

Llangwm Village News

Issue 58 Autumn 2023



Inside:

Polly set to conquer the Atlantic

How clean is our river? We ask a scientist

And David Wilson's new book: a preview

Llangwm Village News, Issue 58 Autumn 2023

This autumn issue of Llangwm Village News will, if nothing else, illustrate just how influenced we are by our watery backyard, aka the Cleddau. On page 3 for example we have Polly Zipperlen planning her attempt to conquer another, rather larger, body of water, but also proof from closer to home that next time you fall in our river you should keep your mouth closed.

On a closely related topic we hear about attempts to restore our environment to a state that just might permit the resumption of an age-old Llangwm industry, oyster farming, plus a call for any old oyster shells you may have lurking in your back garden.

Even the Litfest was not immune from the watery theme with Fran Evans' and Kevin Evans' popular book *My River*. The rowing club (who won the Ramsay Challenge race) and the boating club (a new entrant to Village News) bring up the rear together with the closely-related story of a Llangwm boat that gave birth to a postage stamp.

There's good news that the Village Hall, under new management, is thriving but still needs help from all of us. But the bad news is that the Gardening Society, parched of volunteers, was consigned to the compost heap of history.

We hope you'll enjoy reading this issue and if there's anything you think we should be writing about, feel free to get in touch.

Heather Payton (heather@words-plus.co.uk)

Llangwm Village News is funded by our Community Council and the black and white version is delivered to all Llangwm homes by our specially-trained elves. You can find it in glorious colour on the website: llangwm-pembrokeshire.org.uk

Volunteers wanted

Cllr Victoria Owens is looking for Village Hall trustees (p 15)

Citizen Scientists needed for SWEPT24 (p 5)

Sue Burton wants your oyster shells (p 6)

Events

Cuppa & Crafts, Wednesdays 2pm to 4pm, Village Hall (p 18)

Community Cafe, Tuesdays 10.30 to 1pm, Village Hall (p 18)

Boating Club AGM November 21, The Cottage (p 21)

Village Voices concerts November 23, December 7 & December 19 (p 15)

Christmas Carol Service, December 19 (with Village Voices), St Jerome's (p 17)

Haverfordwest Ladies' Choir December 8, St Jerome's (p 17)

Llangwm Litfest: August 9-11, 2024

Our cover: Lawrence and Dougie

Lawrence is a Year 6 student at Cleddau Reach school and Dougie is a three year old Bernese Mountain Dog from Cariad Pet Therapy who visited the school with his human Claire Evans. Head teacher Rhys Buckley snapped them on Dougie's first visit.



Dogie has been a therapy dog for 17 months and Claire says he absolutely loves it and gets excited when he sees his red bandana coming out. She says he's very emotionally intelligent and will home in on people who are feeling low, anxious or worried. He's also 'worked' at Withybush hospital as well as other Pembrokeshire primary schools including one for children with additional learning needs.

Making a splash!

There must be easier ways to raise money for your chosen charity than rowing the Atlantic yet that's what one Llangwm woman, Polly Zipperlen, and her pals are planning to do in just over a year's time. That's 3,200 miles and 50 days of open and often angry sea.

The women are styling the bid The Three Generations - given that one of them will be 70, Polly will be 50 and the final member a mere babe of 31. There are hopes of signing up a fourth soon.



The team: L-R Polly Zipperlen, Jeanine Williams & Sophie Pierce

So – after you've picked up your jaw from the floor – why? To start with, they're all rowers, members of Llangwm's rowing club, and if you're a rower, well, the Atlantic lurks on your radar. Your ultimate challenge. Polly had been thinking about it for some time but didn't say anything. Then when they were out in the Llangwm boat one day one of the other team members, Jeanine Williams from Neyland, suddenly said "I'm going to do the Atlantic". "Me too" Polly found herself saying, then it was a small matter to lure a third team member, Sophie Pierce from Johnston.

Extraordinarily another team of women from Pembrokeshire is also launching a bid, but they're taking part in a race and don't leave until December 2025.

So back to Polly's team, where next on the list is find yourself a boat. "There aren't many ocean rowing boats around", says Polly. "But we saw one advertised for £40 thousand. I asked the owner if we could have it on deposit with a payment plan and he agreed." Sponsors stumped up the first £20k, leaving the rest to be raised by more sponsorship, events and merchandise.

The plan is to leave from Lanzarote on January 3, 2025,

bound for Antigua, but there's a lot to do before then. A lot of learning for example: courses in VHF radio, sea survival and navigation. Speaking of which nothing so old fashioned as a sextant, these days it's electronic systems and satellites which can spot you anywhere in the world.

And isn't it a bit, um, dangerous? Polly agrees that you don't often hear of people dying while rowing the Atlantic and she can think of far more dangerous situations. "The other day I was running in the dark at Milford with a high viz jacket and this young guy in a sports car appeared, hand brake turn and far too fast. That was far more dangerous.

"But the most scary thing we're likely to encounter is the big rolling seas. There are no rocks or islands to worry about but with the wind and waves pushing you a lot of the work will be keeping the boat on course. If you don't do that you'll get swamped."

Then there's the small matter of getting fit. "Rowing and running", says Polly. "Then upper body strength and core stability is next so you can hold yourself still when the boat is rocking. Then maybe yoga."

So what's the ultimate nightmare? "It's losing your electrics", says Polly "because you need them to desalinate water and for navigation. Without those you're down to VHF radio and a hand pump. And of course your rudder is important." Husband Marcus, she says, is supportive.

Right, that's sorted then. Food will be dehydrated, about 4,000 to 6,000 calories a day. "But it's actually quite hard to eat that much", says Polly.

Assisting them will be two guardian angels: one an old hand who rowed the Atlantic aged 60, and a company the women have engaged as their backup, who'll provide daily weather forecasts and course corrections. They'll also have medical backup.

And finally the charities who'll benefit from this extraordinary adventure: the Cystic Fibrosis Trust (because one of the women suffers from the condition), and Paul Sartori.

Major sponsors are Wilson Fishing (for safety equipment) and Trailfinders (travel partner). The next fund raiser is Christmas Bingo on December 12 at The Alumchine, Neyland.

If you want to be a sponsor: cruisingfree2025@outlook.com.

Trips, rugby and a Shwmae Day - a fantastic start

Mr Rhys Buckley

The start of each academic year always brings with it excitement and a busy workload in equal measure and this year has been no different here at Cleddau Reach! With the new 'Curriculum for Wales' continuing to be implemented, our wonderful staff team have been busy introducing their new classes to the topics, knowledge and skills they are going to be focussing on this year.

As is always the case at our school, the children have been able to enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities, and this includes leaving the village and extending their learning both in and out of Pembrokeshire. So far this term, our pupils have enjoyed trips to Scolton Manor, Castell Henllys, Pembroke Castle, the Cardiff City Stadium, Carew Cheriton, and Pelcomb Dairy Farm as well as welcoming a range of visitors into the school.

white and green before enjoying a range of activities that celebrated both our local area and our country. As always, it was lovely to see children of all ages mixing well together, celebrating the Welsh language and culture.

I'd also like to make a special mention of our Year 6 rugby team who took part in the Urdd competition at Narberth RFC. Despite a strong turnout from schools across Pembrokeshire and Cardigan, the team performed superbly well to qualify from their group before coming out on top in a tight quarter final. Sadly, heartbreak was to follow in the semi-finals as the team lost out by one try in sudden death extra-time. However, a 3rd place finish out of over thirty schools is an outcome the team can be very proud of!

*Cardiff City
football trip*



The curriculum requires that schools invest in and place value on both enrichment and experiences for children of all ages; providing our pupils with these experiences is a vital part of our development and credit should go to staff for their commitment to arranging them and also to the families within our community who are always very supportive of any extra-curricular event.



Y6 rugby team

If you'd like to keep up with events and goings-on at the school, the best place to do so is either our website (www.cleddaureachschool.org.uk) or our Instagram page (@cr_primary_school) which are both updated weekly with newsletters, pictures and videos of what the children have been up to.

*Shwmae Day
reading*



One notable whole-school event was our recent 'Shwmae Day' celebration where children were invited to come to school wearing our national colours of red,

Considering all of the above, it has been a fantastic start to the new school year for us here at Cleddau Reach and, with events such as 'Celebration of Work Day', 'Parent Forum' and the inevitable rush of Christmas to come, I've no doubt that the remainder of the Autumn will be a success also.

As always, we'd welcome the opportunity to work with as many local community groups as we can this year and so please feel free to get in touch if you'd like to create or strengthen your links with your local school. We've been delighted to have Reverend Marcus back in school with us every Thursday this term and, with several local community groups now using our excellent facilities for their meetings/events, we're always happy to open our doors to members of the local community.

Our river looks clean - but it isn't!

This issue of Llangwm Village News shows how much time many of us spend on, in or by the water. Yet we hear almost every week of another spill of untreated sewage in our seas and rivers as huge volumes of rainwater overwhelms our ancient pipes. Ric Cooper is a scientist and water sports enthusiast who lives on our river and agreed to answer some questions, starting with our current situation:

Ric: Llangwm has two sewage outlets. The treatment works at Port Lion seems to be working reasonably well with relatively few so-called Combined Storm Overflows (CSOs) where the plant can't cope with incoming volumes, for example if there's been very heavy rainfall, and the flows bypass the plant and go directly into the river. But there is also another CSO outlet in the village and last year it had the second highest frequency of spills in Pembrokeshire.

(Note: NRW confirm that this second CSO discharges into Llangwm Pill about level with Orchard Row with the pipe visible at low water.)

*The Cleddau
at Llangwm:
"unsurprisingly a fail".*



Llangwm Village News: Lots of us use small boats in the Pill, occasionally falling in. Is that something to worry about, especially after heavy rain?

Ric: I also use the river a lot and I've had samples tested for E Coli which have to date been negative. Heavy rain is a double edged sword in that it can carry pathogens mixed in sewage but it also massively dilutes said pathogens. The more dangerous time is when the CSOs flow in dry weather due to blockages or other problems. The bottom line is when the CSO in the village is flowing I would stay away from it.

Probably the bigger issue for Llangwm is what comes down and up the river from other sources of pollution

LVN: So what are these other sources?

Ric: The single biggest threat to the health of the river is an over-supply of phosphorus and nitrogen from industrial sources or farming. The problem is they're nutrients and encourage growth of algal blooms

which block out the oxygen for fish and other marine life. Another threat is toxic chemicals that build up in the food chain, for example at Burton a discharge containing detergents which may disrupt shellfish biology. And of course litter and waste materials. Any regular walker along the river will have come across plenty of sanitary towels and condoms that bypass the sewage treatment process. Plastics are also a problem.

LVN: How serious is the situation?

Ric: National Resources Wales (NRW) is the body responsible for monitoring water quality and policing discharge permits. There are various directives against which the Cleddau is scored. Unsurprisingly the Cleddau is a 'fail'. Those who fish will report a massive drop off of salmon and sewin catches. I think the numbers are down to about one tenth of where we were 15 years ago. The Cleddau is a Special Area of Conservation and one of Wales's most important over-wintering grounds for a wide variety of waders who feed on the foreshore, an area which has been impacted by algal mats, the bright green coating of algae you'll see on shores.

LVN: Earlier this year there was a story in the papers involving First Milk at Merlins Bridge. What was all that about?

Ric: First Milk has a discharge permit but is currently under investigation for breaching it, pending possible prosecution. I belong to an informal group of concerned individuals based in Hook called The Cleddau Project. Our first success was to observe, video, and publicise the situation. This resulted in an apology from the company and the installation of filters and machinery at their effluent treatment plant at a cost of about £2 million. We are also discussing with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water and NRW how and when we can reduce phosphate discharges from the sewage treatment works at Merlins Bridge.

LVN: So what next?

Ric: We're also helping to set up a citizen science project in spring next year to measure sources of pollution from freshwater feeder streams, a follow up to the SWEPT20 project for which a number of Llangwm people volunteered. We'd like to hear from anyone who'd like to be involved in SWEPT24. I can be emailed on riccooperconsult@gmail.com.

Good news for oysters!

Sue Burton

In the spring issue of Llangwm Village News we told you about efforts underway to get funding for a clean-up of our shores to restore habitats for the native oysters that used to grace our waters. The good news is that it was successful as Sue Burton, Conservation Officer for the Pembrokeshire Marine Special Area of Conservation, explains:

Funding for some native oyster restoration work has been secured from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. 'Natur am Byth!' (Nature Forever!) is a four-year programme running from September 2023 to September 2027, led by Natural Resources Wales. It is being delivered by a partnership of 10 organisations and covers 11 projects each focusing on different species. The marine project, Welsh Marine Treasures, is led by The Marine Conservation Society and the native oyster, *Ostrea edulis*, is one of the focus species.

The work is following on from a study by the West Wales Fishermen's Association in 2016 and more recently by restoration trials by Natural Resources Wales, as well as some development work to inform the project which consisted of further research and planning of engagement activity.

The first engagement event for the project took place on 30th September and was aimed at communities living close to the restoration area (Cleddau Bridge to Llangwm), including Llangwm. Despite the rain, we had 16 enthusiastic participants who enjoyed a shore walk at Burton Ferry, aided by staff from The Darwin Centre, where we found oysters and discovered varied marine life including starfish, sea squirts, sponges, eels and crabs. People who had lived here all their lives saw life that they never knew existed here!

We will be running more of these events in future. We'll be contacting the local schools for the next event. If you'd like to get a group together for a shore walk, please get in touch. All that is needed is a good low tide and some appropriate footwear.

It is exciting to be able to announce that in addition, but contributing to the 'Natur am Byth!' work, is some work by Bangor University. This is being made possible by a grant from the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority as part of the Wild Coast! project currently being delivered along the coast of the National Park with funding from the Welsh Government. Bangor University will be taking some of our indigenous old

native oysters (which we will get back at the end of the project) and will be using them to rear our own baby oysters which will then go into the waterway as part of our restoration effort. It is a difficult and technical process to rear native oysters. Currently, native oysters for restoration originate from elsewhere in the UK. This work will help to build expertise in Wales, and it will help to maintain our existing genetic stock.



The Burton Ferry oyster walk on September 30

When oysters spawn (release their eggs), the resulting spat (tiny oysters) need a hard surface to settle on. This can be rock or stones or shells. One of the best settlement surfaces is old native oyster shells. Call out please! If anyone has any old native oyster shells in their gardens that they can do without, and are happy to bag them up for collection, get in touch! They do not need to be clean, but it would be good if they were relatively free of soil. It would be wonderful for our new babies to settle on their potential distant ancestors. Collection will be on 27/28th November (prior collection can be arranged as needed).

Please contact Sue Burton:

sue@pembrokeshiremarinesac.org.uk

Tel: 07881334047

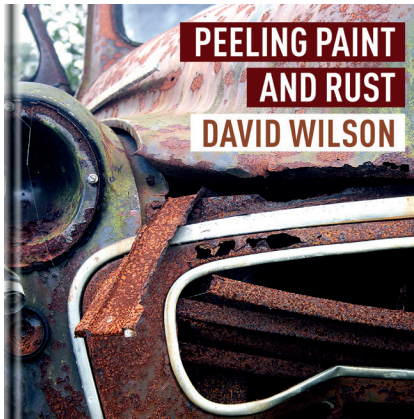
www.PembrokeshireMarineSAC.org.uk

✉ [PembsMarineLife](#)

f [@pembrokeshireMarineWildlife](#)

Who (or what) has the last laugh?

David Wilson



I've been lucky to take photographs around Pembrokeshire and the rest of Wales for twenty years now. Most of the time I was looking for stunning landscapes or abandoned farms to shoot in black and white for various book projects. But as I drove along, my eye was also drawn to the vivid colours of rust, corrugated iron, and weathered paint. I'd be on my way to a location and suddenly I'd pass an old village garage and see the once-bright paint on a petrol pump and think, wow. I couldn't resist even though it wasn't really what I was after. These colour images that I took were irresistible interludes before continuing my quest for the perfect monochrome photograph. But I kept finding these studies in decay and took great joy from those chance discoveries. In fact, one of the first colour images I took, not long after moving to Llangwm, was the corrugated

cottage in Deerland which has recently been knocked down.

Gradually, over the years, I built up a photographic collection of old shopfronts, vintage farm machinery, falling apart cars, and other treasures from around Wales. The colours and textures meant they couldn't be turned into black and white photos. They had to be in colour.

These colour images required a completely different approach to my usual black and white work. When I compose a black and white landscape, I pull in various elements, all of which have to sit within the frame in a way which is pleasing to the eye and take you on a journey through the image. But you have to be wary, because as other photographers know, if you include too many elements, the composition is overpowered and becomes a confusing mess. To avoid that trap I try to steer clear of wide-angle lenses which drag in so much information, and can lead to that confusing mess!



The cottage in Deerland - now knocked down

The colour pictures in my new book *Peeling Paint and Rust* are basically portraits – not of people but of buildings and objects. Unlike landscapes where competing elements sit harmoniously within the composition, with these colour portraits I had to drill right down into the subject, to search for the soul, to isolate that core element. And ask lots of questions: what is it about that old village shop or garage or tractor that makes an emotive connection? What angle works best? Which bits do you include or exclude? I'd walk around, study the subject, notice how the light falls on it, and then I'd see it, the perfect composition. The subjects had to be naturally lit – never use a flash - but strong sunshine is not necessarily very helpful. If you're photographing a three-dimensional structure or object then a direct sun will cast deep shadows and you lose detail. Quite often a more muted diffused light source will allow you to extract detail from those shadow areas and make the image stronger.

There was an aesthetic beauty to these colour images I was photographing, like works of art in the landscape. I love the patina of aged structures and objects. It tells a story. It allows you to imagine all of the people that went before us making use of them. That's the strange thing I suppose – we design and build things that outlast us. They have the last laugh!

If you'd like a copy of *Peeling Paint and Rust* you can get in touch with David on 01437 890647 or email him at info@davidwilsonphotography.co.uk. And if you'd like to see David's work in colour - how it was meant to be seen - you can find Llangwm Village News in colour online at llangwm-pembrokeshire.org.uk

Good Evans! - that'll be Kevin & Fran

Michael Pugh

With the dream team of Evans having briefly tempted the Reverend Marcus away from the greatest book of all with *My River*, Llangwmlitfest was at once privileged and delighted this year to share the most joyful expression of Llangwm's special history in words (Kevin) and pictures (Fran). Each word of this book is precious, authentic and stirring, and each beautiful picture speaks volumes. This was the festival's top selling event and many people felt transported back to Llangwm of old, with one member of the audience even noting that you could literally smell the seaweed, although some suspect that this might have been an eructation by one of the presenters of Tir & Môr Welsh Dry Gin – Seaweed & Spice. We are truly grateful – thank you.



*Kevin & Fran:
My River*

There was plenty more of Pembrokeshire in the mix with an introduction to Dewi the Freshwater East Dragon, and Dr Lloyd Bowen presenting on the Civil Wars in Pembrokeshire. This talk offered an engaging and erudite insight into one of Pembrokeshire's most strategic periods and Dr Bowen's view of the roles of Pembrokeshire families has caused shockwaves through the county. In addition, we hear that applications from Llangwm Ferry to study with Dr Bowen at Cardiff Uni have gone through the roof!

Love remained in the air with David Moore's passionate talk about Ray Howard-Jones in the expert hands of Tasmin Nash (metaphorically speaking!). We are so grateful to David for this visual feast of pictures of Skomer, St Martin's Haven and further afield from a woman artist of deep faith and astonishing talent.

Matthew (Evans again!) and his team at The Cottage stirred up a storm for the Ukrainian Night with dishes laced with garlic, beetroot, vodka and spice. Дякую!

Village Voices (reborn) and Wrong Direction (maturing like a fine vintage port) lifted the souls with their

musical entertainment as did some of Llangwm's folk singers and poets whose passion literally lit up the audience. We are grateful to Claire Phillips and her team for 'The Bales' pop-up bar, which played a supportive and cheering role in ensuring that visitors to the festival could keep hydrated! Llangwm's craft-makers offered their treasures within the welcoming walls of St Jerome's, saving many visitors a busy day of Christmas shopping later in the year.

Mel and her team did Llangwm proud with the most delicious offering of sandwiches, soups and bacon rolls within surroundings of the Village Hall Pop-up Art Gallery so brilliantly curated by Graham Brace. There was so much more brilliance, ranging from rewinding to Russia, Ship-Rats to Bethany and the Beast, Get Stuffed with Ellen Picton, and Get Fit with Ellie Brick, not to mention the lyric of aspiring local writers sharing their work under the careful eye of Judith Barrow.

After so much activity, everyone involved is now enjoying a well-earned rest, and the committee are very thankful for all the support and help from everyone in the village, not least our tireless volunteers who bring good cheer and joy to all that they do!

What of next year? The tides of the Cleddau are still stirring the runes on Black Tar beach and the picture is not quite clear, save to say that the words of 'Brace yourself for a new work by David Wilson' have appeared, as have the words 'Bicentenary of Lord Byron's Death'.

We're always looking for volunteers, hosts for writers and visitors and suggestions for the programme. If you have suggestions or would like to be involved, please get in touch with your usual contact or email us at llangwmlitfest@gmail.com

We'll be back 9 – 11 August 2024.

The Cottage Inn

The Cottage Inn would like to thank everyone who supported us through 2023.

We would also like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. All our winter events will be posted on our Facebook Page.

We continue to serve meals Wednesday - Saturday evenings. We serve a roast on Sunday lunchtime which is very popular and we're also able to offer roasts for takeaway. We strongly suggest that you book early to avoid any disappointment.

Gardeners: look out for our prickly friends!

Dylan Allman

Dylan Allman is a 17-year-old ex-Llangwm lad who now lives with his family in Monmouth. Earlier this year he persuaded strimmer and mower manufacturers to put 'Hedgehog Aware' stickers on their products.

A lot has happened since I left Cleddau Reach School in 2018 – of particular note is that I am now a Hedgehog Champion!

When schools closed during Covid, like many others I found myself adjusting to home-school learning. I also spent more time in the garden, and it was there that I discovered we had hedgehogs! I didn't know much about them, but was curious and so began an exciting journey to becoming a Hedgehog Champion. I learnt that UK hedgehogs (*Erinaceons europeas*) are under threat of extinction due to a dramatic decline in numbers from over 30 million in the 1950s to fewer than 1 million today. I was shocked, but also discovered there was a lot that could be done to help, so I built a log pile, set up a feeding station, and installed night vision cameras. The results were amazing! We soon had several hedgehogs visiting and within a year there were hoglets too.



Dylan with 'Ivan'

I learnt about hedgehog habits and habitat, and decided to share this information so others could help, and joined the charity Hedgehog Street as a Hedgehog Champion. I give talks to community groups and gardening clubs, and exhibited at events, encouraging people to make small changes to help our prickly friends. I've rescued lots of poorly or injured hedgehogs in my area including one caught in netting, and four tiny hoglets abandoned after their nest was disturbed. Thanks to quick responses, emergency care and dedication from the volunteer rescue centre I support, many of the rescued hedgehogs have survived and are now living a great life in the wild!

In 2022 I launched my 'Be Hedgehog Aware' campaign to try to reduce the number of gardening related injuries to hedgehogs. Hedgehogs don't run away from danger so they are really vulnerable to things like strimming. I wrote to manufacturers of gardening equipment asking if they would put my stickers on their products to remind people to check for hedgehogs (and other

wildlife) before they start work. The campaign was hard work as I had to keep chasing companies but I never gave up, and eventually Genpower (who have a base in Pembroke Dock) agreed to meet me and several months later over 100,000 Hyundai Power Product gardening machines came off the production line with my stickers on! They also printed 10,000 stickers that I could send out across the UK. Since then, other companies joined the campaign including STIGA, Henton & Chattell, and local authorities.

I also became a film-maker. In 2020 I won Best Documentary in the under 19 category in the University of South Wales Film & TV Schools and Colleges award with my film 'The Wonderful World of Hedgehogs'. I was awarded Young Volunteer of the Year in 2022 for my hedgehog work and after being nominated by the Lord Lieutenant of Gwent I attended the 2022 Royal Foundation's Carol Service in Westminster Abbey, which was a wonderful experience.

I've had a great time being featured on The One Show on the BBC, Sky News, Radio 4 and Radio 1, as well as in the Daily Telegraph, BBC Wildlife magazine and many more! It's always great to have the opportunity to raise awareness about how we can help hedgehogs.



Dylan with Roland from Genpower

I'm currently supporting a 'Hedgehog Friendly Fencing' campaign and have just persuaded Jewson to bring hedgehog-friendly gravel boards into their product range from 2024. I took a break from hedgehog work to take my GCSEs and am now studying A-levels. I continue to give talks, attend events, and persuade more companies to put my stickers on their machinery. I'm also piloting a Hedgehog First Response Unit which will mean more people in the area undertaking rescues and getting hedgehogs the help they urgently need.

Dylan's top tips: leave part of the garden to grow wild, leave out a shallow dish of water and make a 13cm gap in a fence.

www.hedgehogaware.org.uk for more information.

Changes

Neil Martin

Over the last year, Wrong Direction has managed to survive and improve, despite all the barriers put in our way. Now that we have been going for several years, we can consider ourselves well established and have a number of familiar faces in our audiences who appreciate the efforts we are putting in. One of the important elements in this is to react to our audience and give them more of what they seem to like the most.

To achieve this, we have been moving towards a folk song type of repertoire and, in particular, songs that have an association with the sea. This includes shanties and ballads but also allows for things with only a brief reference to the sea. It has allowed us to create a programme that is more interactive as some of you will have witnessed at the recent Llangwm LitFest. We did a short programme of sea songs and ballads and encouraged the audience to sing along with the chorus and riffs. This has proven so popular over the last year that we now have a repertoire of over 20 similar songs and can put together a complete concert of sea songs and ballads.

This doesn't mean that we are becoming a sea shanty group! There are several of those around who we would not wish to compete with or try to emulate. Indeed, we have developed our own style of songs by mixing classical harmonies and techniques with the folk song basis, using imitation, fugue and canon as essential elements of our style.

So what are these 'classical elements' I hear you asking?

Here is a simple example of imitation in the 'canonic' style. You can see that the 1st iteration is the main tune and that the 2nd and 3rd are exactly the same. It's as simple as that but we classically trained musicians love to wrap it up in fancy language – it makes us feel special!

2nd iteration

1st iteration

3rd iteration

So we'll roll the old cha-ri-ot a - long! We'll roll the

It doesn't always work out quite as easily as this song. In 'A Drop of Nelson's Blood' the imitation works perfectly but in other songs the imitation has to be modified to make the harmony work.

For example, 'John Kanaka' which is often used as our

opening song, especially when we are doing a sea-song programme, has to have the imitation modified so that the harmony works! Sometimes a bit tricky to learn but always very satisfying to perform!

The other classical elements we put in are more standard than this imitative style. Some songs will have a full piano accompaniment just like a classical song and yet others will be sung 'A Capella', which means that there is no accompaniment at all and the voices are heard singing in harmony like they used to 'in the chapel'.

Accompaniments vary as well, giving different textures to the songs, both in texture and in voicing. In the church we have a wonderful keyboard that actually has several thousand voice variations. You may have heard it playing as an organ, even though it has at least 30 different organ voices available. However, I tend not to use these voice variations so that we have a more 'real' performance realisation. When we perform away from the church, I use an electric piano that has a very limited range of sounds (the one I played in the LitFest concert) so it's best not to rely on tonal variations from the instrument but rather to vary the style of accompaniment on the same tone.

So, this is the art of the musical director! Quite a bit to think about and at a number of different levels - for me, personally, made a little easier by the fact that I write all of the arrangements, which allows me to create the different textures at will!

I hope you have enjoyed these articles and that I have given the 'uninitiated' a bit of an insight into what goes on in the background behind every musical performance. All of this applies equally to Village Voices, Haverfordwest Ladies Choir and all of the groups who have performed in our little village. They are all to be applauded equally!

Choir events near you:

Village Voices:

November 23, Portfield School, 5.30 pm
 December 7, Cleddau Reach School, 6.30 pm
 (with the children)
 December 19, St Jerome's, 7.30 pm

Haverfordwest Ladies' Choir:

December 8, St Jerome's, 7.30 pm

Is one of these ladies your great granny?

Jane Mills



Back in the summer, this postcard was found on eBay which showed a procession with groups holding banners showing Llangwm Parish Church, Camrose and Warren and St Twynells. From the outfits, it appeared to have been taken around the end of the 19th century or beginning of the 20th century.

Intrigued by the postcard, members of the History Society turned detective to work out where and when it was taken. At first, we assumed that it must be somewhere in Haverfordwest, given the local communities represented, and possibly somewhere like Barn Street. But at the bottom of the hill there is a large building which didn't seem to fit in with any street locally.

Then eagle-eyed Bob Phillips spotted tramlines in the picture which didn't fit with the Haverfordwest theory. So, looking further afield, we found out that Neath, Llanelli and Swansea had horse drawn trams in the late 19th and early 20th Century. They also had electric systems but there are no signs of overhead cables in the picture. Then electric stanchions were identified on both sides of the road next to the Warren and St Twynells banner. Swansea's tram system was electrified in 1900 so that seemed to point to Swansea being the venue.

It turns out that the building at the bottom of the street is the Albert Hall Cinema in Cradock Street which is currently undergoing restoration. Bob's daughter Josie lives near the venue and has taken

photos of the area as it is today which suggests we are correct in identifying the site.

So it remained to work out what the procession was about. Given that the groups are representing parish churches and that there is a clergyman walking in the group, could this have had some connection to the 1904 revival in Wales? Alternatively, could it have been related to the annual Anglican Church Congress which was held in October 1909 in Swansea?

There is one lady who is wearing the most beautiful lace collars and is obviously reasonably well off (see enlargement). Maybe there is a connection with the Lort Phillips family given their connections to Llangwm.



The detective work goes on but, in the meantime, maybe it was the photographer saying "cheese" that made the two ladies in the front laugh and smile at each other.

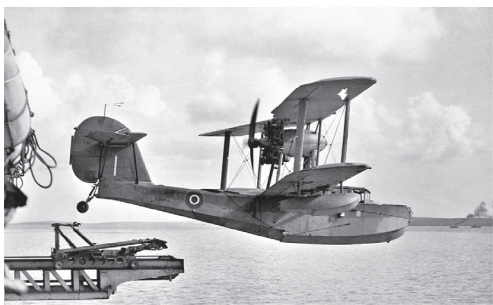
A personal tale

Nikki Bosworth

On 27th August 1943, a Walrus amphibious biplane - P5707 - struck a pinnacle (a lightweight boat powered by oar or sail) on the river near Lawrenny Ferry, flipped onto its back, crashed into the water and broke up on impact. The pilot Lieutenant Commander R L M Shannon was uninjured, the radio operator had a broken leg but a 14-year-old Sea Cadet on board the Walrus was badly injured and drowned. There was no inquest by the Pembrokeshire Coroner and no report in the local newspapers. The death certificate just states "due to war operations" as cause of death.

RNAS Lawrenny Ferry was a Royal Naval Air Station for advanced seaplane training. This base had been established for Walrus, Swordfish and Kingfisher aircraft after the prolonged enemy bombing raids on Pembroke Dock further downriver. It had one hangar, three hardstandings, a wooden jetty and a concrete slipway. Accommodation for personnel was in local cottages and Nissen huts, with officers in Lawrenny Castle. Its practice bombing target was at Sprinkle Pill, further upstream on the opposite bank of the river between Llangwm and Hook. The base was operational only from May 1941 to October 1943.

The unfortunate Sea Cadet was Alec Victor Hancock, son of William Joseph Hancock (also known as Jock and "Uncle Bill" to friends and family) and his wife Winifred. Jock was from the Gloucestershire Cotswolds area originally, married and lived in the Brighton area in the mid-1920s and had moved to Surrey by the time Alec, his fourth child, was born in 1928. Alec was a first cousin of my mother and, therefore, my great-uncle. Alec was buried at St Peter and Paul church, Albury, Surrey, on 3rd September 1943 and he is listed on the war memorial at Albury.



P5707 being launched by catapult off HMS Bermuda (Imperial War Museum photograph).

Four examples survive: three in UK museums (Yeovilton, Hendon & Southampton) & one in Australia. A fifth is undergoing restoration at Duxford.

Favourites, old & new

Barry Childs

The holiday season, alas, seems to be a long way behind us but that has prompted thoughts on what makes good holiday reading. Book or Kindle, what is worth putting in the suitcase? For me, it's something quite light, entertaining but most of all funny. Jonas Jonasson's *The Prophet and the Idiot* fitted the bill perfectly in the summer just gone. There is no writer quite like him, one who invents odd situations and converts them into highly entertaining reading. In this case, we have a tale of Petra, who has fixed a date on when the world will end, Johan an amateur but accomplished chef and Agnes a 65 year old widow who wants more out of life. There is no shortage of plays, novels that are revenge tragedies but this, in part, is a revenge comedy.

Revenge of the different, darker kind is expertly handled in *Act of Oblivion* by Robert Harris. Set just after the Civil War this is the story of Royalists seeking out those, two in particular, responsible for the signing of the death warrant of King Charles I. The story moves between England, the American colonies and Europe, capturing the obsession of Richard Naylor who for personal and political reasons is relentless in his hunt for Edward Whalley and William Goffe. No book by Harris has disappointed but this is up there with his best.

From time to time, and in all walks of life, an outstanding talent appears on the scene: Bobby Charlton (saw him play against Wales in Cardiff) in football, Ben Stokes in cricket, David Hockney in the art world etc. One to join the list is Katherine Rundell. She is a thirty six year old author and academic, a fellow of All Souls College Oxford. Her interests, hobbies (one of which is tight rope walking) and talents seem to be limitless and she has the ability to write on difficult subjects in a very clear way, one example being her book on John Donne which has been mentioned in this column recently.

She also writes children's books: *Rooftoppers*, *Impossible Creatures*, *The Good Thieves* etc. I can recommend all of these and certainly *The Golden Mole* which takes as its theme remarkable creatures from the small to the enormous and from the common to the rare. Did you know that Greenland sharks can live for over 500 years? That means that some living today were around at the time of the Great Fire of London, the Great Plague and when Shakespeare was writing his plays. Did you know that a swift over its lifetime flies about two million kilometres and for about ten months never stops flying? These are just a few of the fascinating insights provided in this remarkable book which is a celebration and a warning about what we have lost and are losing. To her credit Rundell has gifted half of the royalties from this book to environmental charities.

War graves, boats & a secret site

Jane Mills

We continue to organise a varied series of talks and visits which are always well attended by friends from Llangwm and the local area. April saw a return of our good friend Gareth Mills who gave us an excellent talk on “Pembroke Dock – a forgotten town”. He spent the time highlighting the significance of the town in so many different ways that are just not celebrated enough or in ways that are not recognized, often by locals – us included – or by our wider society. As always, Gareth was very entertaining and his grasp of facts and enthusiasm was infectious.

May was our first trip which was to the War Graves in Milford Haven cemetery. In bright sunshine, which was very welcome after a series of cold, wet days, we were treated to a history of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, how it was originally set up and its aims which are “to honour and care for the men and women of the Commonwealth forces who died in the first and second world wars, ensuring that they will never be forgotten”. Looking after 23,000 locations in 150 countries, CWGC is also probably the largest horticultural operation worldwide and whilst the gardens were originally inspired by Gertrude Jekyll’s cottage garden style, the emphasis nowadays is more on sustainable planting in line with the climate change challenges. All their sites are looked after beautifully, regularly checked for any damage and Milford Haven’s is no exception. It is well worth a visit, but be sure to wear sturdy shoes!



*Milford Haven
War Graves*

June was a bumper month with two visits. The first was to Castlemartin Range where volunteers took a small group around different aspects to the range than were seen on our previous two visits. The second was our final visit to Jeff and Pat’s Museum of Scrimpinology. Despite having visited many times, we all found different things to marvel at, items to try and to guess what they were used for. And of course, the tea and cakes were enjoyed by all. Sadly, Jeff & Pat are hanging up their collecting bags but we thank them for all the years they have opened for so many groups and for all the money they have raised for charity.

We also visited the Maritime Museum in Front Street,

Pembroke Dock. The museum was set up in 2015 by the West Wales Maritime Heritage Society with the aim of giving an insight into ship building in Pembroke Dock and all along the Cleddau. We were treated to a tour of the museum which houses the smaller craft, nautical miscellanea, working models, photographs and so much more. Outside there are two main workshops one of which houses the historic Fishguard Lifeboat restoration. Entrance is free but donations are always welcomed. Mike Chant of St David’s RNLI gave a fascinating talk on the “History of the RNLI in Pembrokeshire” in September. Coming from a family with a long history of volunteering (his father was coxswain, his brother is now in charge and he is the chief engineer) he was the ideal person to talk to us. Having given a history of the lifeboat service in general, he spoke about the role of volunteers, both those working on the lifeboats and those fundraising, and then talked about four particular rescues before showing a fascinating series of photographs. Such is his love of music that he even performed a song.

*The
Maritime
Museum*



Our final talk was given by Dick Russill on RNAD Trecwn, a place that most of us know of but know very little about. An excellent speaker, Dick and a small group from Llanychaer had researched the history of the place as part of a community project. Hidden in a deep valley it was the ideal place to serve as a munitions factory and was, in fact, a small town with its own cinema, flats and tailor. Even better was the fact that there was a decoy valley in the vicinity. Recently, a German ex-pilot introduced himself to one of the local residents and explained that although they knew the facility was somewhere in the area, they could never find it!

Work is continuing on developing our society’s website and we hope to be able to launch it at the beginning of next year. Do come along to our talks and if you have any suggestions as to speakers or topics for talks, do let us know. All ideas are very welcome.

Hopes for relaunch

Pamela Hunt

It was more like late summer on the 6th October, when the Rev Marcus and I arrived at St David's Cathedral. A small group of church wardens from all over St. David's Diocese had gathered at the cathedral for the book launch of 'Time To Tell'. Published by the diocese it is written by the Dr Rev Caroline Jones who has spent the last two years gathering material for her book.

The story of our Talking Tapestry in St Jerome's church is one of 100 tales from parishes within the diocese.

The idea behind the book is to reveal to the Welsh and hopefully the Great British public the stories of medieval Pembrokeshire, including those told by the tapestry. Ever since it was completed in 2017, events have prevented us relaunching the audio visual part of the project. Just as we were rolling out in 2019, Covid elbowed its way in. Then it was lockdown. And by the end of all this, public attitudes had changed.

But with the launch of 'Time To Tell' we have the opportunity to develop a new presentation to attract tourists to Llangwm.



Panel from the Talking Tapestry

Events being considered for the relaunch include a medieval wedding celebration and banquet plus guided tours of St Jerome's and Pill Parks cemetery. We will also be celebrating the influence on our community of the many descendants of the man known as Godebert the Fleming, born in 1096. One example is that one of the languages spoken here between 1093 and 1576 was Flemish. Indeed Pembrokeshire's relationship with Flanders has continued through the English Civil War, and even the First and Second World Wars, when we were able to offer sanctuary to the many Flemish refugees fleeing the fighting.

We hope that when we relaunch the Tapestry in 2024 we'll find that it brings the real tourist interest to this part of the world that we deserve.

Small groups can still visit

Jeff James

The last week in June saw Llangwm's little museum open its doors to large groups for the final time.

Those invited included local history societies from Llangwm, Hook, Rosemarket and Clarbeston Road, together with members of Pembrokeshire Industrial Heritage Society, and the Friends of Pembrokeshire National Park.

The chosen charity was Prostate Cymru with over £1,300 donated.



Raising money for Prostate Cymru

It was also quite an emotional time with several new friends being made, and Pat and Jeff would like to thank all of the many cake makers and volunteers who helped make it so memorable.



The cheque!

We're still keeping many of the smaller items, and intend to open for small groups (of say around 6 to 8).

Contact Jeff on 01437 890841, or email curator_james@hotmail.co.uk.

A note for your diary:

If you enjoyed this year's Llangwm Litfest, next year's is on

9-11 August, 2024

The future is in your hands

Cllr Victoria Owens

Since it opened, the Village Hall has been an integral part of our community.

Over the past 10 months, a new group of trustees has been working behind the scenes consolidating and establishing future plans.

Our priority is to repair, renovate and refurbish the hall while also focusing on internal improvements. We want our hall to be a welcoming, practical and user friendly facility for the years ahead and generations to come.

However, the trustees can't do this alone. We need help from the community. The hall's future is dependent on the help of volunteers. We have a What'sApp group set up for dedicated volunteers to help organise fundraising events and suggest ideas for future events. A wide range of skills and experience is needed. If you're keen to help out on a voluntary basis, we'd love to hear from you via our email: info@llangwmvillagehall.co.uk

We successfully applied for the PAVS Living Well and Welcoming Community Spaces grant. This is supporting our Community Café on Tuesday mornings and our Cuppa and Craft group on Wednesday afternoons (see page 18). We would be interested to hear from anyone who would like to start their own group and would like support with this.

We have seen an increase in bookings with events such as Apple Fest, a wreath making workshop, a Macmillan

coffee morning, 'An evening with Karen Wilson' and refreshments following on from the Remembrance Service and coming events such as our first Village Market. All this in addition to regular weekly bookings from various established groups in the village. If you would like to book the hall please contact us on the email above or visit Matthew in The Cottage Inn.



The Apple Fest

- Community Café – Tuesdays 10.30am – 1pm
- Cuppa & Craft – Wednesdays 2pm – 4pm
- A Village Market – Saturday 25th November – 9.30am – 12.30pm. Stall bookings (£10) via the above email.

Please see the Llangwm Village Hall Facebook page for more details of specific events and how to reserve a place.

Village Voices

“Paulette is a gem!”

Fiona Cutting

Well our new musical director Paulette turned out to be a gem, obviously made of stern stuff because she's still with us.

Her first job was to get us ready for the Bluestone Beer Choir Competition held in a farmyard in the hills above Newport in June. This was our third time there wallowing in good beer, a very enthusiastic audience, hard judges (although not as hard as last year) and a great stand up comedian called Stefan doing the links. It was all in aid of the Air Ambulance and raised two, maybe three thousand pounds. We had the wonderful Polina as an accompanist, we didn't win the wooden Pentre Ifan trophy but who cares? It was a great night, so great that Paulette next took us to the Llangwm Literary Festival in August and in October to the Hwb

in Haverfordwest for a choir evening in aid of The Samaritans. There were four choirs, assorted solo and double acts and a joint rousing performance of Calon Lan and the Sloop John B.

So onward and upward!

We'll be doing a gig at Portfield School on November 23 at 5.30, our own Christmas Concert in St Jerome's on December 19 at 7.30 and collaborating with the children at Cleddau Reach School on December 7 at 6.30. So come and join us for Christmassy music - and also try joining the choir! We have new members and always room for more. Singing is good for your mental health apparently. Tuesdays in the Village Hall 7.30 to 9 and no auditions...just turn up for a try with no obligation.

A lover of books & boats

Margaret Brace

Friday 20th October 2023 was a red letter day for Pembroke Dock - and for Llangwm – when the new library at the West Wales Maritime Heritage Museum was officially opened by the Mayor of Pembroke Dock in honour of the late Joan Hague.

Joan was well known to many in her chosen village of Llangwm, where she had lived in Mill House for many years. Joan died in March 2019, aged 93 - not without leaving her mark on the work of many institutions connected with the heritage of the sea. She loved to spend her holidays cleaning up lighthouses or repairing classic boats around the coast of Britain and was especially involved with the work of the West Wales Maritime Heritage Museum.

Joan was never idle - even in her late seventies she studied a course in boat-building at Pembrokeshire College's MiTec building in Milford Haven, after which, aged 80, she said she would have to find a job!

In her early life Joan was one of the first to run an antiquarian bookshop in Aberystwyth, under the auspices of the self-styled 'King of Hay' Richard Booth, who had pioneered the second-hand bookshop business in Hay-on-Wye.

Joan's love of quality books and all things seafaring have come together in the sizeable donation of maritime books she made to the West Wales Maritime Heritage Trust. Now their collection of over 3,000 books in total has been amassed, catalogued and preserved (for reference and lending purposes) by the meticulous work of David Millard and the volunteers at the museum. It is neatly housed in one of the museum buildings, the outer wall attractively painted and illustrated by volunteer Kay Ball.

It speaks volumes that they named the collection *The Joan Hague Maritime Library* and held an Open Day and introductory talk and exhibition about her life. Also proudly presented at this occasion were details of the museum's recently gained Accreditation status.

Joan will be remembered with great affection – her legacy lives on in Pembroke Dock, Llangwm and beyond.

(Llangwm Local History Society, of which Joan was an active member, will forever be grateful for her donation of some hundred-plus history books to the Society, many much treasured and now out of print, dealing with a wide range of local and national history topics.)

Chapel loses treasurer

It was a sad time for the chapel in July this summer when Galilee lost its Treasurer and faithful deacon of many years, Peter Phillips of Foxhall. Peter had served the chapel well throughout his lifetime and will be very much missed. His late wife Cherrill had also been a pillar of support to the chapel – they will be fondly remembered.

A large, well-attended funeral service in memory of Peter was held at Galilee on 2nd August followed by burial at Deerland Cemetery. Rev Alan Ashworth of Salisbury officiated at the service - he had in former years been Minister at Galilee and Johnston Baptist Chapel and was a close friend of Peter and Cherrill. Rev Geoffrey Eynon was also in attendance and Nigel Thomas was organist.

Services continue weekly on Sundays at 10.30am. This will change to fortnightly in the New Year, on the second and fourth Sundays of the month, commencing 14th January. Mr Nigel Thomas takes the pulpit for many of the services – with visiting preachers on other occasions. Galilee continues to be grateful for the work of its two fine organists, Mrs Margaret Davies and Nigel Thomas.



Some of the ladies of the chapel: Mrs Avril Morgan, Mrs Eleanor Roberts, Mrs Ann Vaughan, Mrs Barbara John & Mrs Margaret Davies

Our Harvest Thanksgiving service took place on Sunday 24th September when we were pleased to welcome to the congregation other worshippers from the locality. A fine harvest table was prepared by the ladies of the chapel, with flowers donated by Mr and Mrs Michael Roberts, arranged by Mrs Eleanor Roberts and Mrs Margaret Davies.

A warm invitation is extended to everyone to join us for **Morning Service and Carols on Christmas Eve, Sunday 24th December at 10.30am.**

(Please note that there will be no Christmas Day service at Galilee.)

News from St Jerome's

Debbi Lawson-Earley

Hello everyone, it is the beautiful season of Autumn with its amazing array of colours and textures. As I write this little introduction, I am having a very déjà vu moment, as we are once again being battered by storms, howling winds and the never-ending rain; exactly the same time as last year!!

However, sadly this time there has been extensive flooding and water damage across the whole country, with many people forced to leave their homes, only to return to an awful mess and destruction caused by water damage. It does make you wonder how much more the ground can absorb; I think we will have webbed feet before too long!! Thankfully, our farming communities have been working hard to beat this weather and have successfully harvested all their crops in time, ready for the dark Winter. Despite these difficult economic times we face, let us take a moment to stop, reflect and enjoy the many vibrant colours and let it lift our spirits, give thanks with the hope of better times to come.

A brief recap of recent news and events. It was lovely to be able to yet again hold the Annual Cleddau Reach Y6 leavers BBQ in July! As the tradition dictates, there was the usual warm-up game of rounders, to get appetites going, with lots of fun! As always, the Year 6 children enjoyed themselves, with healthy appetites! A thank you to Jane and David Mills for supplying the BBQ food with Rev Marcus, Polly and Llinos, cooking the food off on the barbeques down on the playing field. The children really enjoyed the fresh fruit I had prepared. There were also some very interesting drink mixes I was asked to concoct!! Everyone had a lovely Summer evening. Once again, a big thank you to Mr Buckley for the use of the school for the evening, also to Mrs Woodward, Deputy Head and Year 6 Teacher Mrs Hicks and Mrs Sally Nowell, Site Manager.

St Jerome's would also like to give a very big thank you for all the donations we received for our Harvest Festival. They have been passed on to PATCH, who were delighted to receive them as their resources are constantly being stretched in these present times.

DETAILS OF SERVICES – Worship Time has been changed to the 3rd Sunday in the month.

Sunday Services

1 st Sunday	Eucharist	9.00am
2 nd Sunday	Eucharist	9.00am
3 rd Sunday	Worship Time (All age worship)	10.00am
4 th Sunday	Eucharist	9.00am
5 th Sunday	Eucharist	10.00am

(This service is on rotation between Llangwm, Freystrop or Johnston Churches. Details on notice board.)

Midweek

Wednesday: -	Morning Prayer	9.30am
Thursday: -	Morning Prayer on Zoom	9.30am (Contact Rev Marcus for details)

For Young People

Pilgrims Group meets every third Sunday at 3pm and we try to have outside activities where we can.

All ages are welcome, but parents will need to accompany any under eights.

Please contact Rev Marcus for full details on 01437 899548 or via email, marcuszipperlen@cinw.org.uk

CHRISTMAS

Freystrop Christmas Carols on Sunday 10th December in Freystrop Church

Christmas Carol Service with Village Voices on Tuesday 19th December in St Jerome's at 7.30pm

Christmas Eve

There will not be a morning Sunday service

Family Crib Service in St Jerome's at 4pm

Midnight Eucharist in St Jerome's at 11.30pm

Christmas Day

Christmas Worship in St Jerome's at 10am

As with all events please check notices on the Church Notice Board.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Haverfordwest Ladies Choir Christmas Concert on Friday 8th December in St Jerome's at 7.30pm.

Price £6 inc. refreshments. Tickets available from Hook Stores or call 01437 890678.

“Breakfast with Santa!” on Saturday 9th December at 9:30-11:30am in Llangwm Village Hall.

Come and join in the Festive Fun with a “Special Visitor!” Proceeds will go to a Children's Charity.

Tickets available from Cleddau Reach Primary School.

2024 Plans

“Bacon Butty Saturdays” will return in January, February and March on the **3rd Saturday** of every month.

Eat, drink & sew together

Kim Sandford

New life has been breathed into Llangwm's village hall by energetic volunteers as the Community Café, nearing its first birthday, is joined by Cuppa and Crafts.



*The volunteers:
aprons by
Llinos*

The café welcomes around 30 people, dogs and even sometimes the PCSO Adam, every Tuesday, 10.30 to 1pm. Special events have included a Coronation coffee morning attracting more than 60 people with entertainment by Wrong Direction. There's another planned for Christmas on December 12, also with Wrong Direction, plus monthly free raffles. The cafe operates on a voluntary donation basis.

Volunteers have also helped out at events including Pat and Jeff's money raiser for Prostate Cymru in

June and the Macmillan coffee morning in November (which raised more than £700) as well as helping with refreshments in the village hall after the Remembrance Service in November. There are plans for a fund-raising coffee morning for Paul Sartori in the New Year. The cafe will be closed for Christmas on December 26.

A huge thankyou must go to those who join us every week and donate, the volunteers, the village hall trustees, the Community Council and the wider community.

Cuppa & Crafts opened in early September with 14+ crafters busy knitting, crocheting, painting and card and jewellery making, every Wednesday afternoon from 2 o'clock to 4. Lots of donated craft materials are available and volunteers are happy to help those who'd like to try something new.

Sessions cost £2 which includes tea, coffee and biscuits. We're also looking into the possibility of craft demonstrations in the New Year. Christmas closure will be on December 27.

Further info for both from Kim Sandford on 01437 891127.

Llangwm Community Council report

The Community Council have been busy over the last few months, financially supporting a number of community initiatives such as the Community Café, refreshments following the Remembrance Service, the Christmas tree lights on the village green and the ongoing maintenance of the public toilets in Black Tar which has been supported by a generous donation of £250 by the Llangwm Boat Club – thank you very much for that! And just a reminder that the toilet block will now be closed until the spring 2024.

There have been a few changes. Councillor Matthew Evans has now become the new Chair person and Councillor Victoria Owens has taken post as the Vice Chair and we wish them every success in their new roles. The minutes of the meetings and agendas will now be published onto the Pembrokeshire Town and Community Council website www.pembstcc.co.uk and the Community Council are working towards updating the Llangwm website.

There are continuing concerns regarding parking and speeding within the village and the Community Council would ask people to call the police service on 101 to provide information.

The dates and times of future meetings are posted onto the website and the notice board on the village green and the Community Council would welcome suggestions from members of the public for future projects, ideas to enhance the village or concerns that you may wish to raise. So please come along to a meeting or contact the clerk.

The Community Councillors continue to give their time generously to represent and support the local community and would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



County Council Report

Cllr Michael John

Review of Town & Community Councils in Pembrokeshire The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales are re-viewing the Town & Community Councils of Pembrokeshire with a view to considering and formulating proposals for their future arrangements. This could see the reduction of councils or some mergers. The Commission would welcome any comments on their proposals in the consultation which residents may wish to make. The 8-week consultation period began on the 23 October 2023 and closes on 17 December 2023. The Commission will consider any representations made to them during the consultation period before they collate their Draft Proposals.

Review of Polling Stations The Local Authority is conducting this regular review and is keen to hear what electors think about the convenience of polling stations used for elections. The Council welcomes the views of all residents, and anyone wishing to make comments or suggestions should, if possible, give alternative venues that could be used as polling places. Information regarding the current arrangements and proposals for changes can be found on PCC's "have your say" page or can be seen at: Electoral Services, Unit 23, Thornton Industrial Estate, Milford Haven, SA73 2RR. Comments can be added online or by email. Closing date for any comments is 1st December 2023.

Don't lose your right to vote Residents are being asked to check their registration details to ensure they are correct. The annual canvass allows PCC to keep the electoral register up to date. More people can vote in Welsh elections than ever before, so this is an important opportunity to update the register. Also, anyone over 16 can vote in Welsh Government and Senedd elections. The easiest way to check you are registered or update is online at: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote It is particularly important to check your details if you have recently moved home.

Also, it should be noted that there is now a legal requirement to show photo identification when voting at some elections. Anyone who does not have an accepted form of photo ID can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate. More information is available via The Electoral Commission website.

Welsh Government 20 mph roll out This was implemented in September as planned and has brought a large response across the County and Wales. Whilst 20mph may suit the narrow roads of Llangwm, there are some in other areas where 20mph is debatable. The council has the power to make "exception" roads and if anyone has any comments, please feed these back to PCC and they can consider reviewing those areas.

A new Youth Enterprise Fund offers young entrepreneurs and their businesses a start-up grant funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. PCC has an Economic Development Officer set up to promote the new funding and support people with their application and sourcing other business support. The aim of the fund is to support applicants aged 16 to 21 to create new businesses in the county. Grants between £250 and £1,000 are available and each award will be based on 50% of eligible costs. Details of eligibility for the grants can be found on the PCC website. You can also contact Alex.Evans@Pembrokeshire.gov.uk for further information.

2nd Home & Empty Property Council Tax: A consultation has recently been undertaken regarding these two taxes following a change in legislation from Welsh Government. Following the

consultation, options are being discussed within PCC and any alterations could be implemented as part of the budget setting process for the 2024-25 tax year. PCC currently adds a 100% levy to 2nd homes but the new legislation allows for up to 300%. Welsh Government have also changed the legislation for holiday lets implementing a 182-day rule to be eligible for small business rates. If anyone has any queries on these, please give me a call.

The Fflecsi Bus Service has now been operating for several months and offers a more flexible service. The existing 308 7.45am and 4:10pm journeys remain in place and do not need to be booked. Other trips do need to be booked and can be made up to 1 month in advance, either using the App or through the Contact Centre (03002340300). It enables travel to/from locations in Neyland, Milford Haven and the West Coast. Also, anywhere within Haverfordwest. Those who have mobility issues can be designated Door 2 Door Passengers and can be picked up from their property (if suitable for the bus) and taken directly to their required destination. It is also available on Saturdays.

Bookings are prioritised based on first come first served. The system will try to book people onto existing bookings if they are within 1 hr of each other.

WISE (Waste Investigations Support & Enforcement) have been appointed by PCC to tackle a range of environmental crimes that have a negative impact on the county. Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued for littering, dog fouling and breach of byelaws relating to dogs on beaches. The aim is to drive behaviour change in the small percentage of people who cause a big impact on the local environment. By issuing these Fixed Penalty Notices, the message sent is that this sort of behaviour will not be tolerated. Any problem areas can be emailed to: enviro-crime@pembrokeshire.gov.uk to highlight areas of particular concern.

Pembrokeshire County Council is ceasing the provision of grey bags and reverting to each household providing their own black bags for residual (non-recyclable) waste collections. The provision of grey bags was introduced in 2019 along with major changes to the waste collection service, which has seen Pembrokeshire named the best county in Wales for recycling for the last 3 years. However, as part of saving measures agreed in March, no further deliveries of grey bags will be made. Households will continue to be able to place out 3 bags of residual waste every 3 weeks, and there is no change to the other recycling arrangements or collection days.

The move to end the provision of grey bags brings Pembrokeshire into line with the vast majority of Welsh Local Authorities, including neighbouring Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire Councils who also require households to provide black bags for non-recyclable waste collections. Residents should continue to use up any existing grey bags as normal and then use standard black bin bags (60litres) for non-recyclable once their grey ones are used up. More information is available via the Waste & recycling pages of the PCC web site.

Finally, I would like to wish all residents and their families a very Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

If you have any queries or questions regarding any topics, please do not hesitate to get in touch. I can be contacted on 01437 890175 or cllr.michael.john@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

If you do have any issues or queries you can also contact PCC direct on 01437 764551 or - <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/resident>

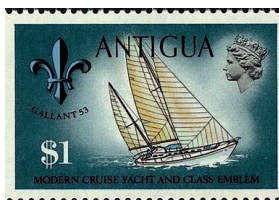
Sol Quest on a stamp

We were intrigued when we saw the following headline in the Western Telegraph earlier this year:

‘Antiguan stamp emblem the Sol Quest spotted off Skomer’.

Could this be the elegant two-masted yacht usually moored off Llangwm Ferry and a daily sight for many of us in this part of the village? Well it turned out that the paper had spotted a reference to the vessel on the website of the Ship Stamp Society and reproduced it.

The article went on: ‘The waters of Pembrokeshire paid host to the sophisticated ‘Sol Quest’ this week – the yacht that graces the \$1 stamp of Antigua – as she made her way past the Wooltack Point en-route to North Haven in Skomer Island’.



Owner Chris Thomas, who you'll find as author of our Boating Club report on page 20, says at the time he'd been sitting out Storm Betty in Goulthrop Roads and was beating out of St Brides Bay the day after for North Haven.

Sol Quest has quite a history. She was built in Bournemouth and sailed from Poole for Antigua, from where she made regular charter trips, in August 1967. She returned to the UK in 2005 having been discovered in Carentan, northern France, in very poor condition. She was then sailed to Cornwall where she was restored. Her name was changed at various times, to Zulu Warrior and possibly Luna Quest, but on her return to the UK she reverted to Sol Quest.

Chris says she's been given a new lease of life and is a beautiful yacht to sail.

*Sol Quest
moored off
Llangwm*



Seconds reach cup final

Ian Gow

The season for the first team started well, they won three of the first five games with the highlights being 133 for our skipper Matthew Kiff against Narberth and 120 not out from Steven Inward against Burton.

Following that, a series of injuries and weddings left our first team depleted for many weeks with the team suffering a series of defeats that saw us slide down the table. Several of our second team filled in the gaps in our first team. This in turn left the second team short of players which meant they also went on a losing run. Through these troubled weeks both teams played with good team spirit.

The second team rallied well and achieved great success in the Alec Colley Cup and following some impressive performances reached the final of that competition. They met a very strong Carew second team in that final and were beaten. The stand-in Captain, Jon Clout, led the team well throughout the season. He worked tirelessly to ensure we put a full team out each Saturday and our thanks go to him for those efforts.

The first team managed to survive for another season in the first division, winning a further two games. The seconds also survived in division four, with Shaun Waller having a magnificent season scoring a lot of runs and achieving his maiden century with 122 against Haverfordwest III.

We are already planning for next season; we intend to start one or two junior teams and hopefully both senior teams will play to their potential and challenge at the top of the table.



Llangwm II v Lawrenny II July 1, Llangwm batting

Black Tar cleanup

Chris Thomas

Local boat owners have enjoyed a summer of mixed weather for being on the water. With the end of the boating season, Llangwm Boating Club will hold its Annual General Meeting on Tuesday November 21st, 2023 at The Cottage at 7.30. Come along if you would like to meet a committee member, hear about the club's activities or speak to the Mooring Officer.



The river at Black Tar - now squeaky-clean

A recent inspection of the Llangwm moorings was carried out by Milford Haven Port Authority with the club Mooring Officer. Everything was generally in order. However, some mooring holders still need to mark their mooring buoy with their mooring number. Some moorings also need to be moved to their allocated location. Both these issues are requirements of the mooring holder's licence. The affected mooring holders will be advised.

There will be moorings available next year at Llangwm, from just upstream of Black Tar down to Port Lion. New applications can be made between April and July 2024 by emailing the Mooring Officer on llangwm.boat.club@gmail.com. If you already have a mooring, you will receive your renewal application in the spring. This will include the payment to the Crown Commissioners (£75 in 2023) which is subject to an annual increase.

Many will be pleased to see the clean-up at Black Tar, undertaken by boating club members working with Llangwm Community Council. A lot of rubbish was removed. This had been cluttering up the foreshore and blocking access to the lifebuoy. Boat owners who keep dinghies at Black Tar will now be able to easily access their boats. Stay safe on the water.

Top of the League!

Peter Rose

It has been a very successful racing season for our rowing club.

In the South Wales league our mixed team comprising Warren and Helen Heaton, Mandy and Richard Bennett, coxed by Mike Miles, won the mixed section of the league, winning events at New Quay and Gelliswick and coming second in Aberdyfi, Aberystwyth and Fishguard.

Our men's team comprising Warren, Richard, Lynn Hooper and Pete Owen, also won their division, with a race win at Fishguard in the final event and the combined efforts of these two crews made Llangwm the top club in the Southern league.

We haven't managed to put out a regular ladies team this year but are hoping to recruit more members next season and match the men's and mixed team results



The 2023 Ramsey Challenge team

We also sent a strong team to do the Ramsey Challenge race. Twenty crews took part in the gruelling race around the island starting and finishing at Whitesands. Richard and Mandy Bennett, Warren Heaton and Jane Scale, with cox Pete Owen, were the overall victors taking 63 minutes. They had to withstand a strong challenge from the Aberystwyth men's crew who came home just six seconds behind them.

Our pride of lions

Mike Preddy

It's been a fantastic start to the season for Llangwm Lions, who have now grown incredibly in numbers.



U6 team

We now field 2 x U6 and 2 x U7 sides on top of our established U9's and U13's



U7 team with Mike & Kim of sponsors KJ Prints



U9 team with kit sponsored by Sugar Loaf

Six for county squad

Rhiannon James

The 2023/24 rugby season is already in full swing - as is the poor weather! This season Llangwm's minis and junior section is fielding seven teams – under 7s, 8s, 9s, 10s, 11s, 12s and 15s, with approximately 100 youngsters training and playing matches for the young Wasps. This is a great achievement for a village club and testament to the hard work of the volunteer coaches and team managers and the commitment and support of all the parents. We are committed to creating an inclusive club in which our young players can thrive and enjoy rugby with their friends. New players are always welcome to join. Training takes place for most teams on Wednesday evenings at Pill Parks. Head to our Facebook page to find out more.

The teams have already enjoyed matrix fixtures against teams such as Neyland, Pembroke, St Davids and Haverfordwest, with successes across all age groups, and the minis have also played a round of festivals. The under 11s, 12s and 15s are looking forward to starting the knock-out cup in November.

Long-standing junior chairman Brendan O'Loughlin stood down from his role over the summer and he must be thanked for his years of service to the club. Brendan has been instrumental in fostering the fun, caring environment which makes Llangwm such a special place to play rugby and the current strength in numbers is in no small part down to his hard work. Nick Hughes has taken over as junior chairman and everyone wishes him well and their full support in his new role.



The six players chosen for the U11 county squad

Following on from last year's success which saw three players – Harry, Lyra and Ollie – play for the county under 11s squad that made it all the way to the Principality Stadium for the Welsh schools competition finals, we are extremely proud to have six players selected for this year's Pembrokeshire Schools Under 11s county squad! To have that many players from a small club such as Llangwm is a fantastic achievement and shows that the rugby future is bright in the village. The super six have played their first matches for Pembrokeshire, with both matches against Ceredigion ending in draws! Well done to Bobby, Dexter, Grace, Kyzer, Noah and Tom, and best of luck for the rest of the season.

The successful youth team move up

Dan Chesmer

After a short break from rugby it is great to welcome you back to the new season at Llangwm RFC. We hope that this season will be just as exciting as last year which saw our village rugby club represented in the Principality Stadium in Cardiff when Llangwm RFC youth team played in the Youth Bowl final. It was an amazing achievement for the team, the club and the village, whose support was fantastic.

The AGM on August 7th saw the current officers remain in post and the club would like to welcome Dave Dowling who has volunteered to take on the important role of membership secretary. For everyone continuing their roles on the club committee please accept our whole-hearted thanks for your on-going support and the time and effort you give to the club.

The senior team have recruited well through the summer and it is great news that some players from last year's superb youth team are joining the senior side. Former player and local lad Mathew Hughes joins as head coach with brother Dan assisting as forwards coach. We would like to welcome Mathew and wish him well. Ieuan Power continues as first team captain with club stalwart James Lewis as team manager for the season.



Llangwm RFC Senior team

At the time of writing Llangwm are in 8th position in Division 3A West of the WRU National League. Numbers continue to be strong in training and performances are improving each week. The support we receive from the village and the local community during the home games is amazing so on behalf of the committee we would like to thank everyone who took the time out to come and support the team and club and hope to see you again this season.

Our new youth team, moving up from last year's U16s, have shown their potential with close games against Narberth and Crymych this season and with new players joining it is exciting to see them build on these performances. Head coach Jon Rowles has created a good support team around him and it is great to see good numbers available for training and games.



Llangwm RFC Youth team

The mini and junior sections of the club continue to grow and we have teams in all mini age groups and new players joining our important U15s team who recently gained an excellent draw against a strong Pembroke side. Nick Hughes takes over as chairman of our mini and junior section and alongside the committee and coaches will continue to build on the strong foundation they have created. A big thankyou goes to Brendan O'Loughlin who has worked tirelessly over the past few years to make the section the success it now is. A huge effort goes into these future generations of players by the coaches and parents and the club would again like to pass on thanks to all involved for their continued efforts. We are always looking for more help in all areas of the club so please speak with the coaches or members of the committee if you would like to help out and volunteer.



Llangwm RFC U15s team

The club and volunteers have been busy during the summer and have invested in improvements to help benefit the club moving forward. As a club run by volunteers we are always looking for new people to help out or join the committee. If you are able to spare a couple of hours on a match day weekend or can help out in the week please see the contact details on our website and get in touch. Your club needs you!!

<https://llangwm.rfc.wales/contact-us>

'Kyip kyip' said the redshank, bobbing on the mudbank

Graham Brace

Everyone who has walked around the Pill and adjacent shores in Llangwm will almost certainly have heard the hysterical, piping, staccato 'kyip, kyip, kyip' alarm call of the common redshank (*Tringa totanus*). Sometimes called 'the sentinel on the shore', it is the first bird to fly off on one's approach warning all other birds of your presence. In flight this brown wader is distinctive with its white rump and white-edged wings. The redshank is present for nine months of the year being absent between early April and late June when it departs to breed on rough damp uplands, moorlands and coastal marshes, mainly in the northern parts of the UK. It is so-called because of its bright orangey-red legs clearly seen when feeding along the water's edge or on the mudbanks, often displaying its 'bobbing' motion. Numbers vary day by day, from perhaps a dozen present to upwards of sixty individuals. More often than not, at high tide, they can be seen roosting on the grassy bank and rocks at Rectory Point waiting for the tide to recede to enable them to continue feeding on the mudflats and in the gullies. In winter the UK breeding population of 22,000 pairs increases to around 100,000 birds with the arrival of migrants, mostly from Iceland.

Redshank
(*Tringa totanus*)



The more sharp-eyed observer might also spot its cousin, the greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) which is nowhere near as numerous as the redshank in and around the Pill with only two or three present at any time. The greenshank is slightly larger than the redshank and is distinctive with its greyer back and near white underside. The name is slightly misleading inasmuch as the legs are not distinctly green but more greyish green. It is less prone to flight in one's presence but once in flight its white rump tapering to a point up its back is prominent. Its wings lack the white trailing edge of the redshank and its flight is more erratic. A winter migrant, it breeds in Scandinavia and northern Russia.

The redshank has a rarer cousin in the spotted redshank (*Tringa erythropus*). This occasional visitor to Pembrokeshire shores is slightly larger and more slender than the common redshank with longer legs and bill. Some 20 years ago we had a single spotted redshank that returned each year to

over-winter in the Pill for five consecutive years.

Speaking of 'shanks', we had a brief visit over the weekend 26th/27th August from a lesser yellowlegs, an extremely rare wading bird from North America. This individual had been blown across the Atlantic by one of the early storms. It was seen on two consecutive days in the Pill and attracted considerable interest from local birders and one or two twitchers from further afield. I was lucky enough to catch a brief sighting of it before it disappeared into one of the gullies. Slightly smaller than a redshank it was distinctive with its long, bright yellow legs. That storm resulted in several individuals being deposited on the western shores of Britain and Ireland.



Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)

Most of you will be aware from the reports in the local and national media that recent severe Atlantic storms have resulted in a whole host of North American birds being blown into Pembrokeshire including magnolia warbler (St Govan's), Canada warbler (a first for Britain at Stack Rocks), melodious warbler (Kete), bay-breasted warbler (Ramsey), to name but a few. These birds were the lucky ones that survived the crossing. Tragically, countless numbers will have perished in the storms. Naturally, this influx of rarities attracted twitchers from far and wide and in some cases causing chaos by parking their vehicles irresponsibly in the lanes leading to these locations. Many returned home disappointed if the birds in question failed to make an appearance during their visit.

A leucistic (white) blackbird was spotted by Hazel Thompson at the Deerland allotments on 26th June. The first flyover of the autumn of Canada geese occurred on 7th August. They have been pretty much in evidence since. There were regular sightings of ospreys from August through September at various places along the river from Slebech and Millin Pill to Sprinkle Pill, Llangwm Ferry and the Cresswell and Carew tributaries. Surely, it is only a matter of time before a breeding pair becomes established somewhere along the Daugleddau waterway.

If you have anything unusual to report from the natural world that may be of interest to others please let me know by dropping me a line at grahambrace@btinternet.com