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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024



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Do you feel better when you smile? I certainly know that whenever I smile, I instantly feel happier. The only resolution I'm making this year is to smile more and hopefully spread a little happiness to everyone I meet.

Wishing you all a 2024 filled with kindness, compassion, respect and gentleness.

Susan

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MONDAY 29TH JANUARY**

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O GASNEWYDD, I GASNEWYDD

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 Senedd Cymru Welsh Parliament Taliwyd costau'r cyhoeddiad hwn gan Gomiisiwn y Senedd, a granfeydd cyhoeddus.
The costs of this publication have been met by the Senedd Commission from public funds.

Happy New Year!

Blwyddyn Newydd Dda!



9 Rathbone House, 1 Serpentine Road, Newport NP20 4PF
 @ natasha.asghar@senedd.wales ☎ 01633 215138

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 Member of the Welsh Parliament for South Wales East
NATASHA ASGHAR MS | AS

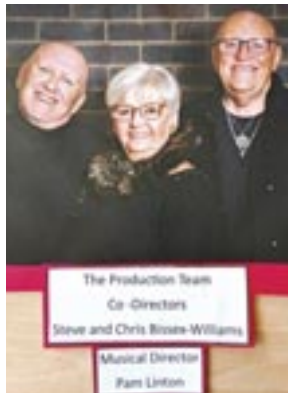
 Senedd Cymru Welsh Parliament  Welsh Conservatives | Celdwadiwyr Cymreig

This has been paid for by the Senedd Commission from Public Funds.
 Comisiwn y Senedd sydd wedi talu am hyn o arian cyhoeddus.

Move opens up interesting avenues for Newport U3A

Newport u3a's move to the Dolman Theatre and our association with the Newport Playgoers Society have opened up interesting new avenues for us.

Steve and Chris Bissex-Williams are long-time members of NPS and have joined our Choir and organise special events for us. They recently co-directed a production of 'The Shakespeare Revue' at the Dolman Theatre - a witty and enchanting collection of music and skits written by theatre's finest comic writers that were inspired by the Bard.



Steven Lansdown is also a member of the choir and has many years' experience in amateur dramatics. He successfully auditioned for a role through the friendship he has formed with Steve.

In addition, Pam Linton who was a u3a member for 22 years and a previous Convenor of the Choir is also the Musical Director of NPS.



Newport u3a provides 40 social, active and cultural groups for the retired at the Dolman Theatre Wednesdays to Fridays during term time at 9.45-15.00. For more information visit u3asites.org.uk/newportsewales or phone Angela Robins on 07983 130541.

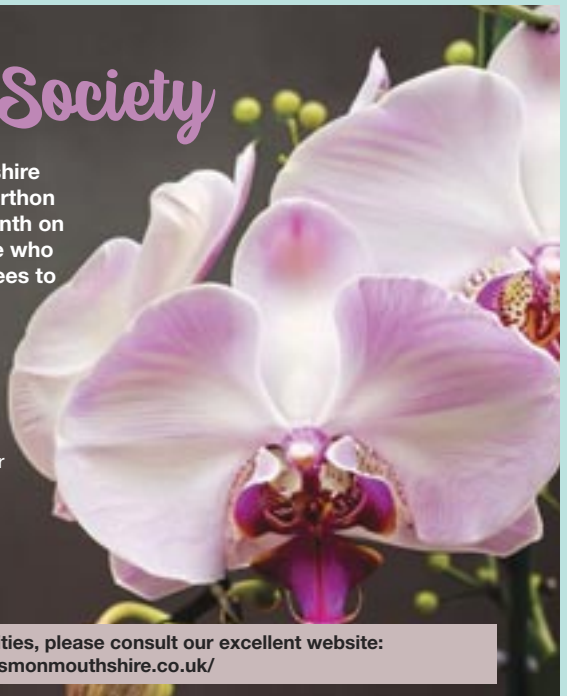
Hardy Plant Society

The Hardy Plant Society Monmouthshire group meets at the village hall on Berthon Road, Little Mill NP4 0HJ twice a month on Saturdays at 2.30pm. We invite those who love hardy perennials, shrubs and trees to share their interest by joining us.

On Wednesday 17th January at 7.30pm a Zoom talk 'Amazing Orchid Stories' by Trey Sanders of Orchid Botanics.

Learn how to grow orchids with Orchid Botanics, a Bristol-based online plant store which specialises in orchids and many other rare and unusual plant species too.

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For more details of our activities, please consult our excellent website:
<https://hpsmonmouthshire.co.uk/>



The Team at Belle Vue Tea Room would like to wish you all a very healthy, happy and prosperous New Year!

We have now completed five full years at Belle Vue Park. We have learned a lot and tried to respond to feedback to make the Pavilion a family (and dog) friendly place for you to visit.

We hope you are as thrilled as we are to know that we are now embarking on what we hope to be another five years at Belle Vue. We want to continue giving you the best possible value for money in these trying times and we look forward to welcoming you rain or sunshine.

As a reflection over 2023:

- Our afternoon teas served each day from 2.00pm have grown in popularity. They comprise of locally made and homemade sweets and savouries and can be booked online or at the till. We even offer vouchers which are becoming popular as birthday gifts.
- We hosted our monthly (from March) artisan markets. We struggled with fresh meat and vegetables, so we are redoubling our efforts to bring you those in 2024.
- We supported Sparkles Appeal, our charity of the year by collecting on markets visitors' behalf over £1800 during 2023. This year we will once again be looking for a local charity to support.
- We hosted the Peace Run which is an international campaign as it made one of four stops in Wales and we hope that a memorial to peace will

be installed within the Park at some time in the future.

- We provided five out of the six planned street food Friday evenings (the weather put paid to August unfortunately). This is where we provide music on the bandstand between 6.30pm and 9.30pm. You can bring your own beverages and food and there is no charge for listening to the music. However, there are scrumptious food vendors and a bar on hand to make the events flow. We will continue this during 2024 on the third Friday of each month.
- Family events have been busy this year with 10 weddings, over 30 baby showers and adult birthday teas. We have also been privileged to host 6 funeral teas, which are sad occasions, but we try to offer support and understanding at these difficult times.
- Our loyalty card scheme has been very popular, so much so we keep running out of cards! We shall ensure that in 2024 we have plenty for our regular customers.
- Some of you may not know about our pay forward scheme. This is where, for £1.50 you can purchase a

drink for a stranger. We top that amount up and a voucher is printed for collection by someone in need. They just need to take it along to the till and a hot drink of choice is available to them.

The costs of energy, food and drink ingredients have risen significantly over the past 12 months. We have tried not to pass these costs to our customers because we know that this can be counter productive. What can mean a frequent coffee and cake can reduce to an occasional treat if prices are too high. From April, staffing costs will be higher and we anticipate the waste management will impact on us too. We are likely to have to increase costs a little, but we will also absorb costs where possible.

We are considering charging for card payments, 1% of each transaction but without the charge for cash payments. We will seek advice on this but want to assure you that you and your friends and family are important to us so we will do our best to keep costs down. Once again, we hope to see you as we continue to open every day between 9.00am and 4.00pm.

Very best wishes
Jan, Paul and the Team



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The solution to help protect your estate is a Will incorporating a Property Protection Trust (PPT). A testamentary PPT can only be executed whilst both partners remain alive. Upon death of the first partner, their Will specifies that their share of the property is placed into trust and names the ultimate beneficiary of this share, normally the children and grandchildren of the deceased. The surviving partner, under the terms of the Trust, has the unequivocal right to remain living in the property for the rest of their life. On the death of the second partner the Trust comes to an end and the property



passes to the beneficiaries. As the surviving partner does not own the deceased's share of the property it is fully protected for the beneficiaries, so if the surviving partner requires care, or even remarries, this share of the children's inheritance is protected. This last point can be of particular interest to couples who have come together but have children from different

partners. A PPT can help each person in a relationship ensure that their children inherit their share of the property, while giving their surviving partner the ability to live in the property for the rest of their life. If the surviving partner wants to move to another property, they can still sell the property and the proceeds be used to purchase a new property; the terms of the trust remain over the new property. Westminster Law will assess your current circumstances and arrange the trust that will provide the best protection for you, your family and your assets.

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Ebbw River

The Ebbw is a river in South Wales which gives its name to the town of Ebbw Vale. The Ebbw River is joined by the Ebbw Fach River (Welsh meaning 'little Ebbw river') at Aberbeeg. The tributary Sirhowy River joins at Crosskeys, then the river continues flowing south east, through the town of Risca, then through Rogerstone, Bassaleg and alongside Tredegar Park. The Ebbw then at the western end of Newport it joins with the River Usk, before flowing into the Severn Estuary. In common with the nearby Sirhowy River and Rhymney River the correct name for the river is 'Ebbw River', not the more usual 'River Ebbw'.

For more than two hundred years, the Ebbw River played an important role in the industrialisation of the valleys. Iron works were established at the heads of both the Ebbw Fach and Ebbw Fawr, and the river became a depository for waste from the coal and steel industries. The demise of these industries has seen the Ebbw's waters flow clean again and its natural life restored.



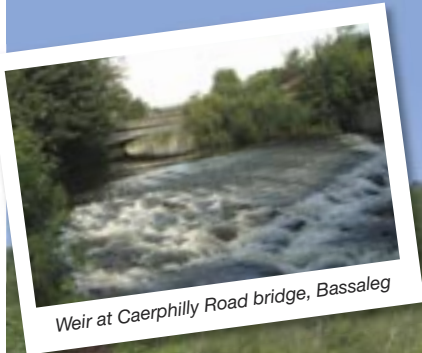
Crescent Road, Risca



Afon village after heavy snowfall



Afon village old construction bridge with river in full flow



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Glandstone Street bridge, Crosskeys

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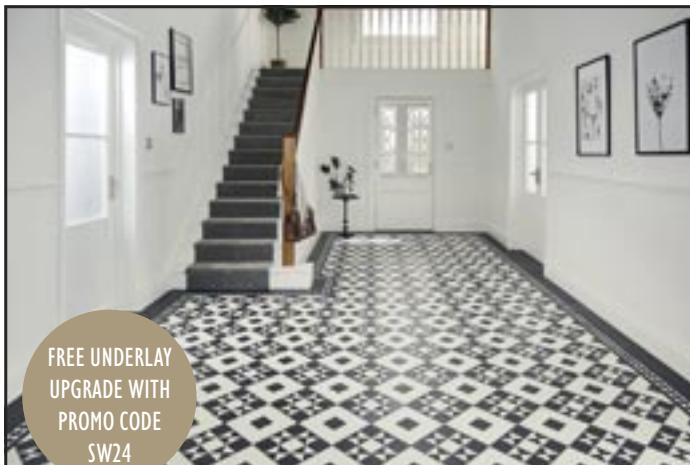
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Clearly, There's No End in Sight

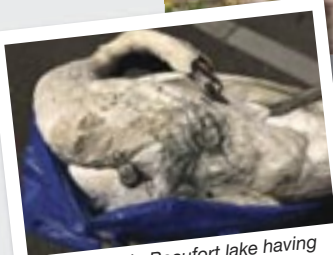
We have been writing about our exploits since 2008. In 2015, we wrote about an incident which occurred in 2008. We must have been short of material then. This was an absolutely appalling story (see photo) of an adult swan which survived being snared – hooks in both feet and a mass of heavy duty braided line - in the Severn Estuary off Black Rock near Portskewett. Until very recently, this was the scariest rescue from more points of view than one, in which we had ever become involved, with, potentially, the most appalling consequences; the swan would have drowned when the tide came in.

Now, this autumn, the horrors of this incident have been relived and exceeded. Over the years there have been calls from time to time from the lakes at Beaufort. Almost without exception, these have been to deal with angling related problems. In a way, this time round, the problem was relatively minor; the male swan was not moving very freely on the water on account of what amounted to a tourniquet around the lower part of his right leg. Clearly, it had been there some time, and the line had cut in very deeply, but, not without difficulty, this was removed, and the swan was released back with his partner.

A week later, another call from Beaufort; the same swan was



Black Rock swan showing hooks in both feet, 2008



Drowned in Beaufort lake having been caught in fishing tackle

struggling to free itself from fishing line in the middle of the lake (upper of two). With the best

will in the world, from a standing start it would be difficult to reach a position to be able to do anything in under one hour, but we did the very best we could.

Approaching the lake with a full array of rescue kit, including binoculars. There was no obvious sign of the swan. It was only by moving closer, and changing the angle of view that we obtained the first very frightening sign of what we were looking for – it looked very much as if we were already too late. Away, on the far side of the lake was a small white 'patch' under an overhanging alder tree. Immediately, one could not do other than to fear the worst. Laden with gear as we

were, we crossed to the other side of the lake as fast as we were able, only for our worst fears to be confirmed.

It wasn't easy to access the water's edge and then to retrieve the body, then, only with the aid of our longest swan hook.

Meantime, while we were preoccupied with the need to do this, we were all too aware of the partner moving around close by, calling plaintively as they do in such circumstances – such a sad sad sound, and there was nothing we could do to ease her distress.

There was line everywhere, many times tight around one leg, and leading ultimately to a medium to large hook caught in the tip of the swan's beak. We cannot begin to imagine the struggle which this poor innocent creature put up before he finally died.

As we have had cause to say again and again recently, nothing has changed in the 40 years we have been doing this work; how depressing is that!

Story: Peter & Ellen. Photos: EK & JH

For swan problems please contact Peter & Ellen on 07802 472788.

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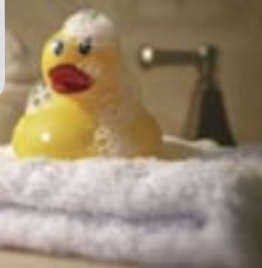
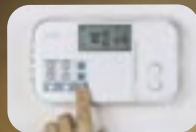
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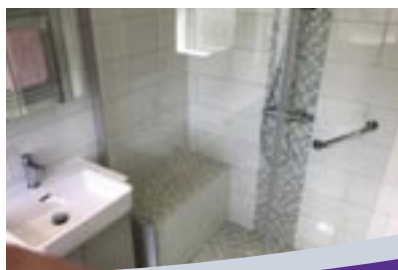


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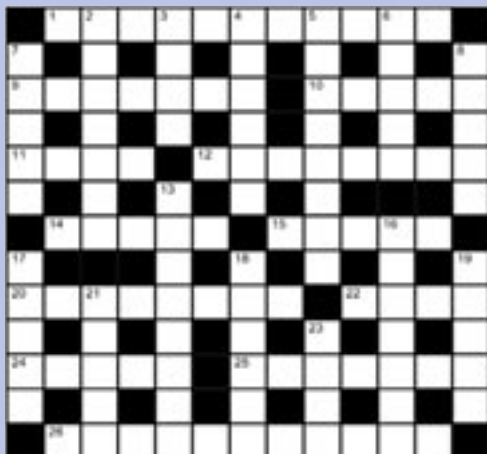
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Puzzles

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Sweet-smelling climbing plant (11)
- 9 Light raft made of balsa, used by Thor Heyerdahl to cross the Pacific in 1947 (3-4)
- 10 Insect in the stage between egg and pupa (5)
- 11 City of Helen, whose face "launched a thousand ships" (4)
- 12 Tree which grows in tidal, chiefly tropical, coastal swamps (8) 14 Communion table (5)
- 15 The Mill on the ___, George Eliot novel (5)
- 20 Line of descent of a pure-bred animal (8)
- 22 Brewery cart (4)
- 24 Private instructor (5)
- 25 Spanish painter, born in Greece (1541-1614) (2,5)
- 26 Primate species to which modern humans belong (4,7)

Down

- 2 Action that turns out to be to the disadvantage of the person who took it (3,4)
- 3 First name of authoress Blyton (4) 4 Helix (6)
- 5 Roman Emperor who succeeded Tiberius (8)
- 6 Key ___, 1948 film (5)
- 7 Glide across ice (5)
- 8 Biblical tower intended to reach to heaven (5)
- 13 Australian marsupial (8)
- 16 Physician who performs operations (7) 17 Mark ___, US swimmer who won seven gold medals in the 1972 Olympic Games (5)
- 18 Formerly the basic unit of money in Spain (6)
- 19 Tower supporting high-tension wires (5) 21 Mark used to indicate the word above it should be repeated (5)
- 23 Tangerine/grapefruit hybrid (4)



SUDOKU

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.

Solutions on page 22



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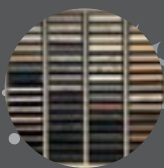
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Twmbarlwm Society Review 2023

It's that time of year again when we reflect on last year's achievements and failures – so I like to browse through all my photographs to act as an aide-memoire.

When I started looking at my hundreds, nay thousands, of photos, it proves we were as busy as ever, but unfortunately, due to space, I can barely scrape the surface here, so please visit our website to see more.

My first visit to Twmbarlwm was on 1st January and I was surprised to see how many people were up there. It was a fine but overcast day and bitterly cold but the car park was full and there were people continuously climbing the slopes to the top all the time we were there – it's great to see and a clear indication how important the mountain is to locals.

Through January and February our contractors completed the stone path from the dry-stone wall to the base of the twmp and installed a new base around the trig-point – which was a welcome sight for those hundreds of visitors who, once more, joined us on our Good Friday, annual Hot-Cross-Bun walk.

You can't really see it in the photo but we had installed a new stock fence from Pegwn-y-Bwlch around the top of the mountain to the forestry road on the south west slope of the hill-fort. This was to contain the cattle that were introduced as part of our conservation grazing scheme.

Also as part of our land management scheme to improve the bio-diversity of the area, a hardy group of volunteers did some bracken bashing on a few horrendous weekends in August and September.

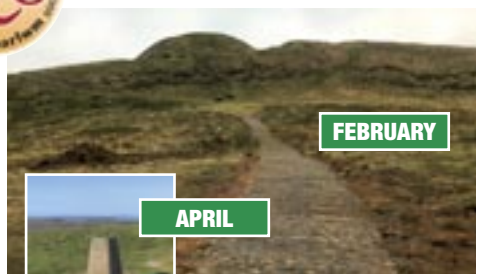
Although we have done no physical archaeological work on the mountain this year, the work with CPAT and Cadw goes on and we will be publishing the finished report of last year's digs very soon.

But no round-up would be complete without a mention of the many volunteers who join us once a month, come rain or shine, to do a litter pick centred on the car park and ranging all round the mountain slopes – your help and dedication is greatly appreciated by us and every visitor.

TERRY EVANS
Chairman CTS



JANUARY



FEBRUARY



APRIL



MAY



AUGUST



SEPTEMBER

LITTER PICKING VOLUNTEERS EVERY MONTH



Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society 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 throughout the year so watch our website and Facebook page for details.

www.twmbarlwm.co.uk

Do you know where your Will is?

Following the closure of Axiom Ince by the Solicitors Regulatory Authority, the firm has now closed down and their files have been seized.

Why does this matter?

If you made your Will with Thomas Simon, O'Brien Lewis & James, Gordon Dadds or Ince & Co, who who were ultimately bought out by Axiom Ince, your Will may be in the hands of the Solicitors Regulatory Authority. The Solicitors Regulatory Authority will allocate a firm to manage their client files, including all Wills, in due course.

There is absolutely no guarantee that this firm will be local to you.

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Get in touch:

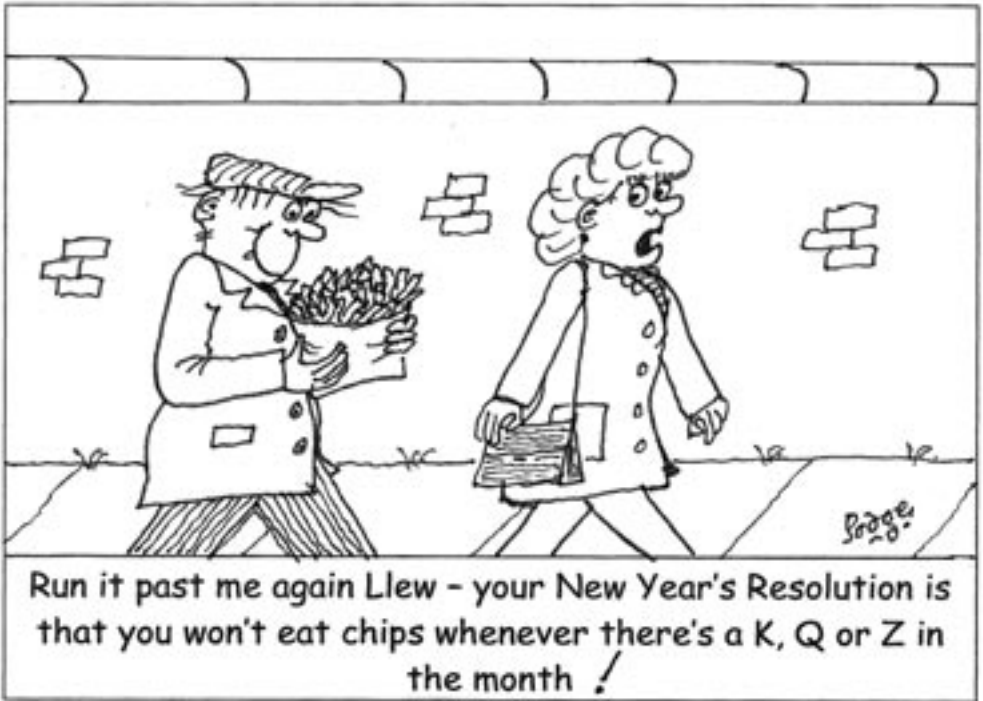
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Across: 1 Honeysuckle, 14 Altar, 15 Floss, 20 Pedigree, 22 Dray, 24 Tutor, 25 El Greco, 26 Homo sapiens.

Down: 2 Own goal, 3 Enid, 4 Spiral, 5 Caligula, 6 Largo, 7 Skate, 8 Babel, 13 Kangaroo, 16 Surgeon, 17 Spitz, 18 Peseta, 19 Pylon, 21 Ditto, 23 Uglu.

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

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RISCA MUSEUM

Waunfawr and the Black Vein Colliery

Part 1, up to 1796

The information below is taken from a paper produced by the late Dr Tony Jukes who was one of the founders of the Risca Museum. Tony was a consummate local historian and the foremost authority on the history of Risca in spite of being a native of Portsmouth and living in Machen, on the wrong side of the hill!

The outcrop of the coal on the eastern breast of Mynydd Mach is marked by a series of bell pit workings, as it sweeps down in a northerly direction through several fields formerly known as Waun Fawr and through woodland (now partially removed) that descends towards the confluence of the Sirhowy and Ebbw rivers. The land had various leaseholders and tenant farmers but was owned by the Tredegar estate who retained the mineral rights. In 1692 Nathaniel Tainton took a lease on a 30 acre farm, a small holding of 11 acres with two houses and the enclosure known as Waun Fawr. The Tredegar estate 'reserved right of access for their servants to cut wood, make charcoal, make gutters for conveying water to or from the said coal or mineral works which shall or may be advantageous to or prejudicial for the digging, scouring and raising of any coal or minerals doing as little damage as possible to the said Nathaniel Tainton'. The Waun Fawr coal works had existed since at least 1670 and possibly much earlier. In 1753, William Morgan of Tredegar came to an agreement with the adjoining landowner,



Henry Morgan of Penllwyn Sarph. He was granted the right to drain his coal works through the lands of Henry Morgan and also had the right 'to make a good, sound and sufficient road or way from the said Coal Works through and over the said lands to the great road leading from Machen Village towards Caerphilly'.

In 1770, Charles Phillips of Risca House and John Oldfield, also of Risca, leased the Waun Fawr coal works from the Tredegar estate for a term of 21 years. They were also granted the right to erect a lime kiln on any convenient unlet ground and to dig and raise limestone. The upper farm was rented by Henry Vigers and Company, lead miners; John Oldfield was involved with the lead company. Following the death of Charles Phillips in 1775, a new deed of partnership was drawn up in which John Oldfield held a quarter share, Evan Phillips of Machen a quarter share, the



children of Charles Phillips an eighth share in total and James Edwards of Machen an eighth share. Increased partners probably provided extra capital needed but, even so, the new company was frequently in arrears of rent. John Oldfield died in 1791 and although their lease expired that year, James Edwards and Company carried on the Waun Fawr coal works until 1796.

Please consider becoming a Friend of Risca Museum to ensure its future.

Details from the website www.riscamuseum.org.uk and Facebook page or visit the museum any Saturday 10.00am to 12.30pm.



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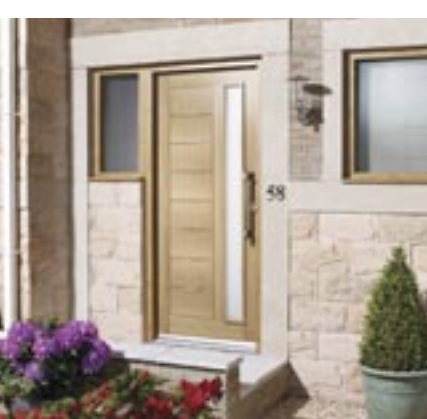
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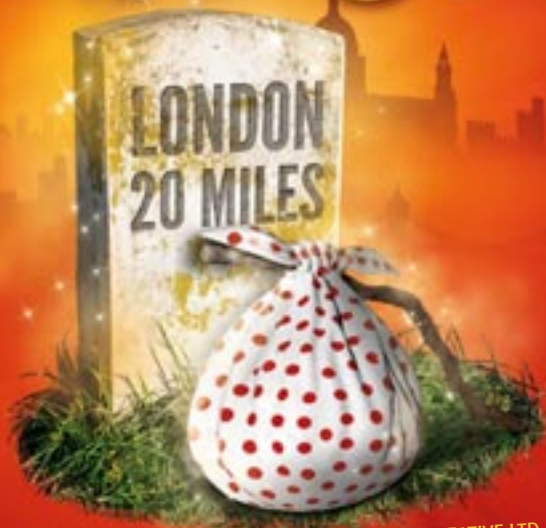
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