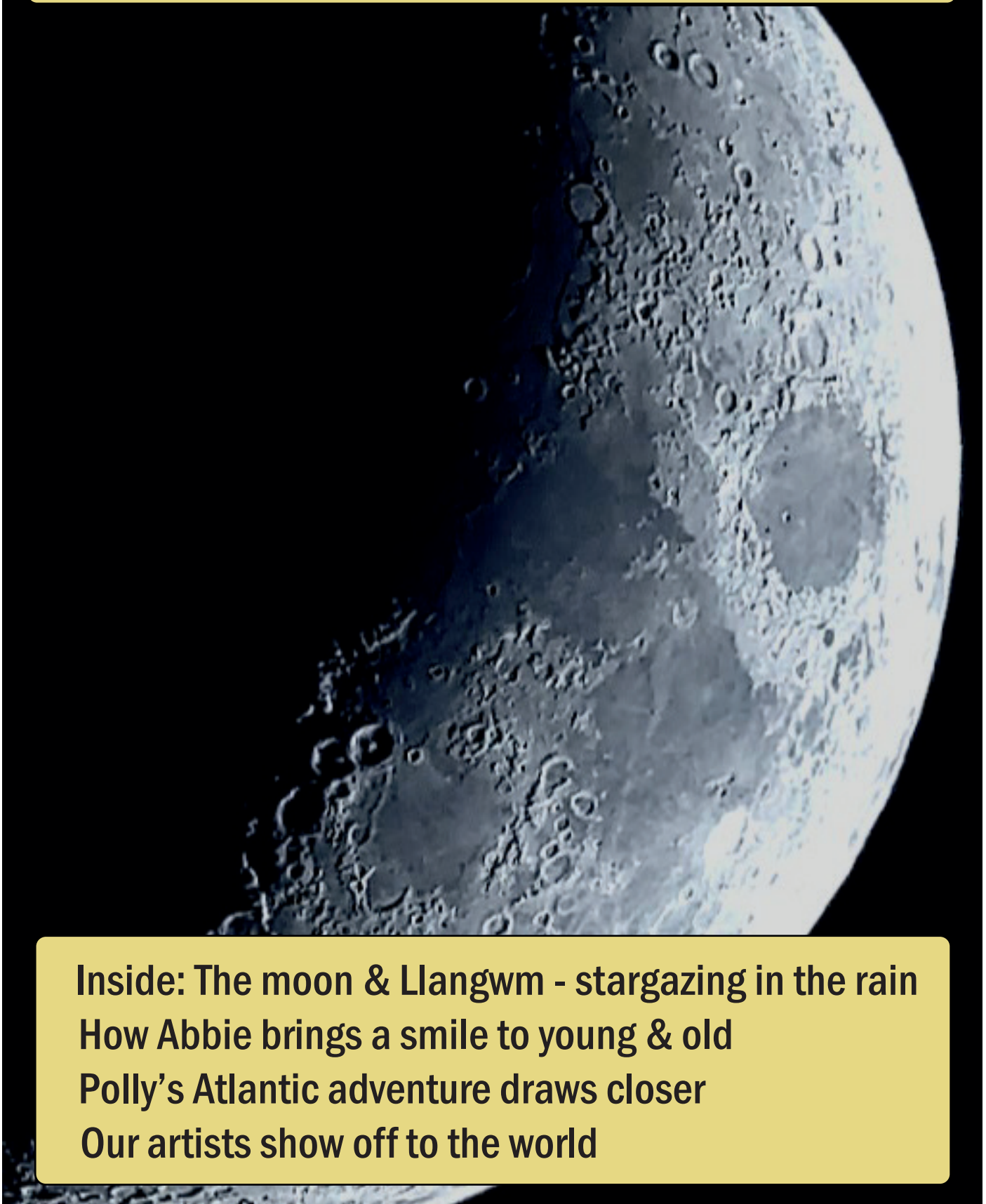


Llangwm Village News

Issue 59 Spring 2024



Inside: The moon & Llangwm - stargazing in the rain
How Abbie brings a smile to young & old
Polly's Atlantic adventure draws closer
Our artists show off to the world

Llangwm Village News, Issue 59 Spring 2024

Lots of water in this issue -- much of it coming from the sky and making life difficult for sporting teams (see rugby page 23 and cricket page 20) but definitely not rowing (page 18) or boating (page 19). Water of the salty variety figures in Polly Zipperlen's plans to row across the Atlantic (page 12) while the clouds causing all the bother make life for stargazers difficult (page 3).

Two of our groups said goodbye to old friends (Village Voices page 6 and Galilee Chapel page 13) which is always sad. But Penny Reuben and Abbie do their best for children and care home residents (page 5).

We have lots to look forward to: the Litfest in August (page 9), a whole range of concerts (pages 6 & 7), a flower festival in the church (page 14) and Llangwm Carnival (page 16). So enjoy!

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

20mph: what happens next?



The decision by the Welsh Government to review the 20mph limit just seven months after it was imposed followed widespread criticism and the launch of a petition that attracted half a million signatures. Then, in April, Transport Secretary Ken Skates said 'revised guidance' would be published in July. So if you want to have your say and help shape the discussion, how do you do it? Michael John, our representative on Pembrokeshire County Council, explains the situation:

"Following the roll out of this scheme last year, and considerable public objections, the new transport minister in the Welsh Government, Ken Skates, has recently announced that this policy will be reviewed. I'm sure this will be of interest to the many residents who have contacted me, and others who have expressed their views.

The minister has stressed it is not a total reversal of the policy, but a review with options for some roads to be returned to 30mph. How this will affect the roads in and around Llangwm is not yet known, but I'm sure more details will be released over the coming months, including how the funding will be provided for any notices and signage.

I would say that any requested reversal in the village would have to be balanced against previous complaints of speeding and the nature of the roads. Parts of the village were already a 20mph area and they will remain but I would welcome views on any roads residents may feel should be reviewed.

Whilst I would need to concentrate on the Llangwm area, I will forward any view to PCC for other roads in the county. Residents can also give their views direct to PCC on PembsCC20mph@pembrokeshire.gov.uk.

I'm sure there will be a great deal of coverage of this in the months to come."

Michael's regular report covering other issues can be found on page 17.

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.

Heavens above Llangwm

Steve Richards

For the past few months extraordinary pictures of the night skies over Llangwm have been appearing online, courtesy of local man Steve Richards. His picture of the moon is on our cover, but other images show stars mind-blowing distances away. Here's his story:

I had an interest in the night sky when I was quite young (a very long time ago) but other interests and work took over. I just never had the money or the ability to achieve the pictures I'm getting now.

My interest was sparked again when my children and grandchildren bought me a novice's telescope for Christmas 2023. My friend Bill Maxwell also cultivated my interest by showing me some of the pictures of the night sky he had obtained from his back garden. We both joined Preseli Astronomy Club. The members there have been very helpful with lots of guidance.



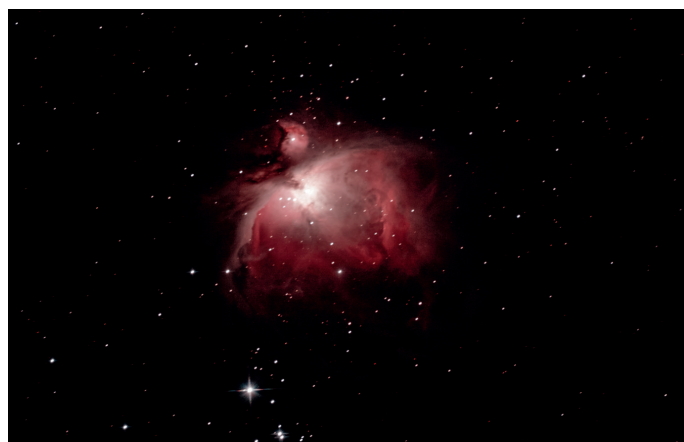
Steve with his reflector telescope - all controlled by computer from the garden shed.

I have since been building up my stock of equipment to view the night sky. I have to be very careful to build it up slowly. It's expensive and I get shouted at!! The most successful item is a little 20cm long telescope called a Seestar S50. You control this with a smart phone and once it is locked onto a particular target it will track it across the sky. It takes lots of 10 second exposures and stacks the images on top of each other to produce the final photograph. The Seestar has become extremely popular with amateur astronomers across the globe. Because it is so small and portable you can use it very quickly in between the poor weather. Don't mention our weather recently!

I also have a 150mm diameter reflecting telescope that I use when the weather is clear for long periods. That's not very often! I am hoping to use this during the summer months and take pictures with a large Digital Single Lens Reflex camera (DSLR). The picture quality should be considerably better with this.

I am slowly learning where to find different objects in the night sky as I go along. I'm attending some free online courses with the OU to improve my knowledge. However, I have always had an interest in photography and it is obtaining pictures of these objects that is my main interest. All I need now is Cloud Gun! To get some clear skies.

Below is an image of the Orion Nebula, aka M42, taken with my DSLR attached to my reflector telescope. The Orion Nebula is in the Milky Way and part of the Orion constellation. It is faintly visible by eye at the end of what is known as the sword. It is 1,344 light years away. During winter it rises in the east and tracks across the valley behind me.



The Orion Nebula (best in colour on the website)

Some facts you probably already know:

The Orion Nebula is a huge cloud of gas and dust in the Orion constellation seen to the south of Orion's Belt, which appears as a group of three stars in a straight line. The stars in the nebula are two million years old but because they're so far away we're seeing them as they were 1,344 years ago, i.e. in the year 680. If you really want to work out exactly how far away and long ago, you need to multiply the distance in light years by the speed of light, 300 million m/second. You can see why astronomers measure in light years.

A busy year and two champion teams!

Mr Rhys Buckley

It is difficult to believe that we are already past the halfway stage of the current academic year, but here we are and, again, it has been another busy, successful and enjoyable time for the pupils of Cleddau Reach! From continued sporting success and fantastic expressive arts performances to events that have brought the community together, there has been so much for our school to be proud of!

Looking back to December, our school community enjoyed a fun-filled festive season! Each year group delivered a superb Christmas production which they performed to their families in our school hall. We all enjoyed the annual 'Cleddau Reach Has Talent' show, with children from each year group showcasing a variety of talents to the school and, thanks to our newly-formed Friends of Cleddau Reach committee, we celebrated the return of our school Christmas Fayre, which I know many of you within the village community attended and enjoyed.

The beginning of 2024 has started at a similar pace, with a variety of topics being covered across the school and a wide range of enrichment activities taking place. Our girls' football team became county champions for the second time in three years and will now go on to the national finals being held in May. We also competed in the annual cross country championships, with some superb standout performances from individuals and the squad as a whole!



Girls' football team - County Champions

However, it's not just the sporting arena where we are celebrating success. In classrooms and in our outdoor spaces, the children have produced some wonderful work, supporting each other and demonstrating our school values consistently well. A great example of this

comes from our outdoor learning activities, with our new garden area providing each class with their own raised bed to plant, grow and harvest for themselves.



Year 4 Boys' Cross Country Squad: Champions!

We continue to get the children out into their local community and beyond, with classes taking part in the annual St David's Day parade in Haverfordwest, year groups enjoying challenging themselves in places such as Heatherton and Year 5 enjoying a residential trip to Cardiff. Our Year 6 pupils will soon be going on a residential trip of their own as they head to Sealyham Activities Centre for the week



Year 3 trip to Heatherton (L) and Year 4 planting in the new garden area (R)

Looking forward, we are hoping that there will be a significant upturn in the weather now that the summer term is upon us. However, one thing that is guaranteed will be the continuing pace of school life, with plenty of further opportunities for our children to demonstrate their abilities both here in school and out and about. If you'd like to keep up with events and goings-on at the school, the best place to do so is either our new website (www.cleddareachschool.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.

Three dogs and some happy smiles

Penny Reuben

In the autumn edition of Village News we ran a photograph of Dougie, a therapy dog, and Lawrence, a year 6 student at Cleddau Reach school. Lots of people commented on it so we thought we'd find out more about therapy dogs and their owners – like Llangwm resident Penny Reuben.

My first experience of therapy dogs was when I was at the County Show and I saw photographs of reading dogs at the Burns Pet Nutrition stall. The way the scheme works is that the dog sits quietly with its owner and a child, who is maybe having problems with reading, reads out loud to it. I completed an application form and duly signed Lucy my lurcher up and our training took almost a year. Lucy spent almost three years at Cleddau Reach School, but sadly died during the Covid pandemic.



Penny, Flash & Lucy, 2017

My next therapy dog was Flash, a whippet, who took over from Lucy as the village school reading dog. He did this for over two years and at the same time was assessed by the charity Greyhound Rescue Wales as a therapy hound. During his year doing this he attended sessions at VC Gallery, Ashdale Care Home, Bush House Care Home, Shalom House and Solva Friday Club. Flash sadly died in April.

Six months after she moved in with us our next dog, Abbie, was assessed by a qualified dog behaviourist and she too became a therapy dog, taking over all Flash's venues when he retired last summer. She also regularly visits Havenhurst Care Home and Havenhurst Day Centre. Most weeks she visits at least one venue, sometimes more.

We've loved virtually all our sessions. The residents of the various care homes have got to know Abbie and me and usually give us a lovely welcome. We are well bonded and Abbie is very food motivated. I spend a lot of time talking to the residents individually about Abbie and dogs they have had. Those of them who want to are given a small dog treat, and if necessary helped to give it to Abbie. She is very gentle and never snatches or licks! Only once has someone tried to eat the dog treat, but I managed to grab it before it went in her mouth!

Not all dogs are suitable to be therapy dogs. It depends less on breed and far more on age and individual temperament. It's a three way relationship. The dog and handler must get something from it (in Abbie's case it's treats and attention) and the child who is reading or the care home resident must also benefit. If anyone is interested in becoming a therapy dog handler I would suggest they do some reading about the schemes available online before contacting any specific organisers.

Abbie came to me from Greyhound Rescue Wales - she and another dog had been thrown out of a car and hit by another vehicle. The police were involved and they found six other dogs at her home in various states of starvation and abuse. Abbie and a little whippet were treated by the RSPCA and GRW over several weeks. She has neurological damage, some nasty scars, half an ear and very poor coordination when walking or running, and frequently falls over when she is excited. Her previous owner was prosecuted for animal cruelty and received a 10 year ban on owning dogs and an 18 month custodial sentence suspended for two years.



Abbie

Why do I do it? Because I believe it is important to put something back into our society, not just take from it. If Lucy and Flash helped even a small number of children develop a positive relationship with reading, or increased their communication skills, then all my time and their hard work was worth it. I know Abbie brings happiness to the people she visits in care homes and day centres - the looks on their faces are reward enough. I am privileged to be in a position to help them.

Christmas cheer, and more to come

Fiona Cutting

Christmas was busy - the choir sang at Portfield School for an hour or so on November 23rd, and December 7th was a concert with the children at Cleddau Reach School. Sian's daughter Seren sang a couple of songs and the intro to "All I Want for Christmas is You" . The children joined in with this, performed two others and not only sang beautifully but knew all the words! A good example to us.

The St Jerome's Carol Concert:

There was a carol concert at St Jerome's Church on the 19th, the basses each did a solo verse of We Three Kings. They were heroic. Well that's what they told me to say anyway.



St Jerome's carols - fittingly Carol (Mackintosh) read the lesson



Bluestone Brewery Sing-off

Once again we are looking forward to the annual knees up, sorry, annual choir sing-off at Bluestone Brewery

on June 22nd and if you have a spare summer evening and fancy the trek to Newport you'll have a great time. Last year it raised £2650 for Air Ambulance.

Come and Sing:

We've also organised a Come & Sing day at St Mary's Haverfordwest on June 8th. You may have seen it on Facebook. For the uninitiated the idea is that you arrive on the morning, rehearse two pieces, Mozart's Coronation Mass and Faure's Requiem during the day with a break for lunch, then sing along with us and soloists in the evening. Not as daunting as it may seem as we've done both before. It's like a Scratch Messiah only not at Christmas. Tea will be provided but there will be a charge to cover the hire of the church and soloists etc, great fun actually and wonderful acoustics in a glorious old church. Just try it - newcomers and past choir members, you'll enjoy it. Bring a packed lunch.

Come and join us

Newcomers to the village are also more than welcome to join us at our regular sessions on Tuesdays in the Village Hall at 7.30 with no auditions.

We have just been devastated to lose one of our dearest choir members, the lovely Anna Wilson who has been with us from the very start. She will be missed forever.

Come & Sing

Saturday June 8th, 10.30am to 5pm

St Mary's, Haverfordwest

Mozart's Coronation Mass

& Faure's Requiem

Rehearse during the day and sing with soloists in the evening.

Hosted by Village Voices with the

Landsker Singers

Everyone welcome!



The boys ring the changes - and raise money

Neil Martin

One of the ongoing challenges for any MD is to keep developing the repertoire of the group. This is important for both the performers and for their audience. This is especially important if, like Wrong Direction, you have returning members of the audience or you are performing to the same audience several times a year.

The challenge at Christmas is to avoid doing the very same songs as everybody else. There is a limited repertoire of well-known Christmas songs suitable for our type of performance so I have always tried to find something more unusual. This last Christmas we had the most varied set we have ever had and were very pleased that we were quite unique in our concert choices. However, Christmas is a very short span and, as soon as it is over, those songs have to be shelved for another year and a new repertoire has to be chosen that is not simply the same old stuff.

This led to our 'Sea Songs' repertoire containing such ditties as "Off to the South'ards", "Old Maui" and "The Death of Nelson" which had almost certainly never been performed in Llangwm before. Our first outing for these was in St Mary's Church in Haverfordwest on 26th January for one of their interestingly named Winter Warmer Concerts. (Interesting because there was no heating at all in that enormous church.....)

We followed it up with a wonderful concert in Llangwm's own Baptist Chapel on 22nd February sharing the concert with Neyland Ladies Choir. The event was a resounding success with the two choirs alternating sets of songs throughout the evening and joining together for a buoyant medley of Beatles songs to round off the performance. The audience was fantastic: enthusiastic and supportive in the way that only Llangwm audiences can be. The concert was a fund raiser for MND research and raised over £700 in a single event. A testament to the generosity of the Llangwm people.



Wrong Direction & Neyland Ladies' Choir at Llangwm's Gallilee Chapel

Our next concert is to be at Kensington Court in Milford Haven on 22nd May where we will be doing a longer afternoon's performance with the first half showcasing some of our Sea Songs and the second half offering up a taster of some of the songs we have done before (including some of the 'silly' ones!).

The next chance for Llangwm residents to hear us will be on Saturday 15th June when we will be singing at the St Jerome's Flower Festival. There will be a mixture of old and new songs with some that have not been performed in Llangwm before.

Finally (for the moment) we will be performing a reciprocal concert with the Neyland Ladies Choir on 6th July at Neyland Community Hub where we will resurrect the Beatles Medley along with a special arrangement of my own of 'The best of Simon and Garfunkel' songs with both choirs singing various sections sometimes together and sometimes apart.

Llangwm artists show the world

Fiona Cutting & Graham Brace

We all know Llangwm is a bit of a hub for artists and, as if to emphasise the point, two village-based illustrators have showcased their work at art shows so far this year, Graham Brace at Oriel y Parc in St Davids and Fiona Cutting at Oriel Q in Narberth. So how did they do?

Fiona: I'd been spoilt with recent past shows such as in the Gulf States, Covent Garden and Richmond in that the framing and hanging were done for me but Ben and I turned a shed into a framing shop and set up a production line. It was a steep learning curve.



'Hot Birds'

As you may notice, Llangwm is full of artists. Why? When I lived in Suffolk in the '70s and '80s, it was full of potters, it was a natural magnet with the cheap property with workshop space. Now you can hardly put the words "cheap property" and "Llangwm" into the same sentence and which came first, chicken or egg, residence or the influence of surroundings?

Clues lie in all our work...there's Graham Brace, Ian and Christine Jacobs, Fran Evans, Jas Cutting, Mark Stanmore, David Wilson, Jenny Ambler, Sian Jones, Paul Brant, Bob Jackson and myself. (And apologies for those I've missed out accidentally).S All are from various degree courses and backgrounds but all are very affected by what Llangwm has to offer. We're surrounded by water, beaches, birds, flowers, animals, how can it not affect us? OK, none of us is ever going to be in the Venice Biennale, or the Saatchi Gallery, we're far too mainstream. But bearing in mind that we collectively raised more than £6000 for our work in the Silent Auction for Ukraine, someone likes us.

So as you pass closed doors, in sheds, spare bedrooms or maybe even at a kitchen table, you will never know who is beavering away producing their own version of the world. Their own version of Llangwm.

Graham: The exhibition was a retrospective collection of much of my commissioned original illustration work from the past twenty years for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park's location information boards that are scattered around the county. Its purpose was to demonstrate the important role that illustration plays in providing clear and attractive information to the general public.

Apart from a few individual items the exhibition featured a dozen location panels each of which consisted of a large aerial view of the location supported by smaller individual drawings showing features of specific interest and importance. Alongside the work was a limited exhibition of my art prints which were for sale.

The exhibition was well attended and proved to be of great interest to visitors.



Graham with some of his work

You can't travel far in the PCNP without coming across this little fellow. He is of course a razorbill. But what you may not know is that the human behind him is none other than Llangwm's Graham Brace, currently celebrating a 40 year professional association with the Park.

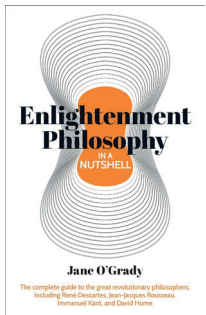


Hillforts, Byron, a Greek feast and more

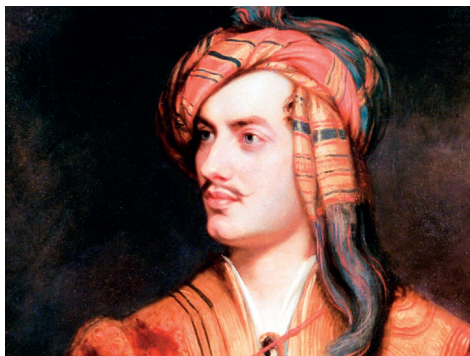
Michael Pugh

The dates: 9 – 11 August

“I think therefore Lang Am” was not quite what René Descartes said in his writings, but perhaps he should have, given the shared values of the Age of Enlightenment and Llangwm. We’ll have the chance to find all about the Age of Enlightenment at this year’s Litfest from the mercurial Jane O’Grady who is coming from the London School of Philosophy to talk about her book on the Enlightenment Philosophy.

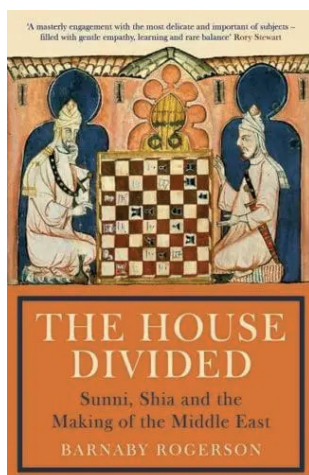


We’ll also be commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of Lord Byron’s passing with the return of Miranda Seymour to talk about her writing on Byron, Mary Shelley and Frankenstein. Who needs the Hellespont when you have Miranda Seymour talking Byron and the Black Tar Riviera?



*Lord Byron
(National
Portrait
Gallery)*

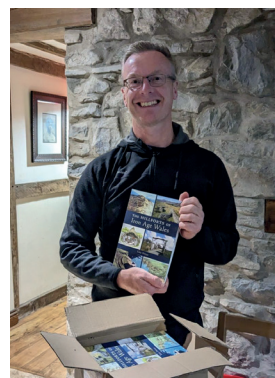
And there is a unique chance to celebrate the cookery and insights of Greece with Dora Dukas ‘Greek Family Cookbook’ with plenty of tastings.



Barnaby Rogerson is coming to unpick the intricacies of the Middle East in his ‘The House Divided: Sunni,

Shia and the Making of the Middle East’ and we’ve been lucky enough to secure the enfant terrible of colonial history, Professor Nigel Biggar, to join us to unpick colonialism and its legacy.

Closer to home, Dr Toby Driver is coming from Aberystwyth to explore the fascinating intricacies of Welsh hillforts (let’s hope that we won’t be needing them again soon!) and Pippa Davies will be running an inspirational creative workshop on the pulse of Pembrokeshire, the Cleddau.



*Toby Driver
‘The Hillforts of
Iron Age Wales’*

In addition, there will be poetry, music, dancing, art, events for children, foraging and lots more. The Cottage Inn will be hosting a Greek feast and Gallilee Chapel will host the much celebrated Bookshop Band.

As usual, the patrons party will be on Litfest Eve.

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

Another date for your diary: Cleddau Reach Summer Fayre

Wednesday 19th June, 3-6pm

- *Bouncy castle & Gladiator Inflatable
- *Games
- *Live music & live performances
- *Refreshments, food by The Bearded Chefs
- *Raffle, Tombola
- *Emergency Services
- *Ice cream, Cakes and Candy Floss

A tale of emigration, home sickness & return

Llangwm's local history society (see their report on page 11) does more than just organise brilliant talks, save important documents and once even stage an opera. They also come to the aid of far-flung relatives in distress.

Earlier this year LLHS member Liz Rawlings was contacted by People's Collection Wales, an organisation that collects and stores historical documents, who were passing on a plea from a community in Alberta, Canada.

Black Diamond is a small rural town within sight of the Rockies in an area known for its oil and gas and its natural beauty – and was also the home of a couple who emigrated there from Llangwm in 1923.

The initial contact from there came from Ken Dutton who said he and his fellow residents were looking for information about the couple, Grace Temperance Anstee and John Arnold Griffiths. Grace returned to Llangwm in 1968 after John died, having bequeathed their place of business to the town; the building still carries their name and is used as a social centre. With its 60th anniversary approaching, Ken was trying to piece together Grace and John's life story before they left Wales.

So Liz, computer at the ready, got to work.



Ken Dutton

The Anstees, it turns out, were a well established Llangwm family with a grocer's business based in the current Cottage Inn. Alfred Joseph Anstee, Grace's father, was from Llangwm and Alice, her mother, was from Black Tar. Alfred's father was a gamekeeper and originally from Edlesborough, Buckinghamshire.

Grace and John married in the 3rd quarter of 1923 in Haverfordwest. John was at that time a farmer aged 42 and Grace five years younger. She had remained at home to help with the family business and to look after her widowed father who had died the previous year.

The newlyweds left Southampton on the 9th August bound for Montreal on the ship Minnedosa of the Canadian Pacific Line along with 573 other passengers. The voyage was expected to take 17 days. Once in Canada they travelled to Black Diamond, population then 800, and set up as storekeepers. The region was in the midst of an oil boom so they worked hard and their grocery business prospered.



Black Diamond's community centre

John's people, the Griffiths family, originally lived in Horn Lane, Haverfordwest. But by the 1881 census they were living in Llangwm at Sulno Farm next door to the Black Horse Inn (now Knowle Cottage). Twenty years later the family were living at Arnold's Hill, Slebech.

During her time in Canada, Grace wrote poetry and one of her poems, "As April Comes Again" written in 1936 was found in a file by Ken Dutton. She writes of snowdrops, golden daffodils, hawthorn and crocus - but also the sound of the church bell and 'the same old hymns they sang in yesteryear'. And was she thinking of Llangwm when she wrote of a winding lane leading to the riverside and fishing boats 'with sails outspread'? She finishes "Every year when April comes no matter where I roam, I hear the cuckoo calling me back to my dear old home". So it was perhaps no surprise that after 45 years on the other side of the world and in her 80s she packed up and came back to Llangwm. She lived at Cleddau Lodge and died three years later at the age of 85. Her ashes are buried at Slebech.

So to help the building's trustees commemorate Grace's gift of what is still their community centre, Liz put together all the information she collected from birth, marriage and death documents and census returns and sent it off to Ken and his colleagues at the end of March.

Back in Black Diamond, Ken, currently tidying up after a late snowfall, sent his thanks for the 'great extra detail'.

Milford Docks: a history

Nikki Bosworth

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the official founding of the Milford Docks Company. The relevant Act of Parliament received Royal Assent on 30th June 1874. Work began on building the docks infrastructure on 5th August in that year but the Milford Docks Company struggled to raise even basic funding for the project. An investment of £50,000 was promised by the Great Western Railway Company but this never materialised. Progress continued to be slow, largely due to financial difficulties. The docks finally opened for business in August 1888, having had several engineers responsible for its creation over the years.

During the docks' construction, the "Great Eastern" (an enormous liner designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel but, by that time, converted for cable-laying under the sea) was berthed in the dock area for repairs. The docks were designed to accommodate transatlantic liners but the bulk of vessels using the facilities were employed in the fishing trade. The original offices of the Milford Docks Company still stand on the dockside but now house a veterinary practice.



The old Milford Docks Company building

Although most Llangwm residents who were not fishermen or farmers worked at the dockyards in Pembroke Dock, the Milford Docks Company had considerable impact generally on the river traffic. "Farmer's Lass", a 50-ton sloop, and "New Providence", a 45-ton schooner, both travelled up and down the Cleddau carrying coal between Hook Colliery and Milford Docks.

Pembrokeshire Archives is now the custodian of an extensive collection of documents relating to the Milford Docks Company – including minutes of the Board of Directors from 1874 onwards, registers of vessels from 1888 onwards, ship entry and departure books from 1890 onwards and details of legal disputes relating to collisions between ships – and these are largely available to anyone wanting to research its history further.

Remembering the opera

Jane Mills

This year has been another busy year for our local history society with its programme of talks and visits. We started the year with our usual fun social event in combination with the Gardening Hub as we pitted our wits, team against team, in our annual quiz. It was a great fun evening and thoroughly enjoyed by all. February saw us celebrate 10 years since we staged our ground breaking opera. It is amazing to realise that our little village produced such an amazing spectacle to commemorate Llangwm's contribution to the First World War. It was a nail biting event when we put on the first performance in Cleddau Reach School but the response was overwhelming, as it was with the other four events throughout Pembrokeshire. 2016 saw us in St David's Cathedral with a concert version – what an amazing experience to perform in front of the second largest audience after the National Orchestra of Wales, and what a privilege to be there. Plus, we won a prestigious national award for the work. And finally, we performed the opera in 2018 in Folly Farm with film shot on location around Llangwm. It was terrific to celebrate this achievement and it just shows what a great community can do.

March saw an amazing talk by John Pearn on the Milford Harbour Pilots which was well received as he gave an insight into the work of the pilots, along with a good sense of humour. And, continuing the theme of the haven, we were glad to welcome our good friend, Dr Simon Hancock, who gave an amazing talk on the history of Pembroke Dockyard. Given the close association of Llangwm with the dockyard, it was a well appreciated talk.

Events coming up include a talk on Monday 20th May by Dr Robert L Davies on the Story of Slebech.

We have two visits arranged for the summer months. First is a return visit to the Carew Cheriton Control Tower. We visited a good few years ago but there has been so much development over the intervening years that we are going back. June will see us visiting St David's lifeboat station and Oriel y Parc, again following our maritime theme. And, if we want to challenge ourselves, we have Gareth Reynolds coming to talk to us in September about his epic journey rowing the Atlantic.

Come and join us for these talks which take place in the Village Hall. Everyone is welcome and it is great to discover more about the history of this amazing county that we live in.

Embracing 'middle' age

Polly Zipperlen

Back in September 2022 Llangwm's Polly Zipperlen acted on what she says was a secret desire – to row across the Atlantic – and she told us about her plans in the autumn Llangwm Village News. She, along with two other women, signed up with Atlantic Dash, an organisation that supports would-be ocean rowers, to row from Lanzarote to Antigua starting in January next year. She found time to write this for us in between training bouts which included an all-night row:

I'm not normally one for risk or adventure – unlike Marcus (husband Marcus Zipperlen, Llangwm's vicar) who has an almost obscene aptitude for danger. So it came as rather a surprise to me, and possibly everyone who knows me, that I was suddenly and wholeheartedly consumed by a desire to row 3,200 miles. After numerous sleepless nights and close study of (Olympic rower) James Cracknell and (adventurer) Ben Fogle's crossing in 2006, which was more like horror than adventure, I found myself signed-up with Atlantic Dash.



So having signed on the dotted line, the three of us found ourselves irreversibly shackled – in a nice way – and equally terrified and excited. We called our team Cruising Free. As we're a bit of a motley crew – Janine Williams is approaching 70, Sophie Pierce younger but living with Cystic Fibrosis and me, in the middle age-wise and with an ant's aptitude for risk – we felt the Atlantic Dash way of doing things suited us better than a race. This is not to say we're not competitive – I have been known to buy a hat just to stop someone else buying it first. But the idea of a dash resonates with us because it echoes a poem by Linda Ellis, 'The Dash', which chronicles the time between birth and death.

We're also of course raising money and our chosen charities are The Cystic Fibrosis Trust and Paul Sartori. Janine's parents were cared for by Paul Sartori staff

before they died and the charity more recently provided enormous care and support to a very dear friend of mine and her family. Having worked as a nurse for the last 20 years, I have witnessed first-hand the dignity that the hospice movement brings to end-of-life care. Without charitable efforts, Pembrokeshire risks losing Paul Sartori and our community would suffer immeasurably from this loss.

We think the row will take about 60 days, rowing shifts of two hours in rotation through day and night. We will not have a support vessel, just a land-based crew who will be on call for daily weather reports and in case of technical difficulty. We need to carry a water desalinator, all our food and communications as well as a fridge for Sophie's medication. We'll generate electricity with solar panels and are currently looking into back-up electricity generation for cloudy days. As part of the row we will be collecting water samples to bring back to the UK for analysis – mainly looking at signs of rising sea temperatures.

It turns out that Atlantic rowing is rather expensive. Together with boat, kit, training, food, boat transport and a whole plethora of other bits and bobs, we need to raise about £100,000. Through fundraising and sponsorship we have raised about half of the total required and, although on track, we are still seeking sponsors.



Fundraising - bingo night

Our next fundraising event is a barn dance in Clarbeston Road Village Hall on Wednesday 5th June at 7pm – tickets £12 and available by emailing Cruisingfree2025@outlook.com. We have been lucky enough to secure a top notch band – The Big Chimney Barn Dance from USA, who are stopping by to support us on their UK tour. Definitely worth coming along to see.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

As they say: be thee cute

Barry Childs

You will have read a lot about my thoughts/opinions on books, poems etc. over quite a long period of time so let's, for a change, turn to the thoughts of others on a range of topics. I'm sure that you will have your favourite quotations, below are just a few of mine, some known the world over, others more local:

'At every word a reputation dies'. From 'Rape of the Lock' by Alexander Pope addressing gossips and gossiping.

'A lie gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on'. Winston Churchill.

'On the whole, I'd prefer to be in Philadelphia'. An epitaph suggested by WC Fields to be placed on his gravestone.

'Nature and nature's laws lay hid in night God said / let Newton be and all was light'. Alexander Pope's epitaph for Sir Isaac Newton.

'Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold / mere anarchy is loosed upon the world'. WB Yeats from his poem 'The Second Coming' striking a particular chord during these troubled times.

'I have had my world, as in my tyme'. Chaucer's Wife of Bath telling us that she has lived her life to the full way back in about 1380.

'In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years'. Abraham Lincoln.

'If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything'. Mark Twain.

'Then I fumbled in my closet through my clothes/ And found my cleanest dirty shirt'. From the song 'Sunday Morning Coming Down' by Johnny Cash describing someone worse for wear from the night before.

'He mobilised the English language and sent it into battle'. Ed Murrow the great American journalist about Winston Churchill's oratory.

'Striving to better, oft we mar what's well'. The Duke of Albany in 'King Lear'. I suppose a modern version might be: if it ain't broke don't fix it. Not quite as elegant though!

'We must all hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately'. Benjamin Franklin: American politician and scientist.

'I raise up my voice - not so I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard...We cannot succeed when half of us are held back'. Malala Yousafzai on sexual discrimination.

'No man is an island, entire of itself.....therefore never send to ask for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee'. John Donne.

'No spring nor summer beauty has such grace as I have seen in one autumnal face'. John Donne.

'Without a song or a dance what are we?' Abba.

To finish with something much nearer to home: **'Be thee cute'** - one of the neatest of the many Llangwm sayings.

Galilee Baptist Chapel

Hoping for more community events

Margaret Brace

It was with heavy hearts recently that the members and friends of Galilee bade farewell to a most faithful lifelong member and deacon, Mrs Maureen Kiff, whose funeral service at the chapel was exceptionally well attended. Maureen's hard work and dedication to the chapel and to the village community was well recognised and appreciated, and she is much missed.

On Thursday 22 February Galilee chapel was full for a charity concert in aid of MND research (Motor Neurone Disease). Neyland Ladies Choir, under the baton of their musical director, Lynne Kelleher, performed a lively repertoire of songs – as did Llangwm's own men's choir Wrong Direction under the leadership of Neil Martin. The choirs then sang together for a grand finale, a medley of Beatles songs which was well received by the enthusiastic audience. The concert organisers were grateful to Galilee Chapel for the use of the building and to the ladies linked with Wrong Direction who served tea, coffee and biscuits to the choirs afterwards in the chapel vestry. (See also page 7 for Wrong Direction's take on events).

It is hoped to hold more community events of this nature at the chapel, which enjoys a particularly fine acoustic and has been the setting of many fine singing festivals and music concerts in the past.

Sunday morning services at 10.30am continue at Galilee on a fortnightly basis, future dates being 19 May, 2 June, 16 June (and ongoing). Mr Nigel Thomas leads Galilee's services in uplifting style. The chapel is grateful to Nigel and to Mrs Margaret Davies for her continuing fine accompaniment at the organ.

News from St Jerome's

Debbi Lawson-Earley

Well Spring has started to arrive, apart from the still chilly temperatures! What an awfully wet winter we've had, along with one storm after another! Surely there can't be any more rain up there, our gardens and fields are taking on the semblance of a muddy battlefield. It must be a great hinderance to our farmers trying to plant out crops and putting stock out into the fields to graze.

However, despite this, nature is wonderful, as we enjoy the cheer the bright colours of Spring bring, as they pop up their heads to lift our spirits after the dark days of Winter. New life with lambs gambling around in the fields and birds busily gathering materials to build their nests. Now that the clocks have "sprung forward" we can lift our spirits with brighter mornings and longer evenings of daylight. Hopefully drier and warmer weather as well.

A recap of recent news and events

March was certainly a busy month, with Lent, Mothering Sunday and Easter at the end! The Annual Easter Egg Hunt this year was held in conjunction with Llangwm Events Group and the Cuppa & Craft Group, who had made crocheted, knitted and felt baskets for the children to find, as well as the eggs. It was well attended and the forecast heavy rain actually held off.



St Jerome's Easter Egg Hunt

The last 'Bacon Butty Saturday' in March concluded after three very successful months.

St Jerome's held a beautiful Craft Fair, organized by Liz Tipping at the beginning of April.

The Tempus Concert with Seimon Morris as musical director was very well attended on 12th April, with some amazing comments. It was so popular we had to put out extra chairs! As several people said, music worthy of a London concert hall.

The MND Coffee Morning the following morning also had a good turnout.

Let us also take time in our thoughts to pray for all the people around the world who are caught up and suffering in the awful conflicts and wars that are going on and fleeing persecution, for some form of restitution to occur.

SERVICES

- Beginning on Sunday 19th May, our Informal All-Age Service (previously called Worship Time) will include Communion for those wishing to partake or just take a blessing, as requested by several people. That's on the third Sunday of every month at 10am. Future dates: 16th June, 21st July, 18th August, 15th September, 20th October.
- Our regular Sunday Services start at 9.00am.
- Wednesday Midweek Morning Prayer is at 9.30am.
- Thursday Morning Prayer on Zoom is at 9.30am. (To join in contact Reverend Marcus Zipperlen for details, 01437 899548).
- 5th Sunday: Eucharist, 10am. (This service is on rotation between Llangwm, Freystrop and Johnston Churches, venue details are on St Jerome's Notice Board).

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- St Jerome's Cream Teas: in the Village Hall, 2pm to 4pm on 18th May and 20th July
- St Jerome's Flower Festival: 13th to 16th June, 10am to 4pm. The Theme is "Looking after our Beautiful World" and it's being organised by Gill Hill. Refreshments will be served in the pop-up café in the North Aisle and on the Saturday (15th June) Wrong Direction will be performing.
- Crafts in the Church during the LitFest, organised by Liz Tipping, Friday 9th and Saturday 10th August, 10am to 4pm. We will also have a photographer who can take pictures of your children and pets and print and mount them the same day.

Reverend Marcus and everyone from St. Jerome's Church would like to wish everyone a great Summer and hope you may be able to join us at an event.

Parish Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Llangwm-Johnston-Freystrop-Churches-357399061488084>

Work begins on improvements

Cllr Victoria Owens

Over the last year, Llangwm Village Hall has benefitted from the Living Well and Welcoming Spaces grant. As Trustees, our aim was to re-establish the hall as a valued venue for community events by promoting groups and activities to engage as many people as possible. The grant has enabled the hall to play host to 43 Community Café sessions, 29 Cuppa & Craft sessions, 4 Village Markets, an Apple Fest and a feast in honour of St David.

The Community Café, part-funded by the grant, has gone from strength to strength offering a cozy gathering spot where everyone can connect while having a hot cuppa and a slice of cake. The grant funding may have come to an end but the volunteers and attendees have overwhelmingly supported the plans to continue with this venture on Tuesday mornings. Likewise, the also part-funded Cuppa & Craft group will continue to meet on Wednesday afternoons, made sustainable through a small charge of £2 per session.

- Community Café – Tuesdays 10.30am – 1pm
- Cuppa & Craft – Wednesdays 2pm – 4pm

The Village Market has also been a successful enterprise, so far raising an amazing £915 for the Hall. A huge thanks to everyone involved and a special shout out to Sue for her super organisational skills. The next market will be in the Autumn with plans shared nearer the time.



Cuppa & Craft in the Village Hall

Some closer diary dates and fundraisers at the Hall:

- Saturday 1st June am – Indoor ‘Car Boot’ Sale
- Saturday 29th June pm – Carnival Cream Teas

Of course, the hall has played host to a variety of other events and groups - from providing a venue for First Aid sessions and wreath-making workshops to a convenient room for band practice to a facility large enough to host a stakeholder information night where 60+ villagers

attended, all in addition to the regular meeting place of established groups. If you would like to book the hall, please contact us on the email below or visit Matthew in The Cottage Inn.

All of these events would not have been possible were it not for the willingness of volunteers. The Trustees would like to thank all of them for their hard work and for giving freely of their time. As always, we are on the lookout for more 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 on a voluntary basis, we'd love to hear from you via our email: info@llangwmvillagehall.co.uk

Hall Improvements

We are now pleased to report that, after a tendering process according to Charity Commission rules, work has begun on improvements to the Village Hall. The roof, guttering and drainage will take priority before a thorough ‘sprucing up’ outside and in.

Mrs Maureen Kiff

The Trustees would like to pay tribute to a much loved and respected member of our community, the late Mrs Maureen Kiff, who was such a compassionate, generous, fun and of course a very glamorous lady and also integral to the founding of the Village Hall. She will be missed by so many of us.

Llangwm Village Hall AGM

A well-attended AGM was held on 22nd of April and, in accordance with our Trust Deed, all trustees were required to step down and an appointment process held.

The Village Hall Trustees: Neil Sandford (Chair), Sue Edwards (Vice Chair), Matthew Evans (Treasurer), Victoria Owens (Secretary), Hazel Thompson, Barry Childs, Sara Saies.

The Trustees would like to express our thanks to Neville Lewis, who stepped down as a trustee last September, and to Chloe Davies for her valued contributions over the last year. We would like to warmly welcome Sara Saies as a new trustee to the team.

If you would like to raise any concerns or have any suggestions please contact us on the email above. Please see the Llangwm Village Hall Facebook page for more details of specific events.

Community Council

Marquee for hire

Cllr C Davies has been successful in preparing and submitting a grant application to the Outdoor Connections Fund for the purchase of a marquee for use in the village. The marquee will be available to hire for events in Llangwm. Please contact Cllr Davies via email if you would like more information. Chloejanedavies91@gmail.com

Proposed development of the land at The Kilns

The Community Council provided a response to Ateb regarding the proposed housing development and asked that consideration be given to a number of queries and concerns prior to the proposal moving forward. The matters of concern included the water and sewerage capability, lack of facilities within the village including shop and public transport, capacity of the school, vehicular and pedestrian access and the housing mix. The Community Council will endeavour to keep all interested parties updated as developments occur.

Donations

The Community Council has made a number of donations to worthy causes throughout the year. These include The Royal British Legion, Remembrance Sunday refreshments and the Flower Festival in St Jerome's Church.

Llangwm Website

The Community Council is commissioning a new website for Llangwm. This website will offer signposting to all the groups and societies in Llangwm and provide information about village amenities. It will be maintained and updated by the Community Council and will also signpost to the Community Council information which is currently available at www.pembscc.co.uk

Parking Obstructions

The Community Council continues to receive complaints and concerns regarding vehicle obstructions, especially on The Green during rugby matches and on the road outside Llangwm Farm. Neighbourhood Police Officer Neil Lees recently attended the Community Council meeting to offer support and to help find alternatives to alleviate the problems. Cllrs continue to ask drivers to be considerate when parking within the village, to avoid blocking the roads, as this could potentially obstruct an emergency vehicle, or parking dangerously which may impede visibility and cause an accident.

Tirion's Rainbow

The Tirion's Rainbow group have worked tirelessly, both to raise money and with physical labour, to create a fantastic play area at Pills Park. The Community Council has worked closely with them and they are creating a fitting memorial for Tirion.

Support from Volunteers

The Community Council would like to thank all the volunteers that have given up their time freely to offer help and support to the community. Their support does not go un-noticed and is very gratefully received. Thank you very much.

Llangwm Events Group

Naughty? - no, sorry, nautical

Chloe Davies

Llangwm Events Group was formed in December after a call out for new volunteers for the festival committee. Our first event at Christmas saw Father Christmas and his jolly reindeer, Rudolph, dash through the village spreading some Christmas cheer. The Events Group would like to thank everybody for their support. Father Christmas has already told us he can't wait to come back this year... watch this space!

In March, we teamed up with St Jerome's Church to support the annual Easter Egg Hunt and Easter bonnet competition. We would like to say a huge thank you to the village's fabulous Cuppa & Craft group for donating and handcrafting some beautiful gifts for the children to find on the day. It was a great day and lots of happy, smiling children could be seen heading out of the gates with their treasures.

Looking ahead to the summer, we are very excited to be holding Llangwm Carnival on Saturday 29th June. This year's theme is 'Nautical' to complement the rowing club's regatta event the following day. We would love to see everybody dressed up and joining the procession from The Cottage Inn at 12 noon to Pill Parks where there will be something for all to enjoy - from inflatables and carnival games to local traders selling their wares and a special performance from the wonderful FF Dancers. There will be food available on site and cream teas will be on offer from the Village Hall. The day will be followed by an evening of live music at The Cottage Inn from 6pm.



Llangwm Carnival 2017 - be inspired!

We still have a few stalls available for traders so if you'd like one please get in touch with us by email at llangwmeventsgroup@gmail.com We are also looking for support with raffle prizes for the day and any donations would be gratefully received.

Get your costumes ready and we look forward to celebrating with you all on 29th June.



County Council Report

Cllr Michael John

Pembrokeshire County Council's annual budget for 2024/25 was agreed at the recent meeting of Council in March. Facing an unprecedented funding gap of around £30 million, the ruling cabinet had proposed a rise of some 16.3%. However, on the day of the meeting an amended proposal of 12.5% was put forward. This involved the use of some reserve funds and further unspecified economy savings. Following much discussion, this proposal was accepted by councillors. In addition, 85% of the 2nd home council tax will now go into the general budget rather than its intended aims of affordable housing and community schemes. The 2nd and empty homes premium has also been increased. The 2nd home levy has now been raised to 200% while the empty homes tax is on a sliding scale up to 300% depending on how long they have been unoccupied.

Withy hedge Landfill Site. There has been an issue for some time with strong, unpleasant odours coming from the site. There has been a well publicised campaign by affected residents called "Stop the Stink!". Whilst these issues have mainly been in areas around the tip itself, more recently there have been reports of the odours reaching this area. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) issued an enforcement notice a few months ago and they are now taking further action due to the continuing problems. They have issued the site operators, Resources Management UK Ltd, with a further regulation 36 enforcement notice which requires them to deliver certain measures by specified deadlines to address the odour problems. PCC have said they fully back NRW's stance and nothing is discounted regarding further actions including possibly suspending the site permit if necessary. NRW requests that any instances of odours from the site be reported via a dedicated form on: <https://bit.ly/reportasmellwithyhedge>. Please report odours at the time of experiencing them to ensure they are aware.

Neighbourhood Policing Week. I have as usual been in regular contact with our local PCSO from the local rural policing team, and recently conducted a joint patrol with him. PCSO Adam Thomas covers our area and we visited locations in and around the village where there are issues mostly around obstructions due to inconsiderate parking.



Michael on patrol with PCSO Adam in Llangwm, Hook and Freystrop, keeping our rural communities safe.

We also visited neighbouring communities and discussed the issues affecting the villages which contrast to ones in the larger towns. If anyone does have any concerns over road safety or any police matters, please contact the team via 101. They do respond to any local concerns.

Pembrokeshire E-bike trial. Residents and visitors to four local towns are able to benefit from the introduction of a pay as

you go E-bike trial. The trial will run in Tenby, Haverfordwest, Fishguard & Goodwick for 12 months with funding of £150,000 from the Swansea Bay and South West Wales Metro programme. The trial started on the 15th April. Bikes can be collected and left at a series of pick-up and drop-off sites around the towns. The aim is to give residents and visitors an alternative method of travel rather than rely upon cars for short trips under 2km. Users need to be over 18 and can access the bikes through an app on their mobile phones. Just download the app and register to use the bikes. Further information is available on <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/leisure-outdoors/e-bikes>

FFLECSI Bus Service. This has now been in operation in our area for close on 12 months and offers a flexible service. Llangwm is part of the "Milford Zone" covering Haverfordwest, Neyland, Milford Haven, all villages along the Cleddau and all the Dale peninsular to Broad Haven.



Journeys can be booked anywhere in those areas by downloading the fflecsi App from the App store, or by phoning 0300 234 0300 (Pre-booking is necessary). It operates Monday-Saturday, 7.30am to 6.30pm. The regular 308 service still runs at 8.00am and 4.00pm Monday-Friday. If you have any comments regarding this service please send to: pubtran@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Community Grant Funding. The Enhancing Pembrokeshire Grant scheme is still open and available for community groups. Funded by the Council's 2nd home council tax premium, there is £700,000 available in 2024-2025 for community groups and projects across the county. Small grants are assessed on a rolling programme throughout the year and £300,000 is available for grants up to £15,000. £400,000 has been allocated for large grants up to £100,000 and the closing date to express an interest is 14th June, with full applications needed by 12th July 2024. Further information is available on: <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/enhancing-pembrokeshire-grant/enhancing-pembrokeshire-grant-funding-criteria>

Public Questions. A reminder that residents can submit questions to Council or one of the scrutiny committees at PCC with any issues they have concerns over. There are regular meetings during the year. Forms to raise appropriate matters, along with details for public speaking, can be found at: <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/overview-and-scrutiny/public-engagement>. You can also contact the team via: Democraticservices@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

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 You can also contact PCC direct on 01437 764551 or <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/resident>

Lots more members - & victory for the Rowjers

Peter Rose

The Rowing Club has welcomed a host of new members this spring, most of whom have taken part in the training sessions organized by Helen Heaton and ably supported by coaches Warren, Mel and Debbie. The new crews have been out training in all sorts of weather over the previous four weeks but it finally turned out nice for the novices' regatta on Friday 19th April. A large crowd of friends and supporters gathered on a sunny evening at Black Tar to cheer on the competitors as the three boats were launched. A course was set starting just north of Black Tar, running down river past Llangwm Ferry, round a turning mark and then back up river to Black Tar.



“Debbie’s Barrack Babes”, formed of Chloe Davies, Zoe Brick, Amy Gray and Lisa Gray and coached by Debbie Phillips made a good start before being overtaken by the “Jolly Rowjers”, comprising Bill Muldrew, Vaughan Jeffreys and Owain Price with Julie Woolnough in stroke seat and coxed by Warren Heaton. The “Babes” briefly caught up at the turning mark but the extra weight and strength of the “Rowjers” allowed them to pull away into the lead on the return leg, punching into the fresh breeze and against the

ebbing tide. Some last minute personnel changes meant that not all of the “Mixers” crew had trained together so it took a while for them to click but Helen Jones, Lucy Gray, Jacqueline Bone and Tina Gorringer, coxed by Mel Miles, came back strongly on the return leg, pushing the “Babes” hard but eventually finishing just behind them.

After recovering the boats onto their trailers and packing away, competitors and supporters headed off to The Cottage for a well deserved party and the prize giving. The novices received certificates for their efforts and the Novice Trophy was awarded to the “Jolly Rowjers” by our chair, Helen, who organised and promoted the training programme.

Our more experienced rowers are looking forward to a competitive season in the 2024 Welsh Sea Rowing league. The first event took place on 13th April just across the Bristol Channel in Clevedon. We sent a strong team to the event and they finished first in all three categories: the men’s, ladies’ and mixed races. We didn’t put out a novice team at Clevedon but, with luck, this will change given the enthusiasm of some of the new members who took part in the novice challenge.



If anyone else is interested in taking up rowing, whether to compete or just to join in the social outings at the weekends, it is best to get in touch with us through the club Facebook page (or buy us a pint in The Cottage) and we’ll see when we can fit you in!

Boats, cats ...& pay your bills!

Chris Thomas

With the arrival of spring and prospect of better weather after a wet and stormy winter, Llangwm Boating Club is preparing for a new season on the water. Most members have paid their 2024 subscriptions but mooring licences can't be issued by Milford Haven Port Authority until fees are paid so please settle outstanding accounts if you need to. Members are also using this time to service engines and moorings and carry out necessary repairs to their boats.



Good to have an expert supervising work.

Membership of Llangwm Boating Club currently stands at over 60. The new Llangwm Boating Club committee was elected at the AGM, held in November, as follows - Chairman: Paul Morgan, Secretary: Val John, Mooring Officer: Bog Tyler, Treasurer: Chris Thomas.

Committee members: Jason Arnold, Darren Brick, Andrew Knight, Gwilym Lewis, Lyn Morgan, Roger Morgan, Dave Nash, Greg Phillpot, Louis Preece.

Where does your money go?

Annual subscription for 2024 is £100. Most of this is collected on behalf of the Crown Estates. An additional fee is collected on behalf of Milford Haven Port Authority when a new mooring is laid. Llangwm Boating Club uses its small share in order to administer new moorings, contribute to upkeep of the toilets and looking after the interests of boaters at Llangwm. The committee are all volunteers, working hard to keep down the cost of boating on the river. The Treasurer has recently changed banks to avoid fees on the old account. The Mooring Officer bought a big supply of second class stamps before the recent price increase.

Anyone planning to apply for a new mooring at Llangwm must submit their application to the Mooring Officer by June 30th, 2024. Please

pay all outstanding fees to the Mooring Officer by this date to secure your licence. Unlicensed moorings may be removed. You can contact the Mooring Officer at llangwm.boating.club@gmail.com.



Concern has been raised about boats being tied up to, and around, the lifebuoy post at Black Tar. This could prevent someone accessing the safety equipment in an emergency. Please can members ensure their boats are clear of this important lifesaving equipment.



Here's to a good summer of boating. Keep safe on the water.

A delayed start but great coaching for kids

Sara Jeffrey

This year the club is looking towards the future as Wednesday 15th May was due to see the start of our All Stars cricket coaching for 6 to 8 year olds. With the help of the ECB we have joined the 2,200 cricket clubs offering this established entry level programme, with the aim of giving children their first experience of the sport. No fewer than 12 club members have come forward to help with the coaching over the 10 weeks of the programme. This goes to show the level of enthusiasm within the club to work to ensure its future and to introduce this beloved sport to a new generation.

So far we have had 21 children sign up for the course and more entries flow in each day. The emphasis of the programme is on fun but the children will take away useful new skills including catching, throwing and moving around the field of play (all with soft balls and plastic bats). Next year we hope to build on this start by introducing 9 to 11 year olds to the game. If you are a parent interested in enrolling your child as an All Star, please email me (sara@saddler.co.uk) and I will point you in the right direction.



Llangwm Cricket Club - memories of last season

For the adult membership the start to 2024 has been interesting, as the county has taken the decision to defer the start of the season. As always Martyn Inward and his helpers have worked extremely hard and have worked miracles to get the outfield ready but adverse weather conditions have prevented work on the square. It became apparent to the county that due to the exceptional weather conditions this winter and early spring, the preparation of many grounds had become impossible. Each club was therefore asked to vote to either cancel the first 2 league matches or to move them to the May and August bank holidays. The second option gained support from most clubs by a narrow margin. This means that games scheduled for Sunday 28th April will now be played on Monday 27th May and games scheduled for Saturday 4th May will now be played on Monday 26th August.

These changes have delayed the release of the fixtures booklet but work is now underway to finalise its contents and within its pages to thank properly those many individuals and companies without whose support the club would struggle to survive. As always we are on the lookout for sponsors and if our new treasurer, Toby Asson, has not already approached you but you would be interested in sponsoring a match for £50, please do contact him (tobyja98@gmail.com). Other ways to support the club include the sponsorship of a ball for £25 or to pay for Vice President status (£35) or membership status (£50).

We are also actively looking for new playing members, having said 'goodbye' to player and club secretary, Joseph Kiff, who has worked and played so hard for the club. The pre-season nets sessions at Neyland have now finished but we are hoping to arrange more sessions closer to the start of the season. If you are interested, you can be sure of a warm welcome. If you do not have your own kit, we can arrange for you to share with your fellow players. Please contact David Lewis at northnashfarms@hotmail.com.

A tremendous effort from our pride of Lions

Mike Preddy



And just like that, another football season has finished for our mini and junior teams.



It's been enjoyable watching our U6 in their first full season, and the continued development of our U7 and U9 teams.



Our U13 had another fantastic season, with a 3rd place finish in the league and a great cup run to the Semi-Final.



Tremendous effort all round. Planning is already underway for next season as we look to introduce another new batch of young footballers ready to take their first steps into mini football.

Nine teams & some very close games

Dan Chesmer

As the 2023/24 rugby season draws to a close Llangwm RFC would like to say a massive thank you to all of our sponsors, members, coaches and supporters for enabling our rugby club to continue to build on its strong foundations. The sponsorship and support that we receive make it possible to maintain nine rugby teams throughout the club, from Under Sevens to Seniors. With over 180 players currently registered, this is a great achievement for a small village club.

Under the guidance of Head Coach Mathew Hughes the senior team has built a strong squad this season, with over 50 Llangwm players pulling on the black and amber shirt to represent their club. The start of the season saw great numbers in training with competition for places in games. Alongside Mathew, Team Manager James Lewis worked tirelessly to ensure we completed the playing season, finishing 9th in the league. There were some very close games against local rivals Pembroke, the Quins and Neyland towards the end of the season and the team will be working hard to try and turn those results into wins next season.



Llangwm lineout vs Aberaeron

It is amazing to follow on from the success of last season with our new youth team performing well in their first season of youth rugby, gaining great wins against Crymych, Fishguard and Vardre. Head Coach Jon Rowles has continued to recruit players and it is great to see the team with a strong squad and new players wanting to join the team. Led by the excellent Kieron Sinclair I know that the players and coaches are looking forward to next season where the majority of the team will be in the older age group.



Llangwm RFC Youth team

The youth team is an essential part of the club and we thank all involved for their time and support.

The rugby club would like to say thank you to all of those involved in the playing and coaching side who make the time to support our village club. We have excellent support from our loyal sponsors and club members who continue to allow Llangwm RFC to grow and prosper and we would like to say a big thank you for your continued support.

Our Mini and Junior section continues to grow and has become a real force, often competing with the best in the county. A group of our U15 players recently played at the Principality Stadium in Cardiff for their school team which was an amazing experience and achievement. It is great to see new players joining our junior section who want to be involved in a friendly and respectful club. The club runs teams from U7s to U16s in our junior section so please contact the club using the details below if you require further information.

As a volunteer run rugby club we are always looking for people to join our small team. If you are able to help out on a Saturday or during the week, then we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch using these contact details: <https://llangwm.rfc.wales/committee>

Weather havoc but they did us proud

Rhiannon James

We are nearing the end of the 2023/24 rugby season now, one which will stand out for being badly disrupted by terrible weather! Our seven minis and juniors teams have struggled at times to train and play matches because of the conditions, but when they have taken to the field they have done themselves and the village proud.

Despite the weather playing havoc with our matrix fixtures, all teams have enjoyed a good season of rugby. The county minis festivals saw our teams go up against all other teams in Pembrokeshire, trying to win a place at finals day. Although our teams didn't make it, they were all incredibly close and results could easily have gone our way across the age groups. The U12s made it through to the semi final of the knockout cup and the U15s got through to the quarter finals.



Llangwm U12s with the touring team from Pontarddulais

The U12s and U15s recently hosted Pontarddulais RFC, who were on a mini tour in Pembrokeshire, with the U12s coming away with the win. A great time was had by all in the clubhouse afterwards! The U8s, U9s, U10s and U11s have also played matches against several touring teams in Tenby, with wins against big names such as Pontypridd showing the high standard of rugby we have here in Llangwm.

The U11s enjoyed a rugby tour to North Wales in March and as well as enjoying fun and games off the pitch, their performances on the field were outstanding, winning all six of their matches against teams from Ireland, England and Wales! Well done boys and girls! The team is definitely on a roll this year as the U11s also made it through to the final of the county tournament, where they faced the old enemy Haverfordwest but against strong opposition unfortunately it wasn't to be their day.

The U15s have enjoyed trips to Aberystwyth and Cardiff to play rugby. The results may not have gone their way, but they had a great time and were superb ambassadors for Llangwm RFC.

We were very proud to have six players from our U15s team in the Haverfordwest High School squad who made it all the way to the Principality Stadium in Cardiff to play in the final of the Welsh cup. The boys came agonisingly close to lifting the trophy, but lost out with the last kick of the match! Nevertheless, to have so much representation from a village club like Llangwm is amazing and we were all very proud of the boys. There was some consolation for Manny Davies and Iestyn Preddy, who were part of the school team that won the Urdd Welsh 7s rugby competition in Cardiff, with Iestyn scoring a great try in the final.

Our U12s also had seven boys playing for the school in the same competition and two of our former female players Beca James and Lyra Mead were part of the U12s girls team that made it into the semi final of the cup competition in their age group. Well done all! Llangwm is definitely proving itself as a breeding ground for quality rugby players!



Llangwm U11s on their undefeated tour of N Wales

The annual presentation evening is being held in the clubhouse on May 17th, when we will recognise the efforts of all the players over the season and thank the army of coaches, team managers, parents and supporters who make Llangwm the special club that it is.

New players are always welcome to join, any time in the season. No experience necessary, just a desire to have fun and make friends. Head to our Facebook page to find out more.

Nature on our doorstep...& some bad news for the swans

Graham Brace

After record-breaking rainfall in the early part of this year (sometimes, it seemed, in biblical proportions) suddenly, as I write this in late April, we've had two days of beautiful weather and a trip to Dale revealed a burgeoning spring. White patches of common scurvy grass, cow parsley and greater stitchwort along with primroses and bluebells were much in evidence in the hedgerows along with blackthorn blossom...truly a sight to lift the gloom of recent months.

Since last Autumn an arthritic knee has prevented me from taking my daily morning walks around local countryside and shores which means that I have been unable to monitor bird activity over the winter months. I did manage to carry out the monthly WeBS count this winter (the British Trust of Ornithology Wetlands Bird Survey which monitors the status of wildfowl, waders and other water related birds around British coasts, estuaries, rivers and lakes each year between September and March). Having been the WeBS recorder for Llangwm Pill and adjacent shores for 17 years, sadly, I've now had to call it a day*.

As a waterside village we are blessed with an abundance of birdlife over the winter months...not just in Llangwm Pill but just a short distance upstream in Sprinkle Pill and at Fowborough Point are two of the best locations in Pembrokeshire for birdwatching. Each winter brings a repetitive influx of migrant birds which survive on the rich pickings available on the mudflats, tideline and in the river. Autumn is heralded with the arrival of large skeins of Canada geese. There are teal, shelduck and (resident) mallard ducks. Waders include redshank, greenshank, dunlin, snipe, curlew and occasionally ringed plover, common sandpipers and black-tailed godwits. Little and great crested grebes are regular visitors out of the breeding season and great northern divers are occasionally seen offshore. During mid-winter we have lapwings sometimes numbering several hundred...with their plaintive calls and their aerial displays they are a joy to watch. Present all year round is the grey heron and the graceful, gleamingly white little egret. In addition, keep a sharp eye and you might be lucky enough to catch the turquoise flash of a kingfisher darting low over the water. All five common gull species frequent the Pill and shores with black-headed gulls sometimes numbering roosts of many hundreds in winter. Herring, lesser black-backed and common gulls are often present in significant numbers, along with fewer of the largest variety, the great black backed gull. Terns can be seen occasionally during the summer months.

Often seen patrolling the skies is the peregrine falcon and ospreys pass through in early spring and autumn, often lingering for a week or two to gather strength for their return flight to central Africa. The lovely red kite is frequently seen wheeling around the skies above Llangwm. What a success story...from being reduced to a couple of breeding pairs in mid-Wales in the sixties there are now calculated to be more than 10,000 red kites in Britain today.

I must mention our two resident mute swans whose repeated failure to nest and successfully raise a family causes us all great disappointment and sadness. Once again this spring they have been thwarted by the high tides in early April which swamped their nest built on a mound under a garden wall in Guildford and washed away the eggs.



*Squacco heron -
liked it so much he
came back!*

Over the years Llangwm Pill has been visited by some rarities namely a squacco heron (on two occasions in October 2016 and July 2018) and a bar-headed goose (November 2017). The first sighting of the squacco heron was only the second record for Pembrokeshire. A pair of black swans (obviously escapees) overstayed for a few months during summer and autumn 2014. These antipodean birds were really quite aggressive and were constantly at odds with the resident mute swans. There are undoubtedly many other rare species which have passed through unobserved.

The fields, woodlands and gardens around the village are home to a rich variety of bird, animal, insect and plant life but lack of space here prevents further detailed description. We are all indeed privileged to have so much natural splendour right here on our doorstep.

***If anyone in the locality feels sufficiently competent and knowledgeable to take on the WeBs monitoring for Llangwm Pill please contact me at grahambrace@btinternet.com and I will introduce you to the local BTO organiser.**