwriting, share original songs/music. Contact Elaine at thelightedstagemusicevents@gmail.com or 07919 250990
1 st , 3 rd Sunday	9.30 am	Eucharist, St. Mary's Church, Cefn . All welcome.

One-off events

<i>December</i>		
Wed 11th	10.30 6.30	Friends of the Allotments : Coffee and mince pies in the Council meeting rooms by the tennis courts Ysbyty Glan Clwyd Annual Carol Service in the dining room. Members of Trelawnyd male voice choir will be present.
Saturday 14th	6pm	St Asaph Choral Society concert : Berlioz' The Childhood of Christ. choralsocietystasaph@gmail.com
Tuesday 17th	1-2.30	Working in hospitality : Information Day. Rhyl Library, Church St, Rhyl LL18 3AA. Guest Speaker Sophie from Denbighshire Leisure.
<i>February</i>		
Wed 5th	2.30	Kentigern Guild . Parish Church Peter Robinson speaking on the "Ocean Monarch"

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Christmas 2024 *Fr Rex Matthias, Canon Precentor St Asaph Cathedral/Parish Priest St Asaph Parish Church*

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All of us in the Elwy Mission Area (St Asaph Cathedral, St Asaph Parish Church & St Mary's Cefn Meiriadog) wish you a joyful and peaceful Christmas, and pray that you will know the presence of the incarnate Christ in your hearts and lives. A warm welcome to all to any of our Services and Events over the Festive Season. We would love to see you.

St Asaph Cathedral

Friday 20th December

7pm Carols by 1000 Candles. *An evening of festive music with the Cathedral Choir. Adults £10. Children Free*

Tuesday 24th December Christmas Eve

7pm A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. *The traditional service consisting of nine special readings, music sung by the Choir of the Cathedral and Carols for everyone to join in. A traditional Christmas celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.*

11.30pm The Midnight Mass *The first Mass of Christmas with music by the Cathedral Choir and Carols for everyone to join in. The Bishop of St Asaph will preside and preach*

Wednesday 25th December Christmas Day

11am Christmas Day Choral Eucharist *A joyful celebration of Christmas morning with music by the Cathedral Choir and Carols for everyone to join in.*

St Asaph Parish Church

Saturday 14th December. 10am to 1pm Christmas Coffee Morning. *Lots of festive treats on offer, stalls with Christmas goods and a Christmas Raffle with Christmas Music*

Tuesday 24th December Christmas Eve

4pm Christingle and Crib Service. *A joyful Christmas Eve celebration for all the family with traditional Christingle celebration and carols for everyone.*

Wednesday 25th December Christmas Day

9.30am Christmas Day Eucharist. *A joyful family celebration of Christmas morning with rousing carols for all to sing.*



Crib Service 2023

St Mary's Church Cefn Meiriadog

Sunday 22nd December The 4th Sunday of Advent

6pm A Service of Readings and Carols. *Readings of the Christmas story and carols for all to sing*

Wednesday 25th December Christmas Day

9.30am Christmas Day Eucharist with carols

A very Happy Christmas to all!

St Asaph Cathedral Choir set for concert tour in Finland – May 2025

The Bishop of St Asaph is encouraging businesses and individuals to support a fundraising campaign to help young choristers from St Asaph Cathedral undertake a concert tour in Finland next year. The Rt Revd Gregory Cameron has described the Cathedral Choir as deserving to be heard "across the world" and hopes to ensure that £20,000 can be raised to enable all 27 young singers to visit the Diocese of Helsinki, which is formally linked with the Diocese of St Asaph.

He said: "We have a wonderful choir who deserve to be heard not just in the Cathedral but across our diocese and indeed across the world. They will no doubt have a warm welcome from our link diocese in Helsinki, eager to hear the glories of Welsh church music!" Amongst other venues, the choir will be performing at the iconic Helsinki Cathedral.



The Director of Music at St Asaph Cathedral, Paul Booth, said: "For many of these children, this will be their first time traveling abroad, offering them the chance to immerse themselves in a new culture, share their musical talents on an international stage, and forge lifelong memories."

To find out more about the sponsorship opportunities, please contact Jackie Feak: jackiefeak@cinw.org.uk / 01745 532597. Donations can also be made online at <https://gofund.me/560aa0db>



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Another accolade for local artist Elysia Gilman

Ben Ross



Many of us have watched on as St Asaph resident, Elysia Gilman, has tirelessly honed her artistic talents, turning her childhood passion into a successful career in painting. A few of you might even own and treasure pieces of her work... even if you've just held on to City Times issue 18, which featured her beautiful painting 'Jubilee Memories' on the cover.

The admiration of her skill isn't limited to our small city though. Elysia has commanded attention in media and exhibitions since 2017 (when she herself was just 17). The latest accolade comes from the **Portrait Society of America's Future Generation**, a juried competition which aims to acknowledge the talents of young artists 18-25.

Elysia's painting 'Among the Bookshelves', shown opposite, was awarded an honourable mention by competition judges, against stiff international competition from other young artists. Truly fabulous recognition for Elysia and her work.

"This year I've been working on a new series of paintings, based around happy memories

spent cruising with my family and friends. I was so thrilled that one of those paintings was awarded an honourable mention, it really meant so much!"

As well as creating pieces which express her interests and challenge her remarkable skills, Elysia also completes sensitive portrait commissions – always producing work which is both realistic and expressive.

You can explore more of her portfolio, get in touch, or browse original paintings and prints for sale at: elysiagilman.com



Christmas Tree collection for St Kentigern.

St Kentigern Hospice will arrange for pick-up and recycling of your Christmas tree after the festivities. No hassle and no needles in the back of your car! You can sign up to this by visiting: www.just-helping.org.uk/register-tree You can make the donation via the website.



Chloe's superb murals

As the visitor steps down from the bus on their visit to St Asaph, their eye will immediately be caught by a welcoming mural at the bus shelter. Thanks are due to St Asaph artist Chloe Dymond Bowe for her wonderful gift to the city of the



painting which certainly brightens our High Street. She chose the design from an old black and white sketch drawn from the west bank of the Elwy. Look out for the leaping fish, and the colourful kingfisher!



A further recent work of art by Chloe is the delightful decoration of a counselling room in the Cancer Centre at Glan Clwyd hospital, commissioned by a family in memory of a loved one. The flowers, blossom and fresh leaves give a restful backdrop, and there are 15 animals and insects to spot.

Check out Chloe Dymond Bowe's work on Facebook—there is an astonishing range on show.

Charting the growth of St. Asaph

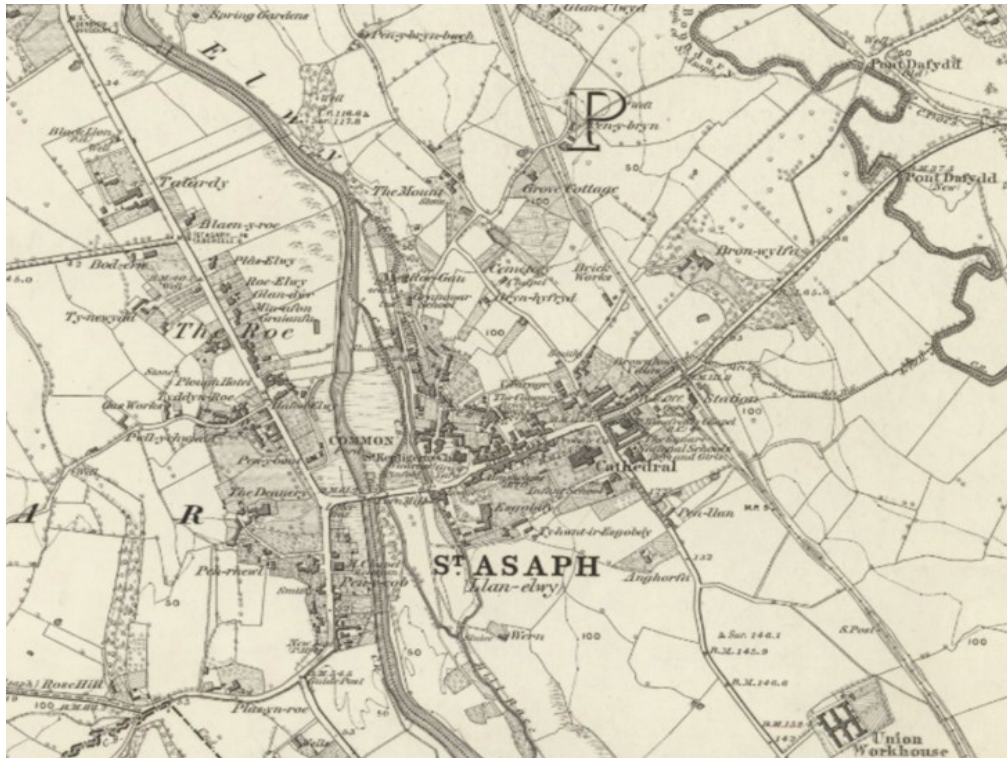
Ben Ross

Long before it was called Llanelwy or St. Asaph, people made this place their home. Although little evidence remains, it's believed that the Romans even placed a fort here on the road between Chester and Bangor.

By the middle of the 6th century, St. Kentigern had established a monastery here, of which his distant cousin eventually became bishop – the one and only St. Asaph.

By 1143, we can imagine a small but significant population of people lived in the town. Certainly, enough to warrant the foundation of our cathedral, around which a vibrant population has since continued to grow.

Maps may only be a signature of relatively recent history, but it's fascinating to pick through and observe how our city has changed over the last 150+ years. One of the best online resources I've found is, perhaps randomly, the National Library of Scotland. In just a few clicks you can view, layer or even compare maps side by side. The sample below is from the 1871 survey of St Asaph, published in 1878.



Explore these maps by scanning the QR code below:



Or by visiting:

shorturl.at/p3nFf

The National Library of Scotland hold detailed maps for the whole of Wales, and beyond, so well worth a look if you're at all curious.

Browse maps over time and you can see a changing landscape of dwellings, industry and more. For example, by 1938 the 'Union Workhouse' was referred to as a 'Public Assistance Institution'. Then, as social reform marched on, by 1949 it was listed as a 'General Hospital'. Who could have guessed that it would ultimately become a housing estate?!

But that's progress for you. Long may our little city continue to welcome new people and grow, as it always has. The story of St Asaph is all the richer as a result. How will you leave your mark on our city's history... and perhaps, even on a map?

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Denbigh and District Probus Club

Julia Hughes

Members and guests of the Club enjoyed a wonderful celebration dinner in October at the Oriel Country Hotel & Spa, St Asaph to mark the **50th anniversary** of the club.

The inaugural meeting of 16 men was held at the Eagles Hotel in Denbigh back in 1974. Meetings have been held in a great number of different venues, but since 2008 we have met in the Oriel Country Hotel in St Asaph. There has been a very varied and entertaining series of talks over the years.



Paul Ray entertains and baffles his audience

The programme for the 50th celebrations included an address by the president Graham Evans, and entertainment from Paul Ray BEM (magic, music, and comedy) and a bumper raffle with prizes donated by the Oriel Hotel, Jacob's Ladder, St Asaph and club members.

At our **Annual General Meeting**, Graham Evans gave an overview of his year in office and the club's activities. Following nomination and voting for the new officers and officers continuing their roles for 2025, he welcomed the incoming club president Dewi Owens, presenting him with the chain of office and club gavel.



Graham Evans, Club President and Jean Cojeen of Rhyl Probus



Graham Evans and Dewi Owen, the new Club President



Brian Lewis

In October, our speaker was chartered accountant Brian Lewis who gave an excellent presentation on **The Rodgers & Hammerstein Story**. Oscar Hammerstein II was born in New York in 1895, but spent many summers in the countryside which would find expression in many of his lyrics. His collaboration with Jerome Kern aged 32 resulted in **Show Boat** which included the famous song "Ol' Man River".

Richard Rodgers was born on Long Island in 1902. At sixteen he teamed up with Larry Hart and this resulted in many film adaptations such as "Rose Marie" and "The Desert Song". The period 1936 to 1940 could be considered to be the Golden Age of Rodgers & Hart, but after that, Hart lost interest in his work and suggested that Hammerstein should work instead with Richard Rodgers, and so began their famous partnership that was to create

Oklahoma!, **Carousel** and **South Pacific**. In the latter, Nellie the American Navy nurse sings "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair". Mary Martin, as Nellie washed her hair eight times a week for three and a half years and apparently loved every minute of it! Probus member Donald Hanby remembered being in the audience at one of the performances and seeing her singing and washing her hair!

This show was followed by **The King & I**; **Me & Juliet**; **Flower Drum Song** and finally **The Sound of Music**. In 1959 Hammerstein was diagnosed with inoperable cancer. After his death, Times Square in New York turned off all lights and neon signs for three minutes at 8.57 pm - the first time it had been blacked out since WW2. 5000 people stood with heads bowed. Rodgers never worked again with one specific collaborator. He died in 1979 aged 76. What a wonderful legacy they left.



For that Big Day! The St Kentigern Hospice wedding shop in Abergelge has a large range of beautiful pre-loved wedding dresses, and dresses for other special occasions. There are morning suits for men also. And if you have already tied the knot, why not consider passing on your dress for such a good cause? Call 01745 822813. Open Mon-Sat



When all at once I saw a crowd of hardy daffodil planters..

Members of the Afon Elwy Environment Group recently braved sub-zero temperatures, deep snowdrifts and rock hard permafrost to plant shundreds of daffodil bulbs in the field behind the surgeries for all of us to enjoy in the spring.

Many thanks team! (Ed.. am I exaggerating the weather a little?)



Ffrindiau'r Rhandir (Friends of the Allotments) *Marion Hemshire*

Firstly a date for your diaries: Wednesday 11th December 10.30–12 noon for tea & mince pies in the committee room, Roe Plas, by the tennis courts.

It's now been over 6 months since the new community gardening project – Ffrindiau'r Rhandir (Friends of the Allotments) was set up by volunteers from the St Asaph Allotment Association. And over the last few months we've been busier than ever on the plots, managing to grow tomatoes, beans, pumpkins and much more – despite the mice who seemed to eat most of our potatoes, and the rabbits who would devour anything tasty! But in the end we had a lot of fun and what we did manage to grow meant we could take home some fresh veg and flowers each week, and keep the allotment looking inviting. Thank you again to everyone who came down to our launch plant sale and fundraiser earlier this year. It made a real difference to the work we can do at the allotments.



They're in training..

In mid-summer we were awarded a Welsh Churches Act Grant to help us to improve our second plot. The project we have funds for is to clear and tidy the far end of the plot, to plant some fruit trees, and to extend the accessible paved area which will help Friends with reduced mobility. We will also build two new high trough flowerbeds to make weeding and growing so much easier for us all, and at a height that even rabbits can't jump! We plan to start work on this project in the New Year. We will keep you posted, and might send out a plea for help! But for now we're onto the next phase over winter at the allotments. We'll keep meeting, and may use the Committee rooms as a backup for times when the weather is really

horrible, although I think we'll all miss the 'pop-up café' that we set up in the polytunnel on the wetter days this summer. So please, do call down and see what we're up to. **We're at the St Asaph allotments, next to the football pitches, between 10am and 12noon each Wednesday. There's always tea and biscuits. Cofiwch bod yna groeso am banded a sgwrs yn y rhandir. Buasem yn falch o'ch gweld! Heledd and Marion**



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St. Kentigern hospice garden.

Chris Jones

St. Kentigern hospice has been an integral part of St. Asaph for several years and prior to the pandemic was refurbished extensively in 2020. Recent years have seen an increase in housing surrounding the building and in order to offset this development Castle Green Homes gifted a large plot of land which has enabled the existing garden to become a substantial space with clearly defined areas and wheelchair accessible paths. Dr Bridget Osborne has led the project team.

The generosity of many people and groups in giving their time and materials shows appreciation of the care and support received by their loved ones. It has allowed the hospice to begin to create a wonderful garden which will benefit patients, relatives, staff and visitors alike.



Students from Coleg Cambria have been a huge help with all their hard work alongside the volunteer gardeners who come each week. Grants awarded from Keep Wales Tidy provided initial tools and planters and a greenhouse, and donations from the Network for Rare Diseases have also helped essential purchases.

Patios and pergolas have been generously donated and constructed, and as each week goes by progress is seen in the development. A roofed pergola will allow bedbound patients access.

It is hoped that four areas will reflect the seasons so that there is year-round colour and interest for visitors. A bed shaped in the form of a fish has been created along with a water feature pond which represents a gold ring. This reflects the story of St. Kentigern, and of course the fish and ring form the hospice logo. The bed will be planted with silvery foliage and red spots to create the fish, and surrounded by feathery grass to make it look as though it is moving.



Behind the bed is a long rose arch which will be planted with fragrant roses which will peak in early summer. A row of pleached hornbeam trees has been planted on either side of the paths surrounding the pond. They and the rose arch will give privacy to the garden from the adjacent houses. The pond has been fitted with a safety grid below the water surface to fulfil safety requirements and allows an unrestricted view of the garden.

A beech hedge will also be planted across an area to the right of the large oak tree to provide a boundary to the immediate garden and provide an area with a greenhouse and raised bed for patients from the well-being Hub to enjoy gardening therapy. A wild flower area to part of the grassed section is also envisaged, as well as fruit bushes and a number of seated areas for people to

have privacy, peace and quiet whenever they need it.

A wooden rotating summerhouse, once constructed by post First World soldiers has been painstakingly refurbished and generously donated to the garden. Bird feeders have been placed in the trees and the gentle sound of water and birdsong is appreciated by all who visit.

The hospice's commitment is summed up in the following words. *"We cannot add days to life but we can add life to days"*.

As the garden continues to develop it will be a truly calm and comforting space which will be a delight to all.





Photo: Anna Parry



Firewalk: RN Williams hosted and sponsored a fire-walk in aid of St Kentigern Hospice. Much excitement and some good video evidence to confirm the courage of participants. Some even walking deliberately slowly!



St. Kentigern
HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE CENTRE
HOBWIS & CHANDLAFAN BOYAL

Christmas FLOAT

in aid of St Kentigern Hospice



8-11th December
From 6-8pm

Father Christmas and his team of elves will be visiting homes around St Asaph spreading Christmas cheer to local children and adults alike.

A map of Santa's journey to be revealed in due course!

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City Times Activity Page



What happens if you eat Christmas decorations? You get tinsel-itis.

What do Santa's elves learn in school? The elf-abet

What do you call an obnoxious reindeer? Rude-olph.

What did Santa say when he stepped into a big puddle? It must have reindeer.

What goes "Oh, Oh, Oh"? Santa walking backward!

What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck? A Christmas quacker.

Let's get creative - Colour and display

Choose lots of green shades for the tree and lots of different colours for the background to give your picture a beautiful stained glass window effect. Why not add your own drawings around the edge?



Christmas Quiz

Q: Including Rudolph, how many reindeer does Santa have?

~

Q: Who was the first ghost to haunt scrooge in "A Christmas Carol"?

~

Q: in what year did Elvis Presley release "blue Christmas"?

~

Q: True or false, plum pudding contains plums?

~

Q: The poinsettia is indigenous to which country?



Answers: 9, Jacob Marley, 1957, False, Mexico

ENGLISH AND MATHS TUITION

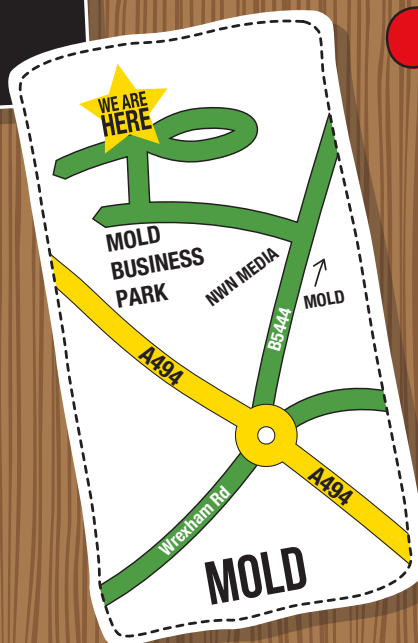
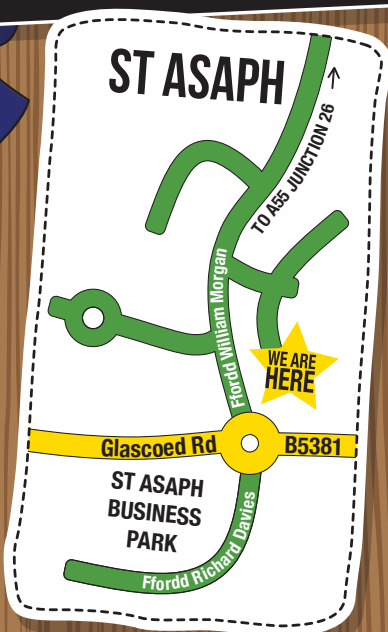
St Asaph Business Park
(91 Bowen Court, St Asaph Business Park, Denbighshire, LL17 0JE)

Mold Business Park
(Creative Learning Room, Unit 12, Opposite the Evening Leader)

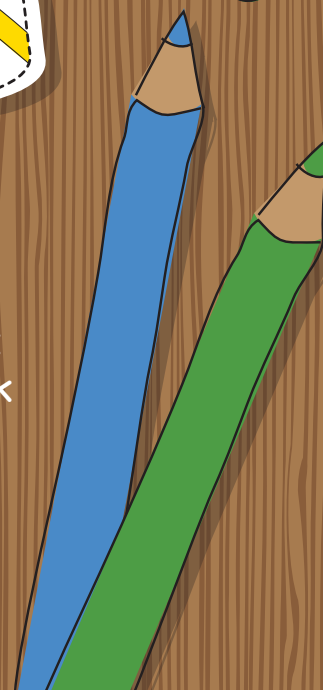
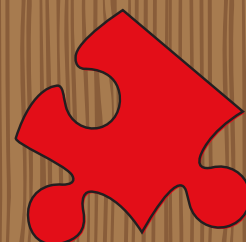
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Entrepreneurs: Creative in Excellence.

Duncan Cameron

When Ysgol Emmanuel in Rhyl received an excellent Estyn inspection report in 2012, the headteacher Darren Martin and the deputy headteacher Alison Matthias decided to share their experiences by organising a series of training sessions for teachers and headteachers in North Wales. These proved both popular and enjoyable, and before long became regular events in the school calendar. With the support of the school’s governing body, they set up a company “**Creative in Excellence**” to run these projects.

When approached by a group of parents asking if they would provide tuition for their children, they identified a gap in the market for a bespoke learning centre to satisfy this need. With the consent of the school, they decided to job share the role of head of Ysgol Emmanuel which would allow them to devote time and energy to develop this venture. Suitable premises were sought in Mold, and they began to run small group and individual tuition for pupils after school hours, initially offering English, Welsh, and Mathematics. They employed teaching staff to provide the tuition, and before long leased further premises on the St Asaph Business Park.

When the Covid lockdown occurred, they moved to online tuition, and gradually increased the number of teaching staff to provide for the growing demand for their services. The subjects offered increased in number to include tuition for older children as they prepared for exams.

After Covid a number of young people found it difficult to return to mainstream school, and as a result daytime tuition was made available for them in both Mold and St Asaph.

There are currently 50 teachers and tutors working for Creative including sixth formers from Ysgol Glan Clwyd who have achieved an A or A* in Maths, English, Welsh or Science. Alison stresses the importance of respecting the pupils – respect for themselves, for their teachers, and for their classmates.

Further developments have included making the St Asaph site a registered exam centre (amazingly, home-schooled children would otherwise have to travel to Bolton as their nearest exam centre for GCSEs etc) and most recently setting up a school in Mold for autistic children who also suffer from anxiety – **Pathways Learning**.

What makes entrepreneurs? Why do people like Darren and Alison take on such responsibilities? There must be a passion for the project, a recognition of a need, outstanding organisational skills and a determination to do the best for their clients. As the rappers say: Respect.

More details available in advert on opposite page.



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Yr Hen Ysgol, Tremeirchion, LL17 OUN





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Stay and Play

Winter themed Stay and Play session
for children born between
Sep 1st 2021 and Aug 31st 2022



Scan the QR code using your phone camera for a tour of a VP Classroom & facilities



Please register your interest by phone or emailing Headteacher Miss K Langford

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stasaph.infants@denbighshire.gov.uk

Ysgol Glan Clwyd

Meryl Pierce

Gwasanaeth Diolchgarwch yn y Gadeirlan: Ar fore hydrefol braf cafodd holl ddisgyblion yr ysgol gerdded i'r Gadeirlan a chael mwynhau ein gwasanaeth diolchgarwch blynyddol. Cafwyd neges amserol i'r disgyblion gan Mrs Sian Alwen, y Pennaeth i gyd-fynd â chân enwog Dafydd Iwan, Hawl i fyw. Diolch i'r unigolion a gymerodd ran ac i'r côr am eu gwaith hefyd.

Hwyl yr Hydref: Braf oedd cael croesawu rhieni bl7 i'r ysgol ar gyfer Hwyl yr Hydref. Dyma noson rieni arbennig lle gweiniwyd te i bawb, cael sgwrs gyda'r tiwtor cofrestru, bod yn rhan o seremoni wobrwyo a gwranddo ar y disgyblion yn canu yn y côr. Roedd yr Hafan dan ei sang!

Ilwyddiant Gwyddonol yn Genedlaethol: Llongyfarchiadau i Tomos Jones Abbas, Ava Williams, Jess Espley a Lillie Dickinson am gyrraedd rownd 16 olaf trwy Gymru yn y Cwis Her Meddygol Prifysgol Caerdydd. Ymdrech ardderchog!



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Clybiau Ffermwyr Ifanc: Ymfalchiwn fod cymaint o'n disgyblion wedi bod yn brysur iawn yn cymryd rhan yn yr Eisteddfod CFFI yn sirol yng Nghlwyd ac yn genedlaethol yng Nghaerfyrddin gan ddod â llwyddiant i'r sir. Gwych yw eu gweld yn manteisio ar yr holl sgiliau a phrofiadau'r Mudiad.

Teithiau Preswyl: Mor braf oedd gweld cynifer o'n disgyblion ieuengaf yn manteisio ar gyfle i fynd ar daith breswyl i wersylloedd yr Urdd ar draws Cymru. Cafodd bl7 dreulio tridiau yng Nglan Llyn; Llangrannog oedd cyrchfan bl8; a disgyblion bl9 yn teithio i'r brifddinas i Gaerdydd. Cawsant oll dridiau llawn dop o weithgareddau a phrofiadau arbennig i greu atgofion am byth.

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don't speak Welsh, EVERYONE
is welcome!



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8:30-16:30 £44

Sesiynau bore ac
prynhawn ar gael.

Rydym yn derbyn
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ariennu
• Gofal plant di-dreth
• 10 awr o Addysg Gynner wedi'i
ariannu

Cylch Chwarae Ti a Fi
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I blant 0-4 oed a'i gofalwyr.
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27 complete "Stride to 5" course!

There were 224 runners at the wet and windy Prestatyn Park Run on 16th November. Over 50 were from the St Asaph City Striders, including 27 graduates of the **Stride to 5 programme**, all of whom received medals to mark their achievement. The next Stride to 5 starts in January—why not make it a New Year's resolution?





Ysgol Cefn Meriadog

Laura Martin

This term our whole school topic has been 'Express Yourself' with a focus on the Expressive Arts. All classes have created some wonderful pieces of work and are all looking forward to our end of term showcase to share their learning with their families.

As always this term has been a very busy one, we have enjoyed lots of exciting visits and visitors who have all enhanced our very busy curriculum! The children performed really well in our Harvest Service, we collected donations for the local Foodbank and delivered 96.7kg of food to the Denbigh branch, thank you to all of our families for their support.

Our Head girls proudly laid a wreath on behalf of our whole school community during the Service of Remembrance in St Asaph in November. As a school we took part in various different activities linked to Remembrance Day with the children's work proudly being displayed on the yard for everyone to appreciate.

Our Christmas preparations are well under way, we are all looking forward to our concerts, party and all of the other exciting planned activities and events! Bring on the glitter! Wishing all of our families and the community a wonderful Christmas and a very Happy New Year!



William Morgan's 1588 Welsh Bible visits Ysgol Esgob Morgan

In one of a very few trips away from the National Library in Aberystwyth, William Morgan's original 1588 Welsh Bible was brought to Ysgol William Morgan in St Asaph. The visit was requested by headmaster Tim Redgrave and Mr Robert Scrimshaw (class 4 teacher), and after tense negotiations, the priceless item was brought by two white-gloved librarians and was on display for the children and the many visitors.

In preparation for the visit, pupils had done a great deal of work. Although William Salesbury has translated the New Testament in 1567, Morgan made his own translation of the whole Bible, publishing it in 1588. Some say this was at the request of Queen Elizabeth, who was a Welsh speaker herself. Pupils had learned the great importance of this Bible for the Welsh language. They had prepared drawings of William Morgan, artwork, and were enthusiastic and knowledgeable about his story and the house in which he was born, Tŷ Mawr Wybrnant. Courteous letters written to his Cambridge College requesting information were on display, along with the response.

Drinks and cakes were made and served by children and staff—and kept well away from the Bible! The event featured on ITV news that evening. All in all, it was a very successful and memorable occasion. Full marks to the pupils and teachers involved!



St John's College
St John's St.,
Cambridge
CB2 1TP

Dear sir or madam,

Hello, my name is Lyra. I'm in year 4 and writing to you to ask about William Morgan. I'm in Ysgol Esgob Morgan and would be delighted for you to send an letter or a e-mail back.

I know that William Morgan translated the bible and that he translated it with other people like a publisher from London. Are school is named after him as well.

Extract from the response from the Dean of St John's College:

Dear Lyra, Willow, Amelia, Ibrahim and Elis, and Mr Scrimshaw...

...Though the work is considered instrumental in protecting the Welsh Language, his main reason for translation was to give his people knowledge of the inspired word of God. His dedication to Queen Elizabeth stated "Unless religion is taught in the common tongue, it will remain hidden and unknown"...

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Coalfield Cup Champions!

John Oliver

St Asaph Walkers F.C. triumphed recently by winning the first North Wales "Coalfield Cup" Walking Football Festival. The tournament was held for the first time at the F.A. Wales North HQ at Colliers Park, Wrexham. St Asaph competed against teams from Wrexham, Brymbo, Deeside, Hawarden, Prestatyn, Brickfield and Coedpoeth. St Asaph finished the tournament in top place after some tough games.

Run by the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, a charity set up to support and maintain awareness of former coalfield communities, the walking football festival has been held in South Wales for several years, but the growing number of Walking Football clubs in the area and the links to coalmining meant it was time to hold it in North Wales. In 1918 there were 60 coal mining pits across the two north Wales coal fields in Denbighshire and Flintshire. By 1978 there were only three pits left in north Wales - Point of Ayr at Mostyn, Bersham and Gresford near Wrexham before coalmining stopped altogether in 1996.



Sponsored by Steve Jones
Northern Tool Hire



Canoe Wales choose Soyoglu brothers

St Asaph residents Bill and Alex Soyoglu, aged 10, pupils at Ysgol Esgob Morgan have been selected by Canoe Wales (the national governing body for paddlesport in Wales) for their regional slalom development programme in both kayaking and canoeing. Canoe Wales created the slalom program as a pathway to the Olympics for young paddlers. 'It's a fantastic way to make friends and develop skills for life. Getting used to making decisions under pressure, performing at your best and dealing with uncontrollable elements are all fantastic experiences and skills for life.' Bill and Alex were chosen for their dedication throughout the 2024 training season as well as their skill, progression and performance.



St Asaph City Striders—from strength to strength!

On Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 6 don't be surprised to see groups of well lit runners making their way around St Asaph, with numbers frequently above 40. The Tuesday run is also when the Stride to 5 runners are out— they are new or lapsed runners gradually building up together to do a 5k run. The extraordinary success of St Asaph City Striders, which has a WhatsApp group of around 150, is in large part due to the enthusiasm and encouragement of leaders Ian Jones and Julie Roberts, now joined by Dave and Elen, Andy and Pete. There are running subgroups to match all abilities. The Striders frequent local Park Runs on Saturday mornings, and were well represented in the October Cardiff half-marathon and the Chester marathon. For more details check out **St Asaph City Striders** on Facebook or turn up to the cathedral car park on any Tuesday or Wednesday at 6pm.



The Striders Cardiff half marathon runners



St Asaph Football Club

John Roberts

As we approach the half way stage of the season the Saints are still finding it hard to reproduce the form that saw them flying high in the League last season. After an excellent 3-0 win away at Menai Bridge Tigers they drew two of their next fixtures despite being in the lead in both matches until the final twenty minutes. They have a run of difficult fixtures in December culminating in an away fixture against Rhyl on December 28th.

Our Reserves, who have an average age of 17 in most of their matches are mid table in the FAW Reserves League North East and are playing some excellent football which bodes well for the future of the Club as they progress to the first team in time.

Our Junior teams have also had a full list of fixtures over the Autumn. The Under 15s have found the season a tough one as they compete in a mixed U16/ U15 league. Highlights have been a mini cup run as they progressed through the first two rounds of the NWCFA Cup and a memorable derby match with Denbigh which ended in a draw. All the matches have been closely contested and the players have shown a fantastic spirit.

The Under 12s have started their first competitive season and have performed consistently well. At present they are second in their league and are on a six match winning streak having scored 150 goals in their matches. They have also progressed well in the NWCFA Cup. After navigating their way through two rounds they now face a team a year older who won their league last season. With more than half the season still to go they are hoping to continue their rich vein of form.

The Under 10 Spartans have shown great improvement since the start of the season. They recently fought back from being 3-0 down in one of their matches to eventually win 4-3. Their coaches are very proud of how the team all work for each other during matches

Our newly established Under 6 team have enthusiastically embraced the football experience and have played their first ever matches. After training on the pitch during the Summer and Autumn they have moved indoors for the colder Winter months. The team are very grateful to have received sponsorship from Mynydd Mostyn Dairy (www.mynyddmostyndairy.co.uk) and H & D Fitzgerald (www.density.co.uk) which has enabled them to be provided with a new kit and rain jackets.

As we approach Christmas we have our annual Christmas Raffle with excellent prizes from local businesses. We also have a stall at the Winter Fair in the Cathedral with a raffle for a Deluxe Christmas Hamper kindly donated by St Asaph Co-op.



Photo: Vicky Marginson



Under 12 team



Under 6 team



Under 9 team



Another Under 12 team!