CAERLEON

DIRECTORY

ISSUE 107 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025



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Welcome!

Hope you all had a lovely summer and are looking forward to autumn with the usual Halloween activities ahead, also the Newport Food Festival on Friday 10th & Saturday 11th October. For more details visit newportfoodfestival.co.uk

We are a small independent business and make a huge effort to produce and deliver this magazine. Our aim is to provide an informative and interesting magazine that positively contributes to both community life and local businesses. We rely totally on the revenue from the advertising to keep the magazine in production and need local businesses to support us as much as they possible can.

We deliver to over 25,000 homes all over Newport; this is an ideal way for you to reach prospective customers and support the local community at the same time. Don't forget that if you rely totally on social media to promote your business you are missing out on so many potential customers who prefer not to use social media.

Susan x

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Caerleon
Then & Now



A close-up of the station buildings that shows the access steps leading up to Station Road in the background. On the forecourt is Mike McClure with a new bicycle circa 1962.
Below is the same view in September 2020 with the steps barely visibly in amongst the foliage.



Extract taken from Norman Stevens's books of Caerleon. They can be purchased from Caerleon Post Office



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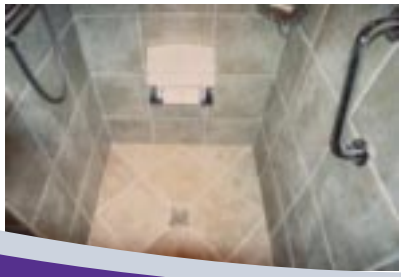
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Swan
RESCUE

The Moult


On the water again at last after how long

Memory plays funny To moult in animals and birds is to shed skin, hair or fur and feathers in order to make way for new growth. In the case of swans, of course, it's feathers and there are very many of them, providing waterproofing, insulation and streamlining. They don't last forever and need to be replaced annually, a process which starts in late July or early August and consumes a lot of energy. It can take four-seven weeks to complete and obviously, during this time they are flightless, as, are the cygnets, which have not yet learnt to fly.


Peace at last

In the context of swan rescue, it is very much the case that one learns as one goes along. Many years ago, our attention was drawn to what appeared to be a very sick adult male swan at Brynhill Golf Course (Barry). He was taken into care for a few days, given a vitamin boost and ensured he had free access to lots of good wholesome swan food, before returning him to his territory.

This memory was jogged as the end of July approached, when we received a call from the canal near the Harvester in Malpas; the report referred to a near motionless lethargic swan surrounded by a large quantity of poo.

It would be totally wrong to assume anything, such reports must be investigated regardless of inconvenience. It was as described, so we started by offering wheat on which he started to feed immediately, a good sign. Shortly he struggled to his feet, and very laboriously made his way down the bank, a long way, given the very low water level in the canal. At this point it was time to try some floating swan and duck food which was also acceptable. This was the moment which his family, female and six cygnets chose to appear. There can be little doubt they became aware 'easy access food' was available!

It is so easy to be tempted to superimpose human interpretations on events as they unfold. The enthusiasm with which the adult female and particularly the six cygnets were tucking in, made it look as if the cob decided he couldn't be bothered to compete. The response was to find a packet of energy and as we watched, the male was paddling away from the scene, at speed, up towards the Harvester bridge. Clearly, there was nothing more to be done here, so we followed him on our way back to the car.

Just short of the bridge, he stopped, stretched fully upwards and outwards and then started to preen. Given the nature of this story, our pictures are self-explanatory!


Family arrive with the lure of food

Two days later, normal service was resumed. We received a call that reported the same swan in exactly the same position on the canal bank, but this time there was fishing line attached to the swan's black berry above his beak by means of a small hook, trailing line and float, mercifully, an easy one to solve.

Story & Photos: Peter. For swan problems please contact Peter on 07802 472788



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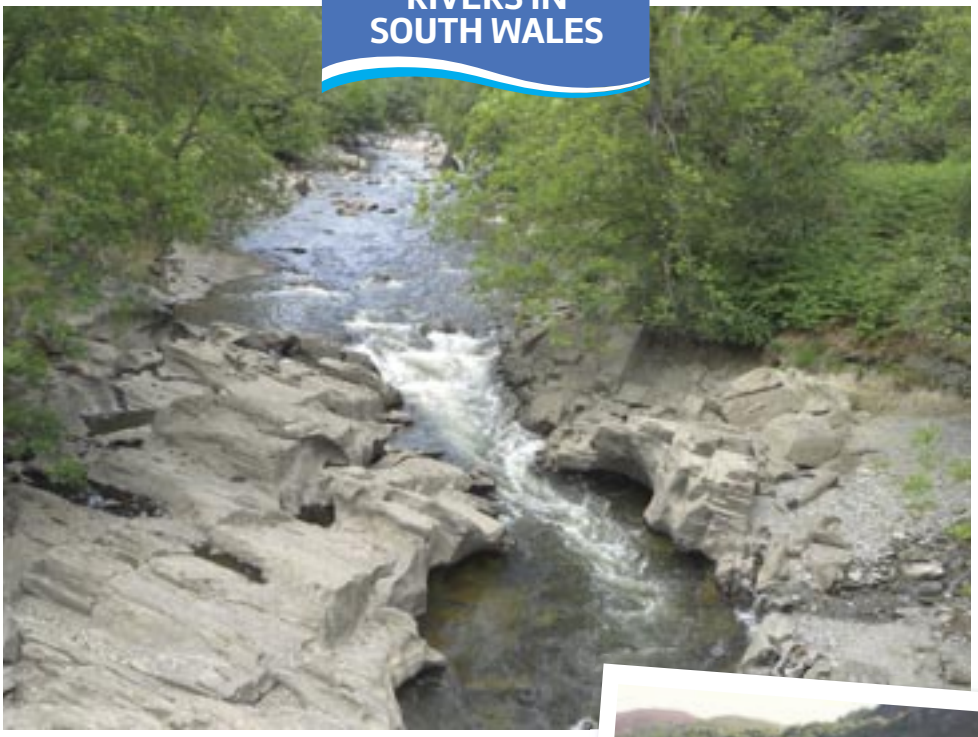


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The Afon Elan



The Afon Elan is a tributary of the River Wye, which runs through Powys, Wales. The river is approximately 16 miles long and flows through the Elan Valley, an area of outstanding natural beauty. Rising on the slopes of Pen y Deunant, high on the moors of Ceredigion (known as Elenydd), the Elan gathers several small tributary streams before it enters Craig Goch, the first of a series of reservoirs built between 1893 and 1904 to provide water for Birmingham. Thereafter, it flows through the Penygarreg, Garreg-ddu and Caban-coch reservoirs then it flows generally northeast for another fivee34254 miles before entering the River Wye a few miles south of Rhayader.



Visitors can take a scenic drive around the reservoirs or walk along the many trails that run alongside them. The Elan Valley Visitors Centre is a great place to start exploring the area. The centre offers exhibitions, interactive displays, and guided tours that provide a wealth of information about the history and wildlife of the valley.

We have visited the area several times and each time see the river & dams in various states of water levels. It takes just under two hours to get to from the Newport area and is most definitely worth the drive to bask in the outstanding beauty.

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Taking Care of Twmbarlwm Gets Expensive…

… thanks to those who persist in trying to destroy it all.

I make no apologies for "banging on" again about the vandalism and fly-tipping we continue to experience on Twmbarlwm – but the fact is, apart from the obvious complaints of such anti-social behaviour being an eyesore and bad for the environment, it gets blooming expensive for the society and the farmers and, indirectly, every council tax payer out there.

Last month at our litter pick we discovered the fence on the slope to the top of Twmbarlwm had been deliberately cut through again, despite there being a gate not ten metres away from the breach. This comprises two lines of stock fence, with trees planted in between them, that the society installed a few years ago, paid for with a government grant that was available at the time.

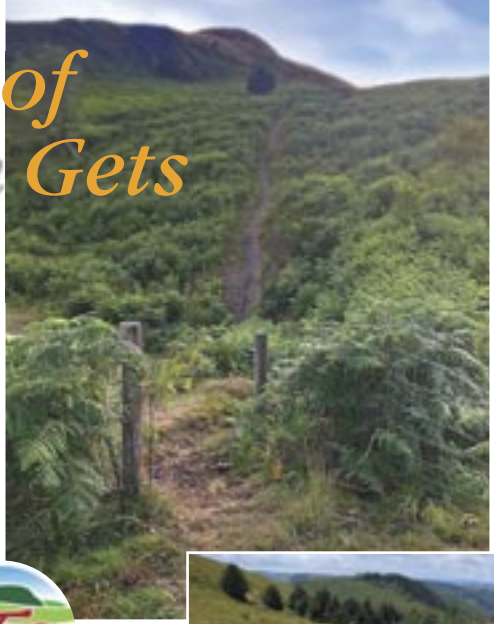
The fence is there to do a job, to keep livestock from straying onto the scheduled monument and further afield, so we will have to effect a repair, but at what cost? There's the material costs, the manpower and time costs and even administrative costs in trying to find the funding to do it – which is no easy task in today's economic climate.

Similarly, where the fence continues on the far side of the Twmp, a stretch of fence was repeatedly cut alongside a stile – we can't fathom why. The landowners and the society must have repaired it a dozen times, at our own expense, only to find it cut a few days later.

As I said above, the fence is absolutely necessary so it had to be repaired and fortunately, earlier this year, we successfully applied for funding through Cadw to install a stronger fence at this location. This will now allow us to continue with the conservation project we are involved with on Twmbarlwm – but this is probably a funding stream we won't be able to access again.



Councils need to spend precious resources to clean up and investigate illegal fly-tipping





Above: Vandals come fully equipped, ready to destroy livestock fencing. Right: The expensive fence reinforcement we recently installed.

They are just two examples of the quite deliberate destruction of the hard work our members have put into the area – I could fill these pages with photos of the damage continually inflicted on and around Twmbarlwm.

Of course, I haven't yet mentioned the other abhorrent crime that besets us – fly-tipping. It is a constant battle, the cost of which, to all of us as tax-payers and decent citizens, is difficult to estimate. CTS gathers as much as possible on our monthly litter pick days but much of it must be left for the council to collect.

Everybody moans about their council tax bills and question where the money goes – but if more members of the public were diligent enough of how and where they dispose of their rubbish maybe, just maybe, there would be more money to spend elsewhere.

For millennia the mountain has been revered by the communities that have grown up in its shadow – that's why the local tribes built a stronghold at the top, they thought it was a special place to be.

Unfortunately, there are those who ignore accepted common decency and see no wrong in the destruction and littering of an area most people in the community have respected and cherished for generations.

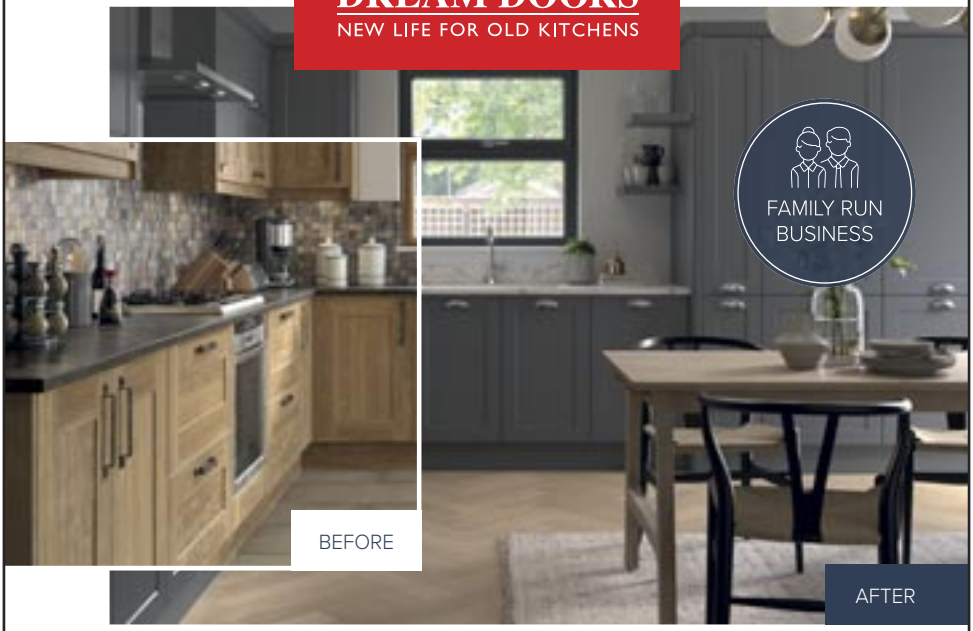
Terry Evans, Chairman
Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society

Cymdeithas Twmbarlwm Society meet at the car park below Twmbarlwm's summit for a litter pick and volunteer workday on the first 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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Boosting Your Pension Pot in 2025/2026:

A Friendly Guide

Looking to grow your pension pot this tax year? Acting earlier in the tax year gives your investments more time to grow, taking full advantage of compound growth and boosting your retirement savings.

Maximise Your Annual Allowance
The annual pension allowance is the maximum amount that can be contributed to your pension schemes without triggering a tax charge. It's set at £60,000 or 100% of your earnings, whichever is lower. For high earners or those who've started withdrawing from pensions, the allowance could be lower. If you've started withdrawals, your limit may drop to just £10,000.

Maximising contributions allows you to reduce taxable income and potentially lower your tax bill, making it a smart way to grow your pension.

Tax Relief: A Valuable Boost
Pension contributions offer tax relief, which is one of the best incentives for retirement savings. For most UK taxpayers, this means a 20% government top-up. For example, a £100 contribution only costs you £80! Higher and additional-rate taxpayers can claim further relief, but a self-assessment tax return is required.

This makes pensions one of the most tax-efficient ways to save for retirement.

Workplace Pension Schemes
If you're in a workplace pension scheme, your employer is required to contribute at least 3% of your qualifying earnings, with you contributing at least 5%. Many employers even match contributions up to a certain limit, so boosting your contributions could double the money you put into your pension.

It's a simple way to grow your pension with minimal effort, so it's worth checking if your employer will contribute more.

Optimise Your Personal Allowance
In the 2025/26 tax year, the personal allowance is £12,570, the amount you can earn before paying income tax. However, for those earning above £100,000, this allowance reduces, disappearing entirely if your income exceeds £125,000.

By contributing to your pension, you can reduce taxable income and potentially reclaim lost personal allowance, which could save tax at an effective rate of 60%.



Keep Your Child Benefit with Pension Contributions
In 2024, the High-Income Child Benefit Charge threshold to £60,000. This means fewer families will lose Child Benefit. If your income is between £50,000 and £60,000, contributing to your pension can reduce your taxable income enough to retain full entitlement.

Even if your income is above £60,000, applying for Child Benefit is still worth it for National Insurance credits, which count towards your State Pension.

Ready to Talk About Boosting Your Pension?
Pension contributions and tax benefits can be a little tricky to navigate and requires careful consideration and professional financial advice, but don't worry – we are here to help. If you'd like to talk through your options or get some tailored advice on how to make the most of your pension, we're just a phone call or email away.

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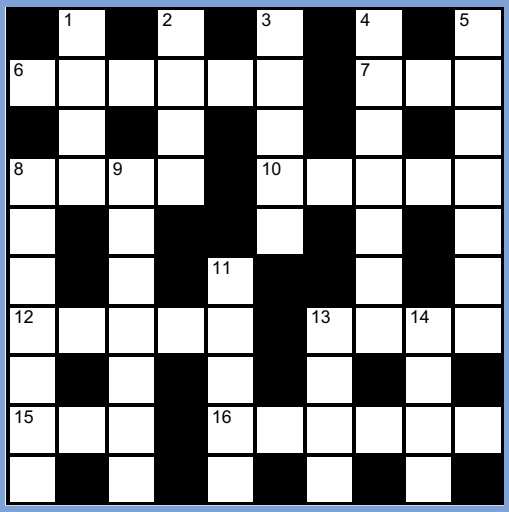
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Puzzles

CROSSWORD

Across
6 Education centre (6)
7 Used for listening (3)
8 Groups (4)
10 Special occurrence (5)
12 Flowing water (5)
13 Group of cows (4)
15 Lubricant (3)
16 Loving touch (6)

Down
1 Dull pain (4)
2 Faithful pets (4)
3 Passageway (5)
4 Protection (7)
5 Make believe (7)
8 Common small bird (7)
9 Journeys (7)
11 Building block (5)
13 Cause injury (4)
14 Element of danger (4)



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

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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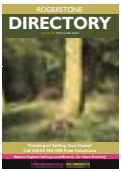


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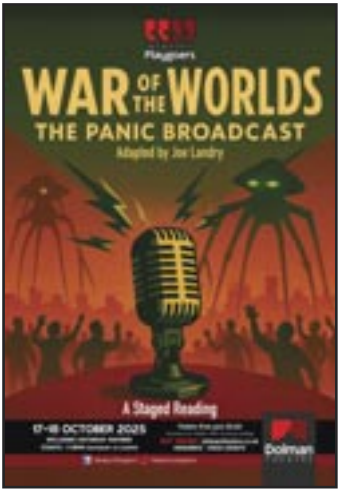
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1	2	7	9	8	3	6	5	4
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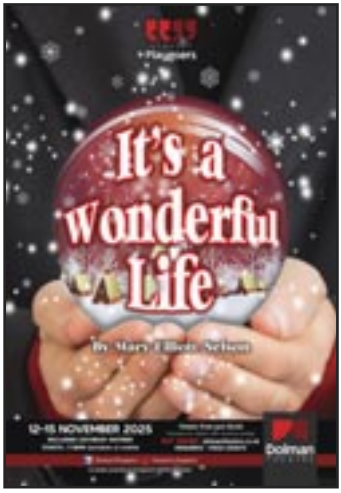
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6 S	C	H	O	O	L	■	7 E	A	R
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15 O	I	L	■	16 C	A	R	E	S	S
W	■	S	■	K	■	M	■	K	■

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BEACHES IN WALES

Saint Govans Head





The views along the Pembrokeshire Coast Path are magnificent. The cliffs here are important for seabirds, including guillemots, razorbills and kittiwakes. The path from the car park to the old coastguard station has been surfaced and provides a fairly level walk. Close to the car park, but down a flight of steps is the chapel dedicated to St Govan, an Irish abbot of the 6th century, unfortunately we never went down to the waters edge to see the chapel.

We walked around the stunning cliffs and saw a variety of seabirds and even some seals basking on the rocks. The Ministry of Defence has been using the area around Castle Martin as a firing range since the 1940s. It was fascinating seeing some of the old bunkers that have now been abandoned.

It's a two hour drive from Newport but if you are on holiday in the Pembrokeshire or Carmarthenshire area it's well worth a visit.





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Newport u3a

Members of Newport u3a went on a day trip arranged by its History Group.
We visited the Royal Mint at Llantrisant for their award-winning tour where we learnt about its 1100 year history including the move to Wales from the Tower of London and Tower Hill and the manufacturing process of coins. Expansion into the global currency production means it is now the world's leading export mint supplying 30 different countries each year. In addition, it produces a wide range of military, sporting and commemorative medals such as those awarded at the 2012 London Olympic Games. In the exhibition rooms we saw some of the rarest and most unique coins in the world and here we all are around a Mini covered in pennies.



Newport u3a offers 40 more active, social and cultural groups for the retired at the Dolman Theatre Wednesday to Friday during term time. If you would like to enrich your retirement, try out some free taster sessions, visit newport.u3asite.uk or phone Angela Robins on 07983 130541.

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. Our meetings provide an excellent opportunity to meet people with similar interests in a friendly atmosphere and afterwards to take time to chat and enjoy refreshments and perhaps buy some plants. In addition to the monthly meetings at 2.30pm in Little Mill village hall NP4 0HE on the second Saturday of each month from September to May, the group organises garden visits and discussions, dinners, a plant sale and more.


Chris Beardshaw

On Thursday September 25th at the Blake Theatre, Monmouth at 7.30pm, we are delighted to welcome Chris Beardshaw, the well-known TV gardener and presenter, whose theme will be 'Painting with Plants'. Tickets are available by email, telephone or post from boxoffice@theblaketheatre.org at £15 for Hardy Plant Society members and £18 for non-members.
At our October 11th meeting at the Hall in Little Mill at 2.30pm, Marion Stainton will be talking on 'The Winter Garden' with lots of practical advice on your garden during the colder months. All welcome. Members £4, non-members £6.

For more information on all the above, our website is www.hpsmonmouthshire.co.uk


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Part 2

Changes in Rogerstone

since 1974 when it officially became part of Wales

Educational Institutions

Rogerstone has seen changes in its primary schools during this period. Firstly, the old board school near the Welfare Grounds moved to a more modern school at the Cefn Wood site and was renamed as such, then in 2003 the school was destroyed by fire. After a period of using portable classrooms and the use of an empty school at Malpas a new, bigger, state of the art school was built and opened in 2006. The other major educational development was the building of the new Jubilee Park School on the estate which opened in 2016.



The old Rogerstone Board School and the replacement Cefn Wood School



Recreational Spaces

Despite the loss of the aluminium factory outdoor sports facilities, partly due to the bypass, the village also benefited from the construction of the bypass, the old 'make do' facilities at the Welfare were replaced by a modern community hall, sports changing rooms and showers in the early 1980s. Then in 1987 Rogerstone Welfare Cricket Club secured a sports lottery grant for the building of a new two storey cricket clubhouse. More recently, the children's playground was upgraded as was the drainage on the football field. A new all-weather cricket net was also a featured addition with help from Cricket Wales/ECB and Rogerstone Community Council. There have been continual improvements at the Newport Fugitives Athletic Club, both on field and in the clubhouse, again with help from the same parties. These spaces have become integral to community life, offering residents places to gather, engage in physical activities, and foster social connections. The enhancement of these facilities underscores Rogerstone's focus on community well-being and cohesion.





The new Rogerstone Primary School in 2011 and Jubilee Park Primary School in 2025







The old Welfare Grounds from the 1930s, the 1970s and the modern Grounds in 2010s


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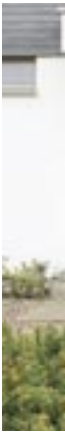


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Gwerinwyr Gwent Diary

Our first booking of the year was at the end of February, when we spent a very pleasant evening with the ladies of Machen WI. This was swiftly followed by St David's Day at Foxhunters Care Community near Abergavenny. We danced and played for them, with Barbara Griffiths again as MC, and even got some residents to join in with one of our simple dances, most, but not all, from the comfort of their armchairs.

On 30th March we had our annual visit to Llanover for the NGS open gardens day. Lovely weather, lots of visitors, and record amounts raised for the charities.

Then a short break before the 10th May found us at another regular...the Tredegar House Folk Festival. Yet more good weather which brought out the crowds over the weekend. We danced on the Saturday and did a spot in both dance marquees. As well as the free dance displays, there were plenty of concerts, workshops, free entertainment, real ale bar, food and most importantly...sunshine.

As a consequence of having a local Hungarian dance group at the festival, GG was proud to be asked to take part in a Welsh/Hungarian day at Lisvane

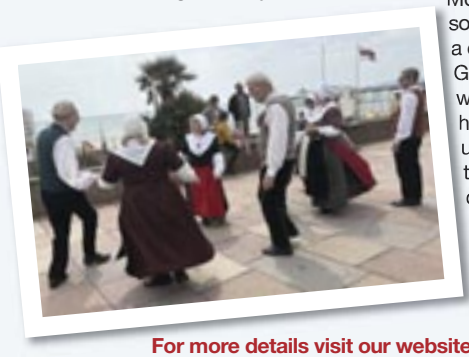






Memorial Hall in Cardiff, celebrating our two cultures. It was a wonderful afternoon and we were entertained by singer Daf Jones and Hungarian musicians and dancers. GG demonstrated three dances, then got the audience on their feet for a twmpath dance. Colourful crafts were on sale as well as tasty Hungarian food.

It is many years (well before Covid) since we have been away as a group to a weekend festival, so we thoroughly enjoyed our time at the Teignmouth Folk Festival in June. This is mainly a Morris dancing event, with some Appalachian sides and a couple of extras, of which GG was one. The forecast was for it to be exceptionally hot (which would have been unbearable for the ladies in their long woollen costumes), but fortunately it was cooler than we feared, and we even got rained on and didn't mind! We danced at three spots along the promenade on Saturday, plus we had the honour of the 45 minute guest performance at the main venue (The Triangle), all dance venues are outdoors. On Sunday we did two spots before the lunch break and then made our way back to South Wales. Quite a few of us stayed at the lovely Cliffden Hotel in Teignmouth. It has extensive grounds which, happily for us, meander down to exactly the part of the promenade where Saturday's procession started. It also has an excellent indoor swimming pool.



During the last 18 months, we have been delighted to recruit four new dancers, however, Gwerinwyr Gwent is still 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, or ring 01495 271953


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