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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 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.

Please check our website for churches near you for information of their Christmas services.

We wish you all a very happy, peaceful and enjoyable Christmas.

Susan x



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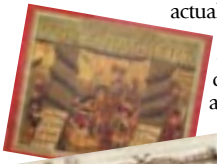
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Christmas Traditions

Ever wondered how we came to kiss underneath the mistletoe, deck the halls with tinsel and wear paper crowns around the dinner table?





CRACKERS

In 1847, the confectioners Tom Smith started wrapping sweets in a twist of paper. Over the years, he added new elements, first inserting a love motto into the wrapper, and then – inspired by a crackling fire – a 'crack' when the wrapping was broken. Tom then replaced the sweets with trinkets and wrapped paper around a cardboard tube. When his sons took over the

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Sending Christmas cards can be time-consuming, but they were actually invented to save time! In 1843 Sir Henry Cole commissioned an artist to create a festive illustration alongside a Christmas greeting. He then printed 1,000 of these cards to send to friends, then sold the rest to charity. Today, around 900 million Christmas cards are sent in Britain every year. In 2001, one of Cole's 12 surviving original Christmas cards sold at auction for £22, 500.

TINSEL

Tinsel was replicate icicles, and was initially made from strips of real silver! However, this became tarnished by smoke from candles, so lead foil was used instead. In the 1960s, worries about lead poisoning saw a switch to plastic materials, which are still used today.

MISTLETOE

Pagans believed mistletoe had a mystical life force of fertility. Kissing under the mistletoe became a popular Victorian parlour game: each white berry represented a kiss, and for each kiss given a berry was removed, until none were left and the kissing had to stop.

Festive Music Facts

We Wish You A Merry Christmas is one of the oldest Christmas songs, originating in 16th century England.

James Pierpont's 1857 song Jingle Bells was first called One Horse Open Sleigh and was written for Thanksgiving.

White Christmas by Bing Crosby is the best selling single of all time, its sold over 50 million copies worldwide.

LadBaby is the act with the most Christmas number ones with five, surpassing the Beatles' previous record of four in 2022. Paul McCartney has been top eight times with various acts, while Cliff Richard has spent four Christmases at number one.
The Spice Girls later equalled the then-record of the Beatles to have three consecutive Christmas number ones, from 1996 to 1998.

Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen, which reached the number-one spot at Christmas 1975 and 1991, was the only record to have reached the top twice, until Last Christmas by Wham!, which topped the charts in both 2023 and 2024, making it the first consecutive Christmas number one.

Mary's Boy Child is the only song to be Christmas number one for two artists – Harry Belafonte in 1957 and Boney M. in 1978, although Do They Know It's Christmas? has been Christmas number one for three generations of Band Aid.

Fairytale of New York by The Pogues and Kirsty MacColl has never hit number one on the UK charts but is still one of the most played Christmas songs in the UK. It has re-entered the UK Top 20 chart every year since 2005.

WHY DO WE NEED A PROPERTY PROTECTION TRUST?

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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.

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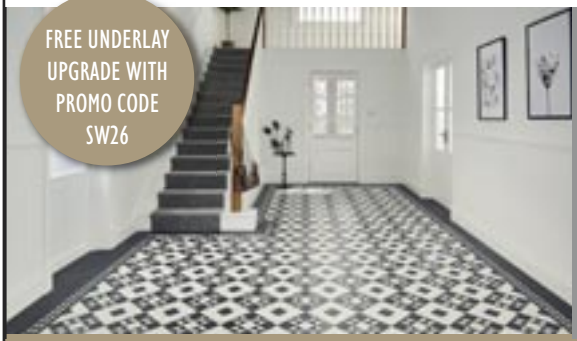
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More Christmas Traditions

SANTA CLAUS
The tradition stems from the pagan figure of Father Winter, who would be welcomed into homes and plied with food and drink in hope of being given a mild winter. The name Santa Claus comes from the generous Catholic St Nicholas, a red-robed bishop who was said to drop presents down chimneys for children. Some say Santa Claus wore green until Coca-Cola gave him a red coat in the 1930s adverts. But some earlier descriptions show him dressed in red, based on St Nicholas' red bishop's robes. In 1879, the world's first ever Santa's Christmas Grotto appeared in Liverpool.



ADVENT CALENDARS
Counting down to Christmas was started by the Germans in the 19th century, who made chalk marks on a door and wiped them off each day. The advent calendar was invented by Gerhard Lang, whose mother placed a cookie on each day of the calendar leading up to Christmas when he was a child. This inspired him to produce a commercial Advent calendar. The first advent calendars containing chocolate were produced in 1958, Cadbury launched its version in 1971.

CHRISTMAS TREES
Pine trees have long been seen as symbols of hope and celebration, their greenery showing that life continues throughout winter. In 1419, the first chronicled Christmas tree appeared in Freiburg, Germany. This communal tree was decorated by bakers with fruit, nuts and baked goods, which were given to children to eat on New Year's Day. In 1800, the German-born Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, put up Britain's first known Christmas tree in Windsor. Laden with candles, trinkets and sweets, it set a trend and demand soared further after a sketch of Queen Victoria's family with their Christmas tree appeared on the front of a magazine.

Christmas Wreaths

Where do they come from?

Christmas wreaths are one of the most beloved Christmas decorations adorning front doors of homes today.
The wreath is an assortment of flowers, leaves, fruits, twigs, or various materials that are constructed to resemble a ring. They are usually made from evergreens and symbolize strength, as evergreens last even throughout the harshest winters.
In Christianity, wreaths are used to observe the Advent season and are often set up on the first Sunday of Advent. The Advent wreath was first used by Lutherans in Germany in the 16th century, and in 1839, Lutheran priest Johann Hinrich Wichern used a wreath made from a cart wheel to educate children about the meaning and purpose of Christmas, as well as to help them count its approach, thus giving rise to the modern version of the Advent wreath. For every Sunday of Advent, starting with the fourth Sunday before Christmas, he would put a white candle in the wreath and for every day in between he would use a red candle. All of the Advent wreaths, however, have four candles, and many of them have a white candle in the centre, the Christ candle, which is lit on Christmas Day.



This Christmas, consider the history of the Christmas wreath as you're hanging your wreath on your front door. Think about what the circle means to you and your family, and decorate your Christmas wreath with symbols of love and life.

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What Can One Say About September?

It has been a month of challenges and difficulties, resulting inevitably in a considerable amount of driving and a handful of truly awful incidents; so here is just a flavour.

The biggest single problem, which given the circumstances had the happiest possible outcome. The location is Tredelerch Lake at the bottom of Llanrumney, a stretch of water with which we have had a very long connection, a lot of it in the past with unhappy memories. There was an echo of this in mid-August when two of the six cygnets were shot dead and another was left severely traumatised. Eight days later, one of the surviving cygnets was found to be horribly tackled involving a 45 minute patient vigil until an opportunity presented to catch the bird; the rest was just routine removal of hook and line.

A matter of days later, (5th September), Paul called to say that two more of the cygnets had been shot and appeared to have broken wings. Mercifully, we weren't too far away and so were able to be on site very quickly.

With the benefit of modern technology, photographs were despatched immediately to Mel at the Swan Sanctuary at Shepperton. 'No', she said 'That's botulism. Get them up here as quickly as you can.' We were under way in no time at all. Technology, then intervened again; passing through the Brynglas Tunnel, Sally from Shepperton phoned with an offer to meet partway; an offer which was accepted pretty quickly! For this purpose, Reading Services is ideally placed with full entry and exit junctions to the motorway, both to the east and the west.

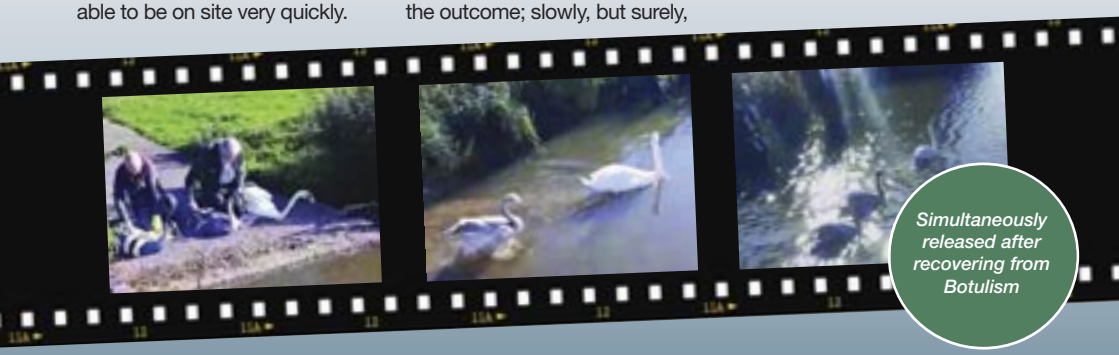
Those two cygnets were in treatment, one much more poorly than the other and therefore on a drip, in near record time.

At 6.40pm the following day, Paul phoned again to report that the cob (adult male) was then showing significant signs of distress. Clearly, there was no alternative but to drop everything, collect the swan, large and very heavy, a long way back to the car and arriving at Shepperton at 10.45pm. For a few days, it seems, it was touch and go as to the outcome; slowly, but surely, the signs of improvement grew stronger.

The effectiveness of the drugs available is well illustrated by the fact that towards the end of the following week, it became clear the swans could be returned to South Wales, which duly happened on 22nd.

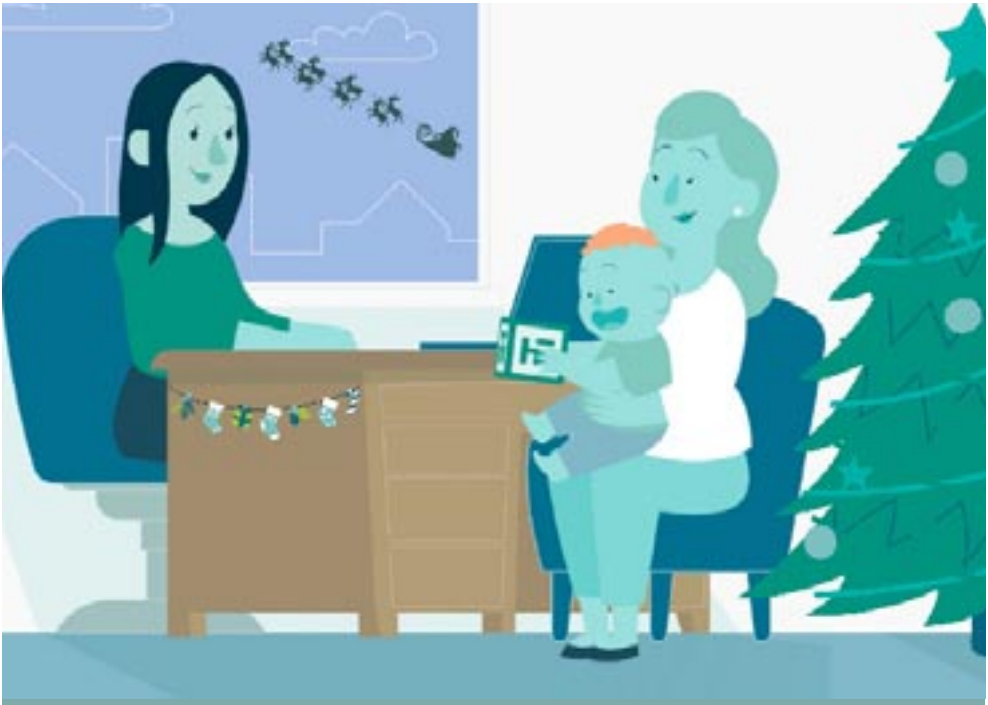
In the meantime, a further trip to Shepperton had to be undertaken on the 8th as a result of the need to rescue a poorly swan from Cold Knap on account of it apparently lost the ability to walk, and hence dragging itself along on its belly.

The release of the botulism survivors went well; the three returnees, still in their bags, were lined up at the foot of the slipway, and all released simultaneously; they all departed extremely rapidly and immediately headed half right to the other side of the lake where, quite obviously they had spotted the rest of the family which had not succumbed to botulism. Despite the lengthy absence, it was obvious there was instant recognition and the anticipated greeting between the adults.



Simultaneously released after recovering from Botulism

Story by Peter & photos by Paul and Lynn Cawley. For swan problems please contact Peter on 07802 472788



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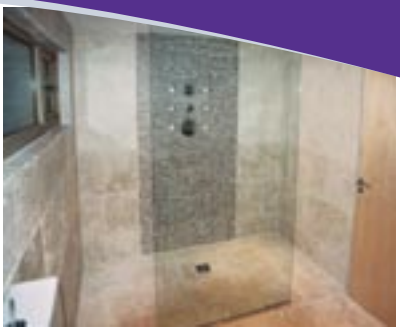
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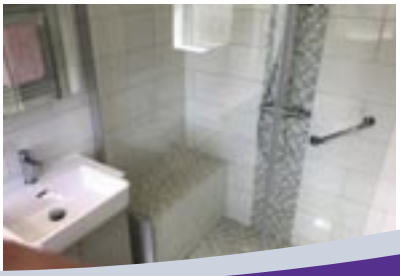


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Christmas Puzzles

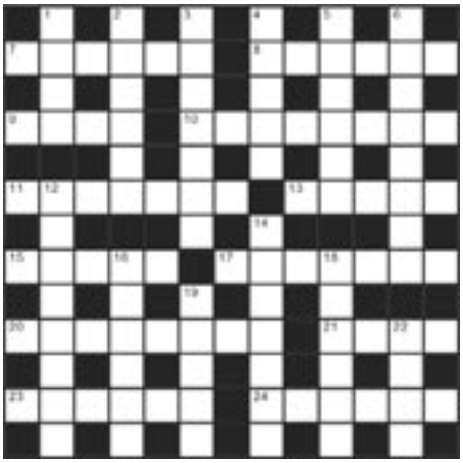
Crossword

Across

7 Any person (6)
8 Strong cloth artists use (6)
9 Wild animal of the dog family (4)
10 Sending something through the air (8)
11 Prohibiting (7)
13 Operate a vehicle (5)
15 Large water birds (5)
17 Easily understood (7)
20 Brief news report (8)
21 A green plant with leaves like feathers (4)
23 Nuclear (6)
24 Person in charge of a newspaper (6)

Down

1 Enter (4)
2 Casket (6)
3 Risking money on horse races etc (7)
4 Provoking fear (5)
5 Reply (6)
6 Large outdoor party or festival (8)
12 Satisfactory (8)
14 Slim (7)



16 Serious (6)
18 An event (6)
19 An orderly pile (5)
22 Part of the plant below the ground (4)

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

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.

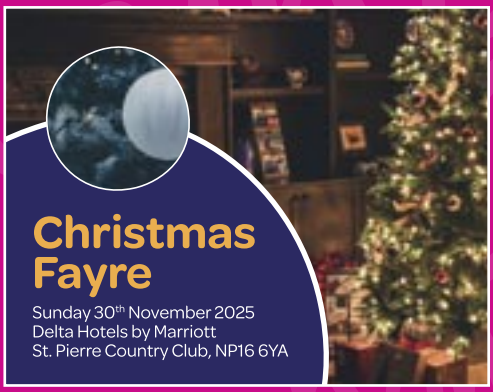
Solutions on page 21

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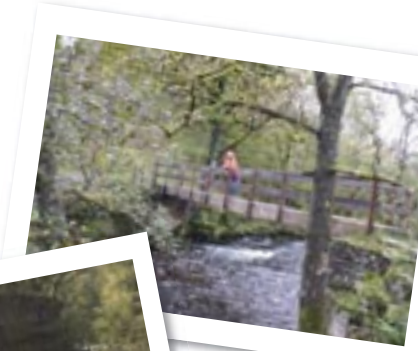
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4	6	2	3	1	8	9	5	7
9	3	1	6	5	7	8	2	4



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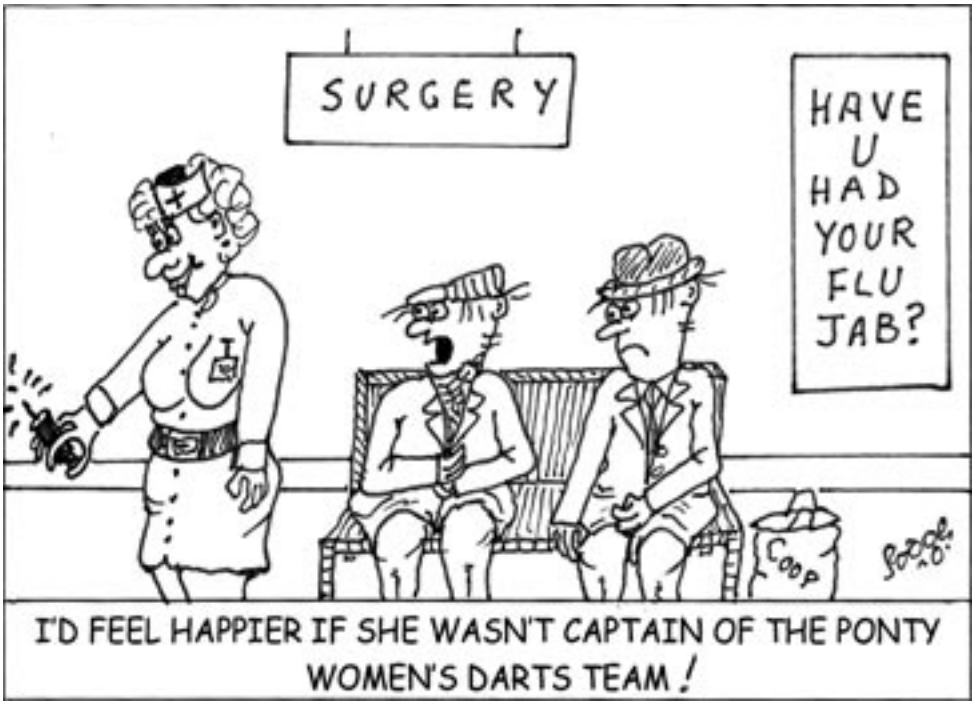
River Mellte





The Afon Mellte is formed by the confluence of the Afon Llia and the Afon Dringarth. It then flows south through the village of Ystradfellte to Pontneddfech an where it joins with the Nedd Fechan to become the River Neath. The river derives its name from 'mellt' - the Welsh word for 'lightning' - after its tendency to rise and fall rapidly in response to heavy rainfall. The bridge over the River Mellte is a great place to view the river that then flows down into Sgwd Clun-Gwyn. When the river is low you can walk along the banks, on the rocks and get yourself down to the waterfall. You can also go for a paddle as the flow is not too strong.

The river and surrounding area are a hot spot for many different outdoor activities including the famous waterfall walks, caving, canyoning, gorge walking and white-water kayaking. Visitors can park at the pay and display car parks at Cwm Porth and the nearby Gwaun Hepste or in Pontneddfechan. It only takes just over one hour to drive to the car parks from Newport and then about a one hour walk from the car park to the waterfalls.



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U Play



Newport u3a provides over 40 active, leisure and cultural groups for the retired including the popular Play Reading Group.
The convenor has had a long association with the Newport Playgoers Society and is able to borrow a variety of scripts from their extensive library. In addition, we have had the pleasure of reading several works that have been written by our very own members, including a murder mystery that was performed on the Orient Express.
This is the group for those who love escapism by bringing a script to life. Acting experience is not required, there is no typecasting, learning lines or first night nerves - just fun!

u3a learn, laugh, live

Newport u3a meets at the Dolman Theatre, Wednesday to Friday at 8:45-15:00 during term time. If you would like more drama in your retirement, come and try us out for two weeks (FOC). Phone Angela Robins on 07983130541 or www.newport.u3asite.uk

Hardy Plant Society

The HPS Monmouthshire group is for people who love plants and gardening and enjoy sharing that interest with other like-minded people. Our meetings provide an excellent opportunity to meet fellow enthusiasts in a relaxed environment, to take time to listen to some excellent speakers, to mingle, chat and enjoy refreshments and perhaps buy some plants. We welcome non-members, entry is £6. You will be made very welcome.
Our meetings are monthly and are held at 2.30pm in Little Mill village hall NP4 0HE on the second Saturday of each month from September to May. In addition, the group organises garden visits and discussions, dinners, a plant sale and more. Saturday 8th November brings the editor of Gardens Illustrated magazine, Stephanie Mahon, to our meeting. Stephnie's talk is entitled 'Behind the Scenes at Gardens Illustrated'. Saturday 13th December Liz Knight will talk on 'How to Make Wild Drinks', an appropriate subject for the approaching festive season.



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

Belle Vue
Park & Tea Room



What's On in November & December

And before we know it… it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!

We shall be closing early (2pm) on Christmas Eve just in case we need to take a last minute dash to the shops. We will open for the weekend on 27th and 28th at our regular time of 9.00am – 4.00pm and then we are closing for three days until 1st January 2026. It has been a busy year and we are ready for a rest. We hope this doesn't cause too much inconvenience to you.

Before then…

We saw in October that our crafters and makers have been busy making cards, gifts and floral displays. They will have many more on the two **Sunday November markets 7th & 21st** so get your orders in and buy those early gifts especially if you are having to post them!

Sunday December 7th 11.00am – 4.00pm

Christmas market packed full of gifts, food, arts and crafts for all the family. We are making this year extra special with a performance from the People's Show Choir from Newport. We also asked Santa to drop by and do the rounds. He will have a grotto on the mezzanine – if you can get around the mahoosive tree in the foyer and we heard the Grinch may make an appearance. It will be our celebration of the year and we hope you come along to join us.

Sunday December 14th Cream Tea with Santa.

Once again, we are setting up the conservatory with two sittings
12.00pm – 1.45pm and 2.30pm - 4.00pm.
Bookings will be via text or phone only to Jan on 07737 630657
Price: £12 per person over 2 years old. Book early to avoid disappointment.

The Team in Belle Vue wishes all of our regular and new customers a very merry and happy Christmas.

WHY NOT TRY ONE OF OUR AFTERNOON TEAS



Book online on www.bellevuetearoom.uk or phone Jan on 07737 630657.
We also offer tea gift vouchers which can be collected at the Tea Room or posted to you or another recipient (just added cost of a stamp).
Our function room is open for bookings for larger gatherings provided with catering (afternoon tea or buffet). Please note we welcome bunting and banners to make your day special, but we are committed to reducing our single use plastic therefore balloons and balloon arches are not allowed.
Our cancellation policy is available on our website and information given on booking.
Did you know that we have a Google review page (Belle Vue Park Tea Rooms) with consistent 4.5 out of 5 rating. This is great and demonstrates how good our customer service and offer is and we appreciate your lovely comments. The Park also has its Google Review page (Belle Vue Park Newport) and it shows that the Tea Room features heavily in the good reviews. That page is 4.6 out of 5. If you think we deserve a good review, please go onto the Google Review page.



If you have a complaint, or think we could improve our service, or, if you have advice you would like to give us, particularly on menu additions, then please get in touch via email to bookings@bellevuetearoom.uk We have a complaints and compliments policy and will always take your concerns very seriously.

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Part 3

Changes in Rogerstone

since 1974 when it officially became part of Wales

Industrial and Commercial Developments

During this period of change, the local economy was hit with the closure of the aluminium factory, the power station and the Asda supermarket but has been bolstered by industrial and commercial developments. Business parks, small and medium size shops and commercial centres have been established, providing employment opportunities and stimulating economic growth.

Heritage Sites

Efforts have been made to preserve Rogerstone's cultural and historical heritage. Heritage sites and historical landmarks have been maintained and restored. The 14 Locks project is an excellent example of these, allowing residents and visitors to appreciate the village's rich past. Another example is the small replica of the destroyed Chartists Mural to remember their march through Rogerstone. These preservation efforts ensure that Rogerstone's history remains an integral part of its identity.

Derek Picken

Asda, the first supermarket in Monmouthshire





Demolition of the Power Station in September 1991



Alcan Factory



One of the locks where the locals swam



Same lock in 2021



Replica of the Chartists Mural

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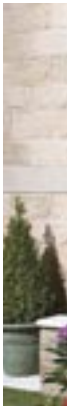
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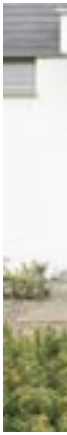
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