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I'm writing this just after the Society's AGM and I must admit, when I started to compile my annual report on the past year I was definitely a "glass half empty" person as I began to wonder "...what have we done this year". Then as I look at all my photos and go through the records of projects we have been involved with – I gradually became a "glass half full" type of guy.

Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society is going into its tenth year since we formed and so far we have achieved quite a lot on the mountain and I am pleased to say that we are recognised by the local authorities and other official bodies as a major influencer in environmental, community and historical issues of the area.

My "glass half-empty" persona says that to continue being effective we need to encourage more people to become members and get involved with the Society's work to make Twmbarlwm and surrounding area a place to be proud of and secure for future generations.

My "glass half-full" persona looks at how popular the mountain is, not just on Good Friday, as the above photo shows, but also on our litter pick days when visitors stop to chat to us and thank us for looking after the area. I would like to convince a few more to come and help us out, just look at the following stuff we get involved with, wouldn't you like to be part of it?

Our mantra, "... dedicated to research, restore and protect Twmbarlwm", remains as pertinent now as when we were founded. Each of these criteria is inextricably linked and Society members work on various projects to help fulfil our aims for Twmbarlwm.

The "research" part of that statement is well underway (as described in this column last month). It has already started with drone, geophysics and paleoenvironmental surveys. Following on from these surveys, 2020 will see an archaeological dig take place on the mountain.

This will be the first time that such research has been officially endorsed and it has come about by the persistence of the society and the co-operation of some sympathetic Cadw officers.

I'm very optimistic that some interesting results will come out of the research and I hope that some light will be shed upon the mysteries of "the Twmp".

The "restore" element of our slogan is also tied in to the archaeological research because part of the programme will be looking at how the wildfires of 2018 have affected the underlying archaeology. It will look at how best to re-seed or treat the burnt areas to give mother-nature a helping hand in restoring the heath land to its former glory.

CTS did a great deal of restoration work in our early years when we erected fences, planted trees and installed and repaired paths and steps to the Twmp. Such projects were in conjunction with the Commoners Association and Caerphilly County Borough Council – together we continue to pursue similar landscape management projects.

For instance we are looking forward to more of that sort of work in 2020 working with CCBC on their implementation of the "Adventure Triangle" funding. This funding was announced a year ago and CTS was asked to submit a list of works to be done such as path repairs, way marking, signage, wall and fence repairs. Planning for this work is almost

Another major project that CTS has been involved with comes under the heading of "protection". Along with our sister organisation, Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive, we have helped campaign for the re-opening of the Drive. I'm sure that everyone is pleased to know that the Drive will re-open to vehicles in the Spring of 2020. Our involvement includes some members being part of the focus groups who advise and comment on the various requirements to re-open the drive.

complete and we hope work will be underway in 2020.

Twmbarlwm is at the centre of the Forest Drive and the nature of the facilities will greatly influence the Drive's success and the Society's work on the mountain will undoubtedly help improve and protect the natural landscape for future generations.

Terry C. Evans, Chairman CTS

CTS meet at the car park below Twmbarlwm's summit for a litter pick and volunteer workday on the last Sunday of every month to which everyone is invited, it's not all hard work and it's a great opportunity to find your way around up there. We organise walks and other events up the mountain and at Crosskeys RFC throughout the year so watch our website and Facebook page for details.

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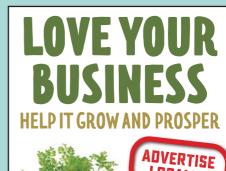
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Gwerinwyr Gwent Diary

On Monday 7th October GG was in St Mellons village hall at the invitation of the ladies of St Mellons WI. They had booked our evening of Welsh culture. which can be tailored to suit our audience but usually comprises a short talk on costume and Lady Llanover, demonstration dances and some easy audience participation dances. This time Barbara Griffiths had also promised them her boxes quiz, so we squeezed that in as well. The ladies really enjoyed the evening, joining in with gusto, and we later received a very nice 'thank you' letter.



The following Saturday (the 12th), we were running a twmpath as a 70th birthday celebration at Lysaght's Institute in Newport. For many of the people attending it was their first twmpath, and I have to say that most people joined in enthusiastically, especially the birthday girl! I think I can safely say a good time was had by all, and for the final dance of the evening (Circassian Circle) only one person in the whole room (a young man) refused to take to the dance floor.

This year the Welsh Folk Dance Society celebrated its 70th anniversary over the weekend of the 25/26th October, and GG ioined the massed dancing in the atrium of St Fagan's National Museum of History. The weather was awful on the Saturday but fortunately the dancing had



always been planned to be in the atrium and not outside. Welsh folk dance teams from all over Wales had travelled to Cardiff for the weekend, and their costumes. made a colourful display. The atrium is a very nice performance space, and many museum visitors chose to watch us dance and even joined in when invited. The music was played by a brilliant band made up of musicians from Tawerin and other teams, we danced solidly for an hour, then went for a cuppa!

November 21st was our final booking of the year and saw us return to Risca and the U3A's monthly social meeting. Our dance displays were interspersed with Barbara's Welsh places survey (this gives us a breather and the audience something to think about). plus a couple of audience participation dances. The

audience then gets to pick their favourite place from those named in the survey, and this time the winner was Tenby. We always have a good afternoon at the U3A, and as we keep being invited back, I'm pretty sure they really enjoy it too.

2019 has been one of our busiest years with 18 bookings, and we start all over again in January with 8 bookings already confirmed for

Gwerinwyr Gwent is always seeking new members, and beginners or experienced dancers/musicians are very welcome. Practice night is Thursday 8-10pm at the Graig Community Hall (opposite the Ruperra PH).

For more details visit our website www.gwerinwyrgwent.org.uk, ring 01495 271953, or just come along and give it a try.





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It's too early to be certain, but right now it feels as if the autumn and early winter 2019 have been amongst the busiest and most concentrated periods of activity we have ever experienced, or maybe it's just another sign we are getting a little bit longer in the tooth. It's not for the first time we find ourselves writing about cygnets and the territorial problems they encounter as they start trying to make their independent way in the world. We like to think adult swans, as it were, give their offspring flying lessons, so that by the time they leave the parent's territory they are reasonably competent fliers. However, what is equally clear is that it is not possible for any guidance to be given as to where it is safe for them to go, or, in a way, where it is definitely unsafe to go. Once again we are in the realm of territorial disputes. This time, the action takes place on a pair of lakes near Upton Bishop a little to the north of Ross-on-Wye, nestling just below the southern end of the M50

motorway. Here there is a breeding pair of swans which we were told produced nine cyanets in 2019 but there were just six left when we were called in late November The trouble began when two other cygnets (origin unknown) landed, one of which was promptly set upon by the resident adult male (cob). The victim was being pinned down at the bottom of the outfall connecting the two lakes. Grisly it is, but the aim is to drown the intruder. By the nature of things, it took us a little over an hour to reach our destination, and we firmly believed we were in time to save the badly distressed young bird. We brought him home and placed him with another reasonably fit cygnet rescued from somewhere else more local. They bonded immediately. What an awful shock it was to discover him dead two mornings later. We really don't know what more we could have done, but the cause of death could have been shock or the intake of too much water in an uncontrolled fashion or both. The next thing we know is we're

back up there again two days later when it seems the cob had 'decided' it was time his own family ought to be on their way and certainly the male juveniles in particular, because they are seen as potential threats. This time however was different; night had fallen and there were remnants of the earlier heavy rain. Of three cygnets which had been driven down the outfall from the lower of the two lakes, one which was slightly injured had managed to make his way up onto the far bank. Despite the uncompromising conditions we were fortunate enough to be able to find a route (on foot) resulting in a rescue being possible. He (definitely 'he' judging by his size and weight, approximately 10 kg.), is making a good recovery and we expect to be able to release him soon, probably at The Knap at Barry. We do not expect the phone to

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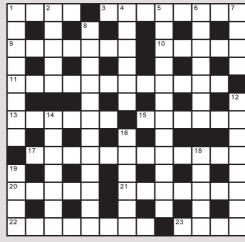
Quick Crossword

Across

- 1 Cattle (4)
- 3 Came about (8)
- 9 Organise (7)
- 10 Passenger coaches (5)
- 11 Garden pests (12)
- 13 Once a year (6)
- **15** Expose (6)
- 17 Formation of society (12)
- 20 Fastening together (5)
- 21 Equalise (7)
- 22 Troubling (8)
- 23 Upper limbs (4)

Down

- 1 Very dark grey colour (8)
- 2 Not the best (5)
- 4 Deferred payment (6)
- 5 Incredible (12)



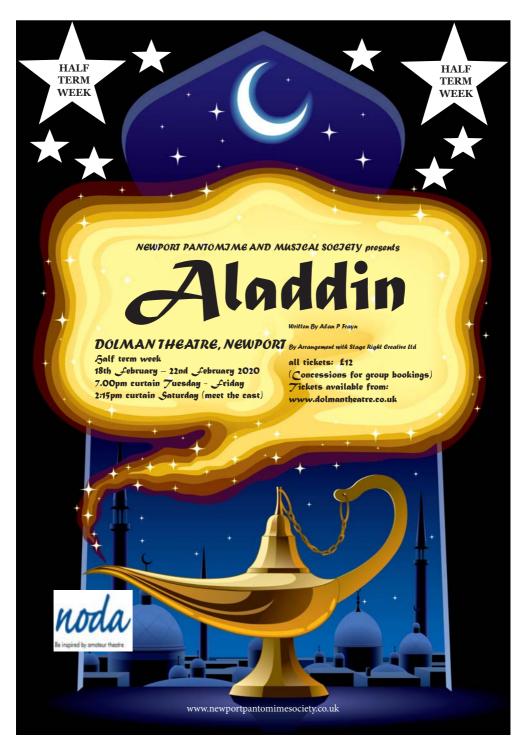
- 6 Set aside (7)
- 7 Hurry (4)
- 8 More and more (12)
- 12 Wool covers (8)
- **14** Louder (7)
- **16** Type of ape (6)
- **18** Internal (5)
- 19 Casserole (4)

Sudoku

		6				1	8	
	2	4						
3			7		5			2
8			2	4			3	
	1			3	8			4
9			4		3			8
						5	9	
	6	5				4		

Solution on page 20

The object of sudoku is to insert the missing numbers in the boxes to satisfy just one condition: each row, column and 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 through to 9 exactly once. This can be done by applying logic – you do not have to guess.



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The reservoir is popular with sailors, anglers and picnickers. The Taff Trail runs through the woods on the western side of the reservoir. Merthyr Tydfil sailing club is based on the eastern bank and the



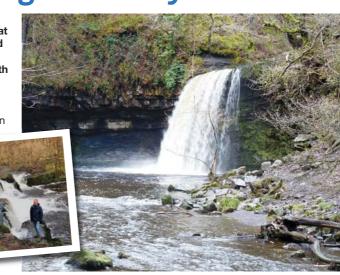
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Sgwd Gwladys

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Pyrddin in the Vale of Neath at
Pontneddfechan. It is nestled
between Aberdare and
Ystradgynlais in Powys, South
Wales and is part of the
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Park.

Indeed the whole area is known as "waterfall country" and has become a centre for activity holidays and extreme sports. Caution should be taken, though, as the caves and waterfalls can become very dangerous in wet weather.

The Waterfall Wanderer





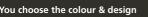
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