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Welcome!

As 2024 draws to an end we would like to say a very big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the continued success of the Directory this year.

Thank you to all the distributors who, no matter how bad the weather is, deliver the Directories for us. Thank you to the residents and organisations for sending us articles. Finally, a very special thank you to the advertisers for their continued support, without the financial support from the them, there would be no Directory.

If you are interested in advertising your business in the Directory, please contact us to find out about the extremely competitive advertising rates. You will always deal with us directly, like many of the businesses that advertise in this magazine, we are a small, independent family business and fully appreciate how much your business means to you, especially in these uncertain times.

Wishing you a happy festive period.

Susan x

COPY DEADLINE FOR THE JANUARY / FEBRUARY EDITION FRIDAY 29TH NOVEMBER

Advertising enquiries: Telephone Leslie on 07725 888070 or email contact@swdirectories.co.uk

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JAYNE BRYANT MS/AS

Member of Senedd for Newport West
Aelod Senedd dros Gorllewin Casnewydd

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The costs of this publication have been met by the Senedd Commission from public funds.

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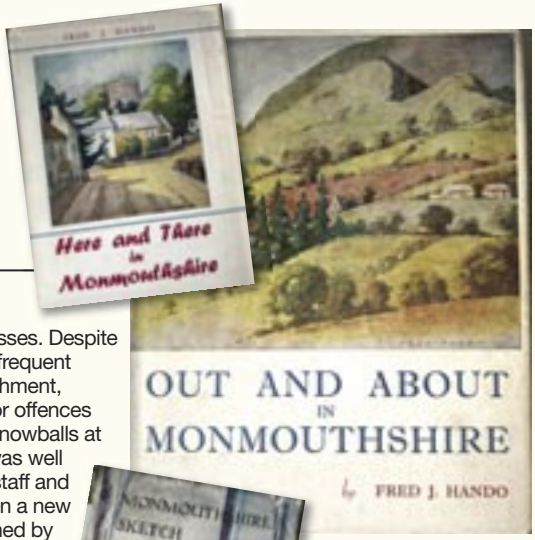
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A Big Hand for Hando

by Paul Minton

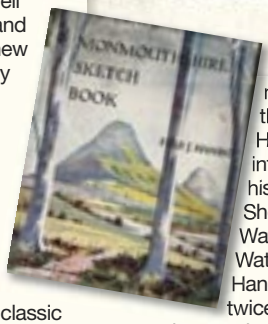


Newport has spawned many a famous person. From the world of literature, for instance, there is the poet and super-tramp, W H Davies and Leslie Thomas, the author of 'The Virgin Soldiers'. However, perhaps the writer who has contributed most to the town itself is a name now largely forgotten. Yet for many years, readers of the South Wales Argus would follow his illustrated local history articles religiously.

The eldest son of the Deputy Postmaster of Newport Post Office, Fred Hando was born in Maindee in 1888. During the course of his life, he wrote almost 800 newspaper articles spanning six decades. Many of these were collected and published in books like 'The Pleasant Land of Gwent' (with an introduction by his friend, Arthur Machen) and 'Out and About in Monmouthshire'.

Despite the Hando family originating from Somerset, Fred developed a keen fascination for Gwent history. As a result of this interest, he sent an initial article to the Argus in 1922. The Editor accepted the piece and suggested he produce a series under the heading, 'Rambles in Gwent', which became the title of his first book (published in 1924). After that, Fred submitted articles 'as the spirit moved me' until writing a regular column, accompanied by his sketches, that ran for seventeen years until his death.

Having trained as a teacher in London, Fred became the first headmaster of Hatherleigh School in Christchurch in 1925. Hando was something of a modernist and as such, the boys were taught home economics and the girls enjoyed woodwork classes. Despite administering frequent corporal punishment, caning boys for offences like throwing snowballs at teachers, he was well liked by both staff and students. When a new gym was opened by the Mayor, Fred surprised everyone by ascending the recently installed climbing ropes himself.

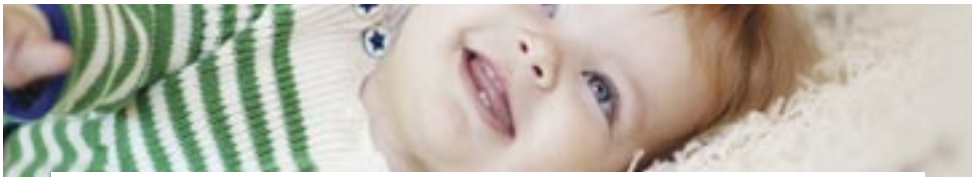


One of Fred's former pupils was Johnny Morris, who presented the classic children's TV programme, 'Animal Magic' from 1962 to 1983. Morris once remarked, "Fred Hando unlocked our prison and set free what talents that I am sure would have remained locked in us forever…He proved to us that all things were possible." This was in stark contrast to my own headmaster, whose parting words to me, as I left school for the final time, were "I doubt you'll succeed."

Hando was a tall man with a straight back and Harry Potter spectacles. According to those who knew him, he was a witty fellow, who often spoke with his tongue firmly in his cheek. In one memorable incident, he was approached by a curious character in the Robin Hood Inn, Monmouth, who claimed to have fought alongside Nelson against Napoleon. According to the stranger, the battle had taken place in the town and after the fighting was over, the enemies had shaken hands and invited the man to dine with them at the Robin Hood. In reply, Hando introduced himself and his friends as Mr Sherlock Holmes, Dr Watson, and Dr Watson's secretary.

Hando was married twice. His first wife, with whom he had two children, died relatively young. As a prominent labour politician, his daughter, Margaret, became Baroness Delacourt-Smith of Alteryn. Meanwhile, his nephew, David Hando, was the Club President and former Chairman of Newport County AFC (my wife used to work with one of his sons). After many years living as a widower, Fred wed once more, this time to a colleague at Hatherleigh School. Husband and wife later visited Buckingham Palace to collect his MBE for services to education and to Monmouthshire.

Fred died in 1970, a few days after his final Argus article was published. Following his death, money was raised to place so-called 'Hando seats' at some of his favourite sites in the county. These included Lawrence Hill in Newport, Llandegfedd Reservoir, and Dixton Churchyard northeast of Monmouth. It would be nice to think they're still there. I wonder if they are.



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Newport u3a

During a recent Newport u3a holiday to Scotland three of our intrepid members, Karen and Steve Lansdown and Martin Shepherd decided to climb Ben Nevis. Karen had failed to reach the summit as a nine-year-old on a family holiday, but always wanted to try again - and it became possible 60 years later.



Karen and Steve are Convenors of a Newport u3a Walking Group and Martin is also a member, so this time they had a lot of experience and stamina under their belts. They arrived at the base full of enthusiasm - but it wasn't any easier! It was a four and a half hour ascent on rocky terrain, but with determination they struggled on.

The rare, superb weather allowed magnificent views of mountains and the lochs below. At one point they were above the clouds which felt truly surreal. After a much needed lunch, a sunbathe and a photo shoot, they made their three and a half hour descent with aching limbs and a growing tiredness. It was euphoric to arrive at the bottom and at dinner that evening they received a standing ovation from their fellow travellers. The trio agreed it had been the most gruelling walk they had ever done and just need the T-shirts to prove it!

u3a learn, laugh, live

For more information contact Angela Robins 07983130541 or visit u3asites.org.uk/newportsewales

Monmouthshire Hardy Plant Society

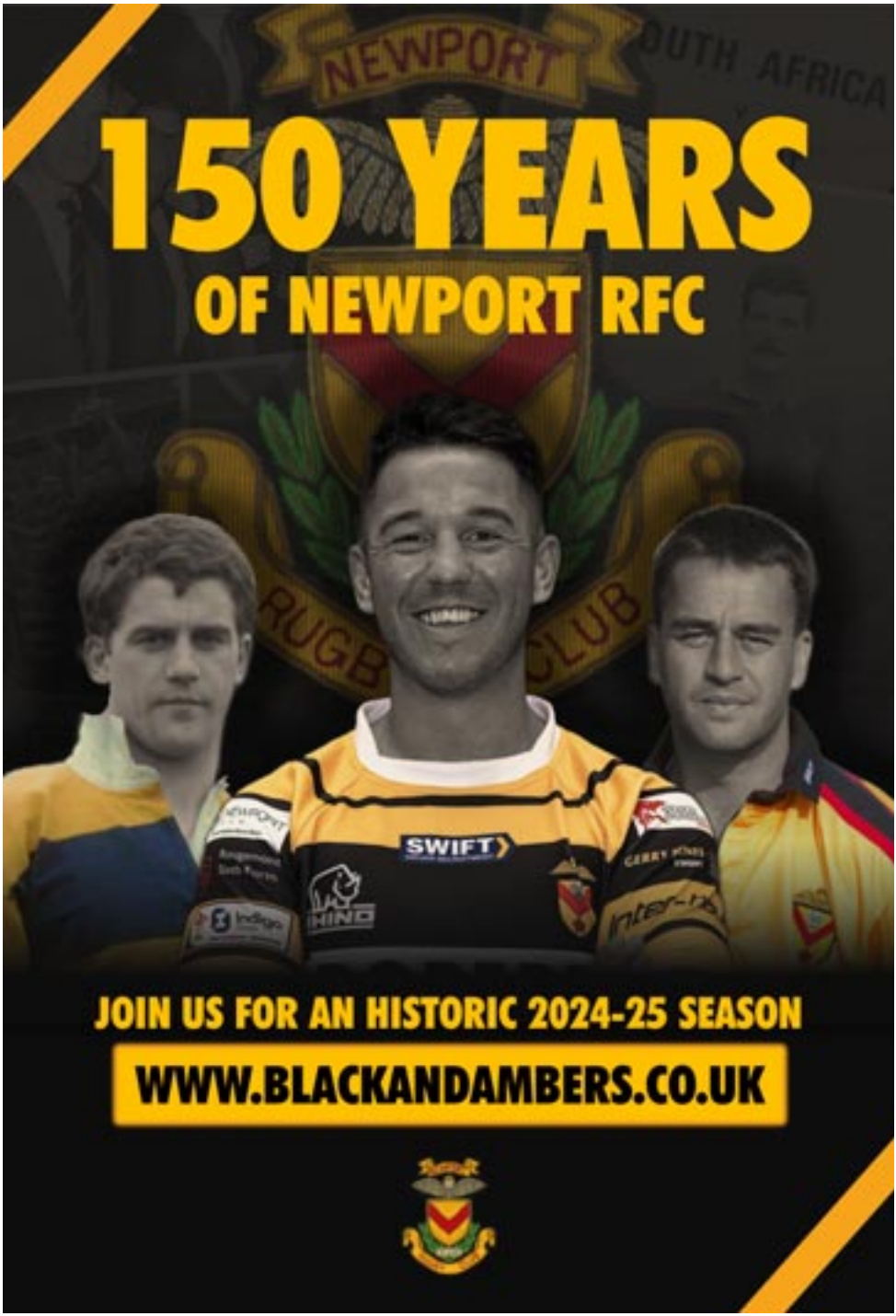
The HPS Monmouthshire group is for people who love plants and gardening and enjoy sharing their enthusiasm with other like-minded people. Non-members are very welcome to come along to our meetings. They're an excellent opportunity to meet people with similar interests and to chat, enjoy refreshments and buy some plants. You can join us as a member too!

The meetings take place at Little Mill Village Hall NP4 0HE off the A472 Usk to Pontypool Road on the second Saturday of the month at 2.30pm and from September to May. Entry is £4 to Members and £6 to non-members. For more information, contact monmouthshirehps@gmail.com or look at www.hpsmonmouthshire.co.uk. The group is registered with the National Hardy Plant Society and is also an Affiliated Society of the Royal Horticultural Society.



Saturday 9th November brings Frank Sengpiel to the hall at Little Mill at 2.30pm to talk on 'Succulents'. Professor Sengpiel, a professor of Neuroscience and Head of the Neuroscience Division at Cardiff University describes himself as a cactophile, a wildlife enthusiast and a Borussia Dortmund fan, an intriguing cocktail of interests. We need to hear more! £4 members, £6 non-members.

Saturday 14th December at 2.30pm at Little Mill Hall we will be hosting a festive event featuring Liz Knight on foraging and making cocktails and wild drinks. Still in the planning, more details to follow - please see www.hpsmonmouthshire.co.uk. All welcome


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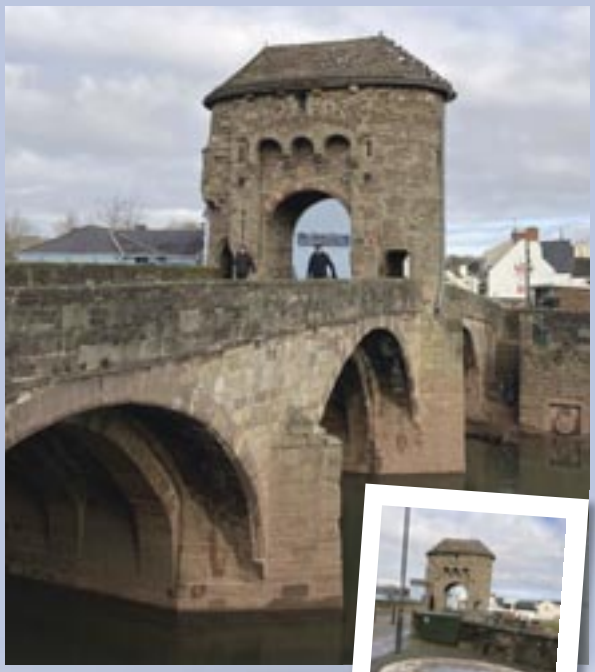
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Monnow River

The River Monnow marks the England–Wales border for much of its 42 miles length. After flowing through Herefordshire and Monmouthshire its confluence with the River Wye is approximately 1⁄3 mile south of Monmouth.

The Monnow Valley Walk follows the river for 40 miles. The Monnow Bridge is the only remaining medieval fortified river bridge in Great Britain with its gate tower still standing in place. Originally built with a portcullis, it's primary use was for defence, but over the years it developed into a toll collection point, a jail and even a home.

Now it remains standing guard over the River Monnow at the bottom of Monmouth's high street. It's great for taking pictures, watching the bird life and then walking in the town and enjoying one of the many coffee shops.



Monnow Bridge at Monmouth

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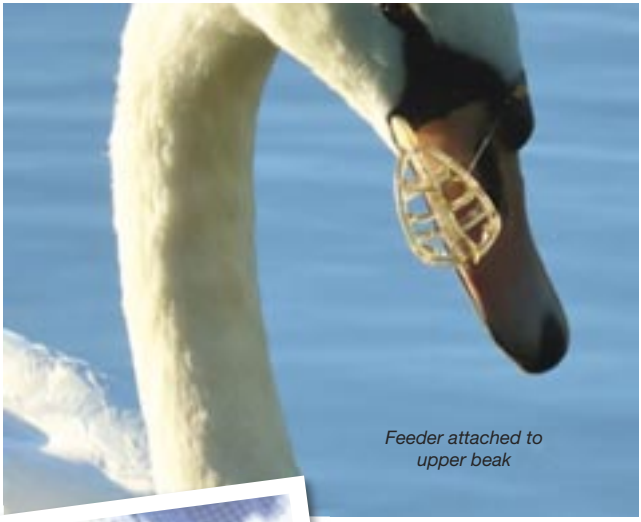
Swan RESCUE

More of the same...Plus...!

We're into the last few days of September and it doesn't feel as if the pace has slackened at all, and the expected exodus of young swans from the parental territory hasn't begun. Instead, the last few days have been dominated by the need to rescue swans which have had regrettable encounters with carelessly lost or discarded fishing tackle.

To Cwmbran Boating Lake which is now a well run fishery where the members know the rules and why they exist. Policing any water can never be provided 100% of the time, but the example we needed to deal with adequately illustrates the point; our photograph shows a small cage feeder attached to the berry atop the swan's beak by a small hook - a piece of kit totally inappropriate to the type of angling offered at this water. It was clear this was causing the swan considerable irritation as it shook its head when the feeder was right in its line of sight. A number of attempts were necessary before an extended swan hook was brought to bear once sufficient confidence had been gained to persuade the swan to immerse its head in a search for grain under water. Mercifully, the hook was not barbed, and so could be removed very easily.

Next to Rhoose Point, where only one out of an original brood of eight cygnets had survived – all the others believed to have been lost to the activities of a group irresponsible individuals fishing illegally. It had been noted that No.8 had stopped feeding.



Feeder attached to upper beak



Illustration of a 'chin strap'

Subsequently, it turned out he was very underweight, even allowing for the fact he was small. The reason he wasn't feeding was due to the presence of a 'chin strap' - fishing line passing under the lower mandible, very close to the 'hinge', with one end of the line passing down the throat either side of the tongue. Inevitably, because of the way the swan's digestive system works, this loop is pulled ever



Result of a chin strap - unable to close beak

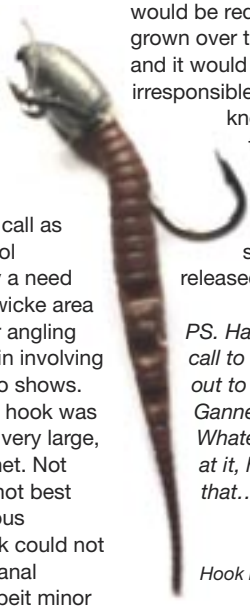


Hook protruding from underside of beak

tighter. Normally it is sufficient simply to snip the line under the beak and the tension is released immediately, However, this time more damage had been done, and the lower mandible was left hanging loose. Result: a change of plan for the day, and an immediate dash to the Sanctuary at Shepperton where, as readers will know, long term care is provided.

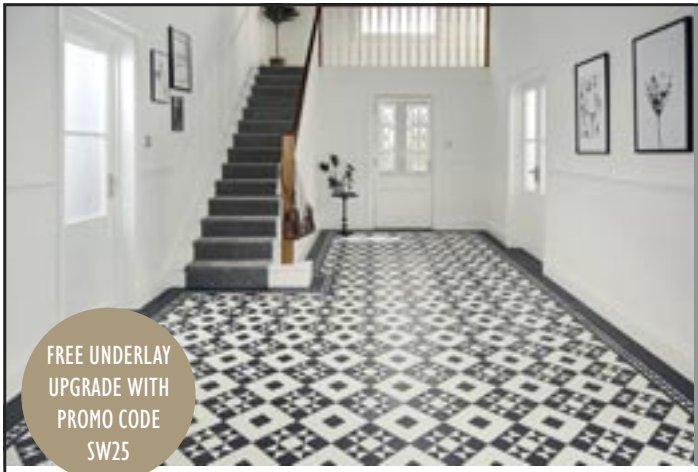
Part way back from Shepperton a phone call as we approached Bristol indicated very clearly a need to divert to the Hardwicke area of Gloucester; anther angling related problem, again involving the beak as the photo shows. Again, the long swan hook was needed to catch this very large, heavy energetic cygnet. Not surprisingly, he was not best pleased. It was obvious immediately this hook could not be removed on the canal bankside; surgery, albeit minor would be required – skin had grown over the entry wound, and it would have been irresponsible to attempt it. We know, as we write, the hook has been removed, and after a day of recuperation, the swan will be released.

PS. Have just received a call to rescue what turned out to be a juvenile Gannet at Blaenavon…! Whatever way you look at it, how incongruous is that…?



Hook removed surgically

Story by Peter, photographs by Ellen. Photos by Roz, Sally & Dean.
For swan problems please contact Peter on 07802 472788.



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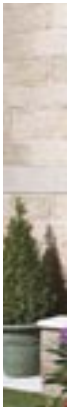
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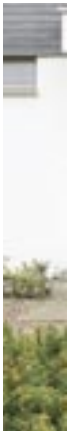






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Puzzles

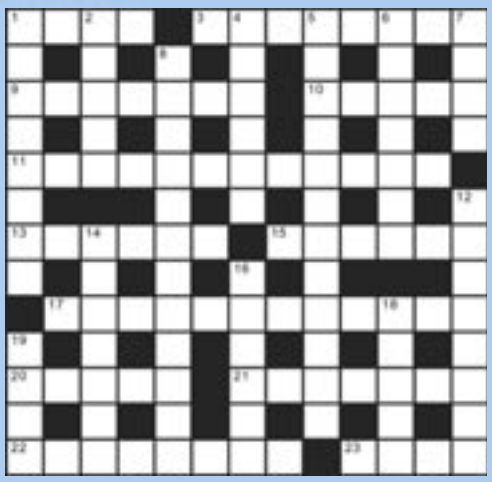
CROSSWORD

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)

Across

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)



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

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 21



Belle Vue
Park & Tea Room



What's On



Congratulations to us!

Our homemade bara brith has won the Free From category for this year's Great British Food Award. It's the second time we have entered and the second time receiving the Gold award.

November

Sunday 3rd between 11.00am and 4.00pm Monthly Market.
We are expanding the craft side of things in the interest of early Christmas shopping. Come along and grab some bargains. We will of course have a donation bucket as entry and Serennu's Sparkle Appeal will be the recipient of all donations.

Saturday 2nd from 4.30pm
Sees the return of the torch-lit march and music to mark 185 years since the Rising. Tickets are for sale from Newport Rising and the procession starts gathering at the Tea Room from 4.30pm ready for its conclusion at the Westgate Square. The Café will be open to serve warming soup, sandwiches and drinks.

Saturday 30th 6.00pm – 9.30pm
Christmas Wreath Making Workshop, hosted by Chelsie from Apple Blossom in May, one of the most lovely flower stalls ever! Contact Chelsie directly for tickets. Limited numbers so you may need to be swift!
Instagram @appleblossominmay

December

Its here! The most exciting month of the year! Our Christmas theme this year is the Snowman and the Snow Dog. We will have our beautiful tree decorated ready for our market and you can see the build up of our theme over the weeks leading to Christmas. We are especially looking for pretty pictures of pooches to hang on our trees. Any ones you have, please bring to us for the foyer decorations.

Sunday 1st 11.00am – 4.00pm
Christmas Market, with accompanying music from Newport's Bavarian Brass Band to make our one day market special for you this year weather permitting of course!

Saturday 7th 6.00pm – 9.30pm
Christmas Wreath Making Workshop, hosted by Chelsie from Apple Blossom in May. Contact Chelsie directly for tickets. Limited numbers so you may need to be swift! Instagram @appleblossominmay

Sunday 8th and 15th There are two sittings: 12.00pm and 2.30pm.

Santa is in residence Sunday 8th & 15th for cream tea.

There are two sittings: 12.00pm and 2.30pm
Bring the family for cream tea £12 per child meeting Santa and £15 per accompanying adult.
BOOKING BY EMAIL ONLY Bookings@bellevuetearoom.uk
Santa will also be visiting on Saturday 7th & 14th between 11.00am and 2.30pm for quick drop ins and a chat.
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Email: Bookings@bellevuetearoom.uk Facebook: @bellevuetearooms Tel Jan on 07737 630657

Twmbarlwm's Place in History

Our first evening talk of the season was recently presented by CPAT and Cadw – the team we worked with on the Archaeological Investigations on Twmbarlwm from 2018 - 2022.

The talk started with the statement that there is no written mention of the earthworks and Twmbarlwm until the post medieval period when the hill began to appear in property deeds and the first cartographers and antiquarians first explored the historic county of Monmouthshire.

This prompted me to look back at our earlier research into Twmbarlwm, using the excellent Bibliography supplied to us by Will Davies (which can be seen on our website) – and thus I spent a few hours surfing the web for old books and documents and struggling to read those ancient texts with their strange letter forms, like 'f' instead of 's', and archaic language.

The first book I studied was from 1587 in which Thomas Churchyard mentions Twmbarlwm in his poem *'The Worthines of Wales'* he alludes to the earthworks on its summit – having just described the hill fort on Lodge Hill above Caerleon he states:

> *'Not farre from this, much like unto the same, Tombarlown stands, a mountaine of some fame',*
>
> A margin note adds *'A wonderful high mountaine with the like manner of defence'.*

The poem isn't clear to me whether he actually visited the mountain but it shows it was as impressive a monument then as now.

The first published description, I came across, of the monument itself is in *Archdeacon Coxe's Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* (1801). Coxe's detailed descriptions are enhanced by the engravings (by Colt-Hoare) which show the mound with the small cairn on the lip of its ditch, the pond and the breaches or gaps on the west and south-west arc of its defences.

Coxe assumed the mound to be the burial place of a fallen Silurian chieftain saying:

> *"…Twyn Barlwm … may contain the ashes of some valiant chief among the Silures, who fell in defending his country against the Romans."*

Of course he had no evidence of this but he was also informed by a local Mr Owen:

> *"… according to the present race of bards, it was once a celebrated place for holding the Eisteddfod or bardic meetings."*



William Saxton's 1557 map shows 'Tumberlow Hill' as a mole-hill-like lump.

Coxe's description of the hill fort is quite detailed and a modern reader will still recognise the location. The account of his trip to the summit on horseback was surprisingly delayed three times by inclement weather, yet he paints an idyllic rural picture of the mountain and waxes lyrical about the views over the valleys and township below:

> *"The beautiful valleys of the Ebwy and Sorwy appear in the hollows between the mountains, deeply shaded with trees and watered by torrents which faintly glimmer through the intervening foliage."*

I also turned to studying some ancient maps to find that *'Tumberlow Hill'* appears as a mole-hill-like lump on William Saxton's map of 1577, and again in John Speed's map of 1610. This corruption of presumably unfamiliar Welsh was followed numerous times and occasionally varied by subsequent cartographers, including *'Pentwynbarhen Hill'* (Morden 1695), and *'Tumberton Hill'* (Badeslade and Toms, 1742). John Cary's map in 1787 appears to be the first to indicate the enclosure rather than simply a schematic conical hill.

It's not until you see the Tithe map for Risca of 1843 you find written evidence of ownership. 'Mynydd Twyn Barlwyn', in plot 191, was owned by a John Jones Esq. and occupied by one Mary George. It is drawn in more detail with the enclosure as an unbroken raised area and the motte still at its eastern end.

It can be fascinating exploring the history of our local mountain and landscape and I would encourage anyone to delve into the archives (use the Bibliography and Archaeological reports on our website as a starting point) to discover more information or come along to one of our talks.

TERRY EVANS
Chair Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society

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

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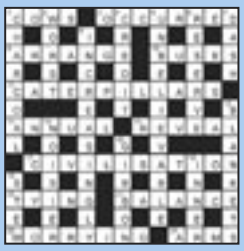
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Gwerinwyr Gwent Diary

We have had such a quiet summer there has been very little to write about, so let's go back to early May and the 33rd Tredegar House Folk Festival. GG was due to dance two spots, one in the main dance marquee and the other in the farmers market. The weather was lovely, and we completed our first spot in the marquee although it was very hot in there and we were all a bit breathless by the end. Unfortunately, one of our dancers was badly affected by the heat and had to spend some time in the St John Ambulance vehicle to cool down and recover, so we cancelled our second spot. I think most people in the farmers market were more interested in browsing the stalls than watching us anyway.

The festival had a new layout this year with all venues sited around the car park at Tredegar House as the National Trust was expecting work to be carried out on some buildings and couldn't guarantee the date. It made for a compact 'village feel' which many attendees preferred.

Our next outing was at the end of the month at Chippenham Folk Festival, an event we have supported many times. Another lovely day and we gave two performances, one in the main street and





one outside the Rose and Crown, both alongside other groups. We weren't the only Welsh side in attendance as Tipyn O Bopeth from West Wales also took part. There were good crowds to watch the dancing, and the Grand Parade through the town with all the Morris, Appalachian, Clog, Step and Welsh groups provided a colourful spectacle for them.

Finally on the 6th August we were at the National Eisteddfod in Pontypridd for the midday spot in Ty Gwerin. Amazingly we were again lucky with the weather and had the sunniest, warmest and, most importantly, driest day of the whole week. Some dance groups take their costumes and change into them for their performance, but we like to wear ours for the whole day. This meant a lot of stopping while walking around the maes as people do love to take photos especially of the ladies in their tall hats. Some of the group were even photographed by the BBC and appeared on the Eisteddfod highlights programme.

Our performance went well although once again it was very warm for dancing inside the yurt.



With the Eisteddfod being held in Ynysangharad Park it was so nice to be able to wander through Pontypridd town centre for our lunch (more photo stops), before our second spot in the tiny space of the Bwthyn.



Gwerinwyr Gwent is always seeking new members, and beginners or experienced dancers/musicians are very welcome. Practice night (numbers permitting) 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

St David's Hospice Care

Fundraising Calendar of Events 2024













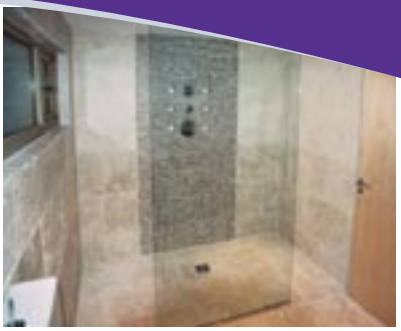
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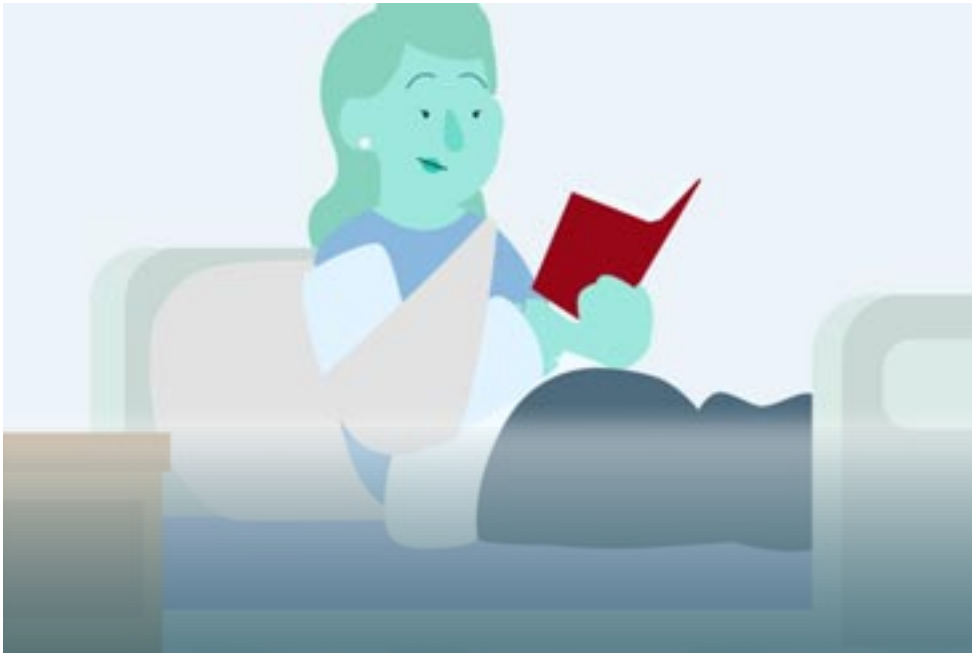
Pant-Yr-Eos Reservoir



Pant-yr-Eos Reservoir is situated approximately 2km east of Risca and is on the boundaries of Newport and Torfaen councils. It is impounded by a 27m high, 280m long embankment dam with clay core, and has a storage capacity of approximately 600 Ml. The reservoir was completed in 1878 for provision of water supplies to Newport.

The Reservoir is managed by Islwyn and District Anglers and is well stocked with both brown and rainbow trout. To fish at the Reservoir, you can join Islwyn and District Anglers online or in person at Greens Fishing Tackle, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood.





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