



Talybont Matters

Find this newsletter in full colour on <http://www.talybont.org/newsletter.html>



50th Issue

Summer 2015

Please send in articles!

- The newsletter will be published quarterly, at the end of January, April, July and October. All articles to be submitted by 20th of these months to appear in the next issue.
- Be a journalist, send in articles, news, and what's on in Talybont.
- Wherever possible your articles will be published in the next issue. However the editor reserves the right to edit articles or hold them back for subsequent issues should there be insufficient space in the current issue.

Advertise goods, services & activities

Free!

Many thanks to the volunteers who distribute this newsletter

Editor's Note

In compliance with the provisions of the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2013, this issue of Talybont Matters will be sent to the National Library of Wales for archiving as part of the Library's national collection.

Review of the key articles of all 50 editions!

As I prepare to pass the editorial reins to David, I have been looking through all the past issues of Talybont Matters, from its inception in March 2003. I thought this a good time to review and highlight the key events that have been featured.

It all kicked off with the need to communicate the looming threat of sand and gravel mining in the area. This campaign raged for 3 years until the proposal was finally quashed in 2006. 'Gareth's Patch' also featured on the back page for the next 26 issues!

There was great excitement when Talybont won the Welsh Village of the Year on 28 July 2003 - a special edition of TM was requested, which came out the very next day to report the good news! - Talybont went on to compete nationally but was unsuccessful.

There followed a community housing survey to inform the latest Local Development Plan; and the next big series of news stories were on the safety improvements to the A40 Junction, which first appeared in the newsletter in Autumn 2004 and finally ended with the planting scheme in Autumn 2007.

Talybont Water Treatment works followed, in the summer of 2007, causing managed disruption until it was completed in Nov 2008.

2008 also brought street lighting cuts by Powys CC - contentious at the time, but maybe indirectly leading to Talybont being recognised and declared the Dark Skies reserve it is today?

In March 2009 the canal reopened after repairs were completed: it had been closed between Llanover & Talybont following the large breach of Oct 2007.

Talybont Stores and Café, central to the village, has been renovated & changed hands twice since the first newsletter: Heather & Gary Vaughan, having been runners up in a Welsh PO award in 2004, sold it to Laura Kostoris in 2009, who sold it on to Rob & Regan in January 2012.

Broadband arrived in 2005: now, 10 years later with a fair wind, High-speed Broadband should be replacing it in the very near future.

The big success story brought about by energy-conscious residents has been the exploits of Talybont-on-Usk Energy, which was set up and had its first AGM on 28 Jan 2004. By 16 Feb 2006 turbines had

been installed in the dam wall, and they were selling electricity to the National Grid. This has funded multiple energy-saving initiatives, including free light bulbs for all, trials of electric bicycles, Henderson Hall has benefitted by being fitted with AV equipment for use by the community and, in March 2011, PV Panels on the roof. ToU Energy then helped to purchase 2 community cars: Mr Chips (bio-diesel) and Bluebell (electric), and the Community Car Club was born. Bluebell was later replaced by Heulwen in 2013.

In addition to the community cars, local eco-warriors launched the B-Bug, winning Welsh Green Dragons Den competition in summer 2010. They later developed the Eco Travel Network of Twizys in Summer 2012. ToU Energy continues to generate feed in tariffs by generating renewable energy and set up the Community Fund in Autumn 2013 to support local eco-projects, administered by the Community Council.

EU funding to BBNPA initiated a Sustainable Tourism Plan for Talybont in 2011, which led to the setting up of ToU Tourism Group and helped to fund the new interpretation panel, bench & website, studies for improvements to parking & bus services, and the recently developed Welcome Scheme.

Henderson Hall has hosted many events and group gatherings and its Committee came to the rescue in 2014 over the public toilets debacle, adapting its toilets for public use. Recycling bins have been introduced, and the play equipment rejuvenated. Annual events held there have been the Village Show, Christmas party, Bonfire night, Ceilidh/Twmpath, and regular meetings of many groups, which have included clubs: Tennis, Cricket, Hobbies, Book, Garden, 200, Business Breakfast; Brownies (1972 - 2014), Playgroup, Drama, Traditional Welsh Music, WI (in Talybont since 1934), First Aid training 2011, Bingo, Flicks, Tea and Chat, and Family Church. Other groups have been Friends of Talybont Reservoir, Community Woodland group, Joint oil buying group, Talybont Tombles, Dementia & Alzheimers support, and BRAG volunteers, funded by Dyfed Powys Police to improve security.

Outdoor activities featured have included the annual Tor-y-Foel race and Duck race, and 3 major celebrations in 2012: the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in June, the Canal 200 year centenary and the 50th anniversary of Royal Navy's Outdoor Leadership Training Centre in November.

(continued on Page 9)

TALYBONT ON USK
ENERGY YNNI
TALYBONT AR WYSG

Talybont-on-Usk Energy is
delighted to fund Talybont Matters



HENDERSON HALL

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Talybont Show
Sat 29 August

Flicks

Wednesdays 7.30pm:

5 Aug - 'Llo Llo'
(cert 12)

2 Sept - 'Gone Girl' (cert 18)

7 Oct - to be confirmed: 'Still Alice' (cert PG) + session for Alzheimers' support and information before film.

4 Nov - 'The Golden Dream' (cert 12)

REGULAR EVENTS

Short Family Church Service

1st Sunday each month
11am for approx 25 mins.

Playgroup

Mondays
10 - 12 am
Kirsty Carr

Tea and Chat

1st Monday in the month 3-4.30pm.
Cherry Jones 676232

Zumba Dance Class

every Tuesday 7:45pm
Heather Vaughan
Talybont Stores

Talybont Flicks

1st Wed each month
7.30pm
Clare Wright 676679

WI

2nd Wed each month
7pm - 10pm
Penny Morgan
01874 665283

Gardening Club

3rd Wed each month
7.30pm Sept to June.
Chair: Gareth Davies
01874 676200

Junior Tennis Club

Weds 5.30pm - 7.00pm
Margaret Cox
01874 676697
Sarah Osborne
01874 676633

Cricket Club

Contact Geraint James
01874 676272

Henderson Hall Contacts

Clare Wright (Temp. Chair) 676679 (Vice Chair - Vacant) Kirsten and Russell Jones (Treasurer) 676509
Shirley Hemmings (Caretaker) 676456 Sue Thorne (Bookings Secretary) 676293

Village Hall Recycling Area

We are having a real problem with not only the wrong things being tipped into the wrong containers, but also fly tipping. We could be in danger of losing this facility if this continues so do keep your eyes open for anyone leaving rubbish and if possible let someone from the hall know.
Many thanks for your help.

Talybont Show 29th August

Come along to this year's Talybont Show on Saturday 29th August!

There will be lots going on - something for all ages, including horticulture, domestic, fancy dress, sports, and much more. The show will be held at the usual venue of Henderson Hall.



Programmes are available from Talybont Stores, giving more details on the events planned for the day.

We hope to see you all - you will enjoy it!
Allan Jones

Canal Raft Race

A date for your diary:

**the afternoon of
SAT 12TH SEPTEMBER FOR
TALYBONT'S FIRST EVER RAFT RACE
ON THE CANAL**

which is being organised by Talybont Tourism. This is subject to getting approval from the Canals and Rivers Trust so please keep your eyes peeled.

Fingers crossed, teams of four will be invited to make a

raft and see who can navigate the course in the quickest time.

There will also be a prize for the most originally decorated raft. The race will be followed by a BBQ back at the village hall and is open to anyone who wants to join in.

Entry will be £20 per raft and information will be advertised by poster and on the village website www.talybontonusk.com so do keep looking. It's hoped that this may be back yearly by popular demand!

Clare Wright

Talybont WI extends a welcome to our newcomers

A sunny day on June 15th was the start date of the **WELCOME SCHEME** with the first Welcome box being presented to the last resident to move into the village before this date.

Talybont WI look forward to providing a WELCOME to residents who move in to our Community from now on.

Please be our eyes and ears, if someone new moves in to live near you please contact any member of the WI and we will be sure to take them a box.

We are very grateful to all those who have contributed to the scheme in any way.

If anyone still wants to add to our box with a product, an offer or to advertise please contact Sue 676293.

Sue Thorne

Talybont on Usk Tennis

We have had a very good season so far. The weather has been very kind to us, play on the outside courts being possible most Wednesdays.

On Sunday 5th July five residents in Maes Mawr Close opened their gardens to raise money for our court resurfacing fund and Vintage Strawberry Teas were served. This was well supported. Thank you to every one who attended.

Our thanks go to Brenda Powell, David Chalmers, Anne Jeans, Neville and Monique Danby for opening their gardens. Thank you to Pat Wilkie for organising the teas, and well done and thank you to Esther, Jessica and John Burdon, Mia Coakham, Cherry Jones, Skyla and Connie for their help during the afternoon.

Margaret Cox

Our Talybont Community Yesterday and Today

Following our initial request for photographs to illustrate our proposed booklet to record our community from the past to the present we urgently need more material.

What is required are good quality prints (coloured or black and white) or digital photographs.

These can range from the distant past right up to the present. Pictures of buildings, people, groups, organisations for young and old, teams, school classes and activities, events - e.g. the show, Jubilee, Millennium, weddings, bonfire night.

Anything that relates to our community would be most welcome.

Prints can be immediately scanned and returned with digital images transferred to a memory stick or emailed.

Please contact :

**Brenda Powell - 676639,
Sarah Osborne - 676633, or
John Jones - 676232**

John Jones

Powys waste and recycling update

Just a quick update on developments within waste and recycling in Powys:

- At the end of the financial year 2014/15 Powys achieved the statutory recycling 52% which we are delighted about and have thanked residents and traders using the recycling services for their efforts to date and to continue with their efforts.

However, the council needs to achieve a recycling rate of 58% in 2015/16 to meet the next statutory target and will need to improve its recycling rate further as there is still too much rubbish going to land-fill. This is a very expensive option for council tax payers which can be avoided if Powys residents make an effort to reduce, reuse and recycle their rubbish wherever possible.

- We have also been reviewing the materials that we collect to ensure that we recover as high a quality recycle as possible. The higher quality the material we collect the more income we will generate and less costs will be incurred during its recovery. One of the materials that causes great difficulties is plastic film. It is extremely difficult to find a market for, and also adds additional cost to the sorting process, for very little benefit.

Therefore, from the 1st of June the council will no longer collect plastic film - stretchy plastic items such as carrier bags, magazine wrappers and bags and bubble wrap at the kerbside or at recycling centres. Clean plastic bottles and tops, pots, tubs and food trays, food and drink cans, aluminium foil, metal bottle tops and jar lids and aerosol cans can still be recycled in your red plastic and cans box.

Most other Welsh local authorities do not collect plastic film because of the problems with its recovery. Plastic bags can be reused, used to line your rubbish bins at home, can be recycled at most supermarkets or placed in your wheeled bin.

- Powys County Council has also recently been announced as one of the top performing Welsh councils in an independent report into the Recycling Carbon Index for the UK for 2013/14. The report shows that the CO2 emissions savings from Powys County Council's waste and recycling services have increased by 2% since 2012/13 from a figure of 102 to 104 in 2013/14.

*Melanie Amor
Communications and Marketing Officer
(Highways, Transport & Recycling)*

Talybont Flicks

Our next Flicks night will be on **Wed 5th August at 7.30pm**. It will be **'Llo Llo'** - certificate 12 - Brimming with love, humour and heartbreak, 'Llo Llo' centres on the inseparable bond between a 10 year old Singaporean boy and his Filipina nanny while the boy's parents struggle to weather the 1997 Asian financial crisis. This is a real gem of a movie. Mandarin with English subtitles. (running time 1 hour 35 mins)
Hope to see you and please do feel free to bring along any friends or family.

The up-coming programme of films for the next few months is as follows:

- September 2nd: 'Gone Girl'** - cert 18 - film of Gillian Flynn's best selling book. A tense thriller.
- October 7th: 'Still Alice'** - cert PG - remarkable story about a brilliant professor with early onset Alzheimers'. To be confirmed, but a session for support and information will be run in conjunction with the film for anyone who wants to come before the film showing.
- November 4th : 'The Golden Dream'** - cert 12 - a powerful and award winning film following 3 teenagers attempt to get in to America through Mexico.
Clare Wright

Talybont WI

Meets the 2nd Wednesday
of each month
7-10pm at Henderson Hall

Newcomers Welcome!

Secretary Penny Morgan: 665283

Programme:

August: No meeting

Sept 9: Penny Nelson.

'How does a child become looked after?'

Competition: A favourite old toy.

Oct 14: Marie Pope. 'Paper cutting'

Competition: A handmade card.

Nov 11: AGM

Llangynidr Farmers' and Producers' Market

**Don't miss the
Llangynidr Show:
August 30th!**

Sept 27

Oct 25

There are tables available at the market if you feel you would like one.

Contact Jenny Thomson

jterwbant@hotmail.com



Businesses - Help is at hand to get Superfast Broadband!

Are you interested in applying for up to £3,000 to boost your business's broadband?

WHAT? Up to £3,000 is available to cover the installation costs of upgrading to a faster and more reliable connection for your business. You could get a fibre optic, cable or wireless broadband connection among other options. Most businesses pay nothing but VAT and their standard monthly charges.

WHO? Small and medium sized businesses in Powys including home-based businesses, sole traders registered charities and social enterprises.



Department
for Culture
Media & Sport

**SUPERFAST
BRITAIN**



WHY? Over 22,000 businesses in 50 cities across the UK are already benefiting from the scheme.

By upgrading, you too could:

- ◆ Do things faster - increase your business's productivity
- ◆ Improve customer service
- ◆ Reduce software and hardware costs by helping you switch to online data storage solutions.

To find out more information, visit:

www.connectionvouchers.co.uk/city/cardiff

Reminisce Boxes

It is increasingly difficult to communicate with people diagnosed with dementia as the disease progresses. Short term memories disappear but often long term memories stay intact for a long time and triggers are needed to act as a prompt. This is where reminisce or memory boxes are very good tools as they can stimulate conversation and recall past experiences.

The Alzheimers Society has recently started a session on a Tuesday morning for people with dementia and their carers in Brecon. It has proved very popular and a much needed service. We would like to get some boxes together that can also be used in local care homes or loaned to families.

The items used in the boxes are artefacts from childhood or young adulthood.

I am in the process of putting boxes together using the topics of WASHDAY, MENS SHEDS, GARDENING, KITCHEN and BAKING, HEALTH and BEAUTY, TOYS and GAMES, ENTERTAINING and the 1940/50/60's.

If you are having a clear out, emptying a house or have items that you would like to donate please could you contact me and I can arrange collection. Thank you.

Cherry Jones 676232



Congratulations to two budding athletes!

Congratulations to Jessica Burdon and Arthur Bell - they are Talybont children who go to Llangynidr Primary school and they were awarded best girl and best boy in the whole of the juniors for gaining the most points at sports day!

Anna Bell



*Cheerio!
It's been
good. Enjoy it!*

Contact details for
Talybont Matters' new editor:
David Meacham
talybont@pickledegg.org.uk



“Talybont Tombles”

Since the last issue of Talybont Matters our group has been extremely busy by meeting and “picking” on 2 separate occasions - in May and July. We felt it necessary to meet more frequently in order to keep the litter under control for our local residents and visitors to the area and think this is the best way forward. On both occasions our intrepid litter pickers were busy covering the usual areas of the village with their gloves, litter picker sticks, brown bags, hoops, and for those on the road yellow high visibility jackets. The usual areas were covered - the Recycling area, the immediate Hall surroundings including the playing field, and children’s playground, the front and back of the OAP bungalows, the canal towpath in both directions, and the main road through the village in both directions including Station Road.

The group were recently awarded funding from Talybont Energy Group and I purchased additional Litter Pickers/Grabbers for adults and children, more Hoops, Storage Bags, and Children’s Gloves. In addition we have had some special signs made which are erected after a Litter Pick session which we hope will encourage residents and visitors not to drop anything within our area and we hope

this works!! The signs are now being used in the Talybont-on-Usk and the Scethrog area. A Photoshoot took place showing the additional new equipment just prior to our July group setting off. Unfortunately not all of our regulars were able to attend due to holidays but we had 2 new “pickers” and it is encouraging that our enthusiastic group is growing!! My thanks to all who regularly turn out and assist

Our very grateful thanks to Talybont Energy for their ongoing help and support and to the local Community Council in helping to arrange the appropriate Insurance cover which unfortunately in this day and age is required.

**Our next date will be
Sat 5th Sept., meeting outside
the Shop/Post Office at 10 am.
Please come along
and join us!**

I would like to thank all my volunteers for their invaluable help in trying to keep our delightful village clean and tidy. If there are any groups or individuals who would



like to borrow the equipment at any time please let me know - you can then choose your own date to go “out and about”.

It is disappointing to see the unwanted household items that are just left behind the recycling bins in the Hall Car park – any unwanted items should be disposed of by the individuals concerned and not merely “dumped” hoping that someone else will clear up after them!!!

Sandra Briskham (Organiser) Tel 676297





The ENERGISER

*THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
TALYBONT on USK ENERGY GROUP*

2014 / 2015 Talybont Energy Highlights

info@talybontenergy.co.uk

www.talybontenergy.co.uk

Company Limited by Guarantee - Company No. 5047317

How's the turbine going?

In the past year, Welsh Water has changed the flow regime through our turbine in order to maintain water levels in the reservoir. As a result, our total production is about 20% lower than the pre-2013 average. In 2014, we generated 160,124kWh. The first 5 months of 2015 has reached 98,008 kWh (10% higher than 2014). Based on an average domestic electricity consumption of 3,300kWh, our turbine's 2014 production is equivalent to the electricity used by about 50 houses.

This year, we've been recording and displaying on our website energy generated by other (mostly domestic) installations in our community. Totals suggest about 60,000 kWh/year from these. Together with the Talybont turbine, that's currently about 17% of the electricity consumed by our community. Do get in touch with us if you are generating electricity via solar or hydro so we can include your contribution to making our Talybont community more self sufficient in electricity!

In February, our turbine featured in BBC's 'Escape to the Country' along with the Eco Travel Network Twizys.

Eco pod youth shelter

Talybont Energy provided funding via the Council to the Talybont Community Recreational Group for a youth shelter where people can sit, chill out and play i-pod music (powered by winding a handle!). This is now installed in the playing fields.

*Some older "youth" enjoying
the wind-up music*



Projects funded via the Talybont Community Council

For the 2nd year running, Talybont Energy donated a proportion of its income to the Talybont Community Council for them to offer as grants for wider community projects and activities. These have helped fund a community defibrillator, a trip for young people to Techniquet in Cardiff, a wheelbarrow gardening project for children, the community woodland group and the Friends of Talybont Reservoir. Talybont Tombles Litter Pick Group received a grant to purchase additional Litter Pick equipment and we have also continued to help fund Talybont Matters.

Talybont Energy Directors are all volunteers. We seek to deploy the turbine income to help reduce our community's energy consumption, to generate more renewable energy and to educate and have fun together.

We always welcome project ideas and involvement from other members of our community.



Community van – fully loaded for an art project

Community Car Share

Our 2 zero carbon vehicles continue to be shared and used.

Mr Chips, who runs on recycled vegetable oil, travels far and wide and Heulwen, our roomy electric van is charged via Henderson Hall's solar PV and comes in particularly handy for anyone needing to carry a load – even if it's just to the recycling centre. Other people are amazed that our small community has shared vehicles for folks to use.

In 5 years, the vehicles have done a total of 96,000 'zero carbon' miles saving ~33 tonnes CO2 (once the shared journeys are calculated).

If you sometimes need an extra car or need a van to carry a load, get in touch with us to find out how to join the scheme. .

Education

Hilary Williams has delivered Talybont Energy's Key Stage 2 educational package (based on the turbine and associated activities) to Crickhowell and Llangynidr Primary Schools. This package is available to any local school.

Earlier this year, we offered sponsorship for local adults wishing to take short courses in sustainable energy or sustainable building techniques. Sadly, we had only one applicant. We are also exploring ways to offer potential student placements in local sustainable energy companies through links with local school 6th forms. If any such local company can offer such placements,

Eco Award for Cubs

This year has seen an exciting new collaboration between Talybont Energy and 1st Llangynidr Cubs.

Working with Talybont Energy Directors, Michael Wright and Hilary Williams, the cub leaders have developed possibly the UK's first ever Community Eco Award for cubs.

This has involved the cubs and Talybont Energy in a turbine visit, numerous activity and educational packages, an entertaining activity and educational evening with the High Sheriff of Powys and, finally, a celebration and badge awards presented to the cubs by Hilary in May.

It's been a challenging and stimulating exercise for all parties and the Llangynidr Scout group is now keen to develop Stage 2 of the badge with our help.



Learning about turbines together with the High Sheriff of Powys

Carwyn Scott-Howell

As the majority of the community know my 7 year old son Carwyn died in April this year. As you can imagine our lives have been in turmoil since. At the time of writing this I have returned to Flaine France to try and get some danger markers and basic run markers to mark this run that is 100 meters from an unmarked cliff.

I cannot thank the Talybont community enough for the tremendous support and continuing support they have given my family since this tragedy.

A very big THANK YOU goes out to the friends I have made during my nine years in the community and others in the community who I have never had the pleasure of meeting, Community groups who made pretty flowers posies for the tables and other groups who helped bake and arrange.

There are some special Individuals some I have yet to meet and thank personally, who cooked and baked for days to help turn the hardest time of my life into a celebration of Carwyn's life.

Thank you also for the continuing support of individuals and groups in the community who are helping me through each day! Words cannot express thank you enough!

Ceri Scott-Howell



A morning with Billy Brag

I recently noticed a brief entry on calendar one Thursday, 'Phil out with Billy Brag'. On the basis that this was probably something I had been volunteered for, I made a brief enquiry with my wife, and was informed that Billy Brag is not in fact a person but Billy is the man who is involved with the BRAG (Brecon Rural Action Group) scheme. Essentially this is a scheme to involve the community in supporting the police and National Park rangers to prevent crime. I was to spend a few hours with Andy Pole, one of our local police force on Saturday morning as part of the scheme.

I confess to a slight apprehension at this news and briefly mentally reviewed all my previous misdemeanors, not finding anything that might have been recently discovered I proceeded to the matter of dress for the day. I was keen on a full SAS black outfit with accompanying hoodie; I was, however, quickly told not to be a 'prat' and find a clean shirt.

Andy kindly picked me up at 10am the Saturday morning in the car. Introductions were made and we set off up the Glyn. I suddenly noticed myself giving everyone a rather queen-like wave. I think this stemmed from a slight anxiety at being seated in the front of a police car; I knew I wasn't a drug-dealer / shoplifter/elderly terrorist, but did the rest of the village appreciate this? I quickly abandoned the regal salute and settled for a fixed if rather demented grin until only the sheep could see me.

We drove up past the reservoir and Andy explained the purpose of the scheme: essen-

tially to provide a visible police presence in conjunction with the community to reduce particularly car crime. We stopped at all the car parks, looked in the parked cars to see if any valuables had been left visible, 'sat navs' being the most common - a brief letter would later alert the owners to the risks. You can learn a lot about people by looking in their cars. Some are so clean you could eat a meal off the seats; some packed to the gunnels with what can only be described as 'crap', anyone breaking in likely to succumb to a serious infection a short while later. I suspect the most valuable component of the morning was simply talking to those out enjoying the hills. We met a couple of ladies from Aberdare, various children and dogs, lost or otherwise.

At the next stop we spotted a beautiful Kawasaki touring bike. I thought this was likely the advance guard of the Brecon Hells Angels chapter. Bravery not being one of my abiding attributes, I quickly positioned myself behind Andy as its owner and his partner approached. I was relieved to find a gentleman of some considerable age, immaculately decked out in biker leather jacket and sporting a silver pony-tail and modest paunch. He and his friends knew the area as servicemen years previously and were revisiting the scene of past adventures. A fascinating conversation around the railway ensued.

Next stop, Andy says we can have some fun: Taser practice. "Fantastic", I say, thinking perhaps I missed a trick with the SAS outfit. "OK, line them up out of their cars", he says "and simply ask them their names and where they come from. To operate, you just pull the

trigger, like this", he says, narrowly missing Jones the tourist. I ask the first one where he comes from: "Brett from Fosters", is the reply. I look across, a nod, "Zap him", a hiss, some smoke and some twitching; job done. Next one: "Name please?" - "Patrick from McCaffrey" comes the tremulous reply. A nod (apparently must be seen to be treating all nationalities fairly and equitably) and a hiss; two down. I am on a roll now, electricity surging through my body. Third one: "Where do you live?" - "Pontsticill", "posh Merthyr"; says my host: "Zap him".

Please note-this last paragraph is of course pure fantasy! I think based on a recurring fantasy of getting mother-in-law in the sights of such a weapon and rendering her incapable of speech at least for a few hours!!

More seriously, I had a very interesting morning. Andy and his colleagues do a fantastic job and it is a pleasure to support them. Initial results do suggest an impact in reducing car related thefts. It is increasingly rare to meet the police in a relaxed atmosphere doing this type of crime prevention. The universally positive reaction we got from the public makes me hope that this and other similar initiatives will flourish. I would certainly encourage others to take part.

Mike Bugler as chair of the Community Council is looking for volunteers and anyone interested should contact Mike or Katy (Clerk to the council) on katytutt1976@googlemail.com

Phil Darbyshire

Review of the key articles of all 50 editions! (continued from Front Page)

Two heritage walking routes have been upgraded: the Brinore Tramroad and the Henry Vaughan walk, and various articles on local and natural history included.

The churches too have seen changes. Canon Peter Jackson was followed by Andy Robinson, recently replaced by Kelvin Richards. Of the buildings themselves, Llanfeugan bells were rejuvenated in 2003, Llansantffraed given a new roof in 2008, and its floor and Henry Vaughan's grave were restored in 2014.

The Community Council, - first clerked by Peter Seaman and, after he retired in Spring 2012 after 16 years in service, by Katy Tutt - have been very supportive throughout; as has Talybont-on-Usk Energy, who in later years have provided most of the funding. In addition to funding, their support has included sending in articles where they had relevant announcements to make, and also keeping their ears to the ground and prompting others to write about things they felt may be of interest to the wider community.

In July 2011 I undertook a Talybont Matters Readers review survey at the request of the Community Council and ToU Energy, who were funding it. We received very positive and constructive feedback by readers, some of whom said they would be happy to receive a digital version of the newsletter. Following this, we decided to combine it with the ToU Energy's newsletter - which had been running in parallel, also a quarterly issue inserted into Talybont Matters - and merged the two together into one in Autumn 2012, the centre pages being reserved for 'The Energiser'.

A colour version pdf of the newsletter is now emailed to those on the mailing list and regularly published to the 2 Talybont websites and this way reaches beyond the boundaries of the Talybont-on-Usk, Aber, Buckland, Llansantffraed, Pencelli and Scethrog communities to whom the printed copies are still provided, thanks to the loyal volunteers who distribute them. A complete set of issues to date has also been sent to the

National Library for Wales where they are held as part of its national archive collection.

Over the years much has been achieved in by individuals, businesses and by enterprising residents and groups carrying out local initiatives. Numerous awards have been won and personal achievements acknowledged, both in honour of the living and the deceased. Knowledge of local history and wildlife has been shared through the newsletter interesting anecdotes written about for others to read, and adverts placed to promote local products and services.

Being the editor of this newsletter has been a very enjoyable journey for me, especially since I have been doing it from its inception. I have watched it grow from small beginnings, thanks largely to the energy and contributions of all those who have written the myriad of interesting and informative articles, and I wish it, and its new editor David Meacham, every success in the future.

Claire Gray, Editor

Thomas Melville Budden, known as Mel of Scethrog



Residents of Scethrog were most saddened to learn that Mel of Scethrog had passed away.

He was a much loved member of the Scethrog community. He grew up in one part of what is now Brynhyfryd (then 2 cottages) and Margaret Probert of Pentre was a young girl in the other cottage. He lived all his life in Scethrog, never marrying but always willing to chat and observe. We always referred to Mel as the 'Mayor of Scethrog' such was his love for our village and the special attention that he gave it. He was the 'unofficial neighbour watch' - not a vehicle could drive through without Mel passing a frowning look at it.

For years he voluntarily strimmed the verges in the village. This was quite a sight. Mel used a red

protective helmet and face guard when he was strimming that always appeared to be 5 sizes too small for his head. The site of this large man with a smoky strimmer and little

red helmet concentrating deeply on the verge in front of him was memorable. Nothing though would be touched though till his verge side daffs were ready for cutting down. He was widely known across the area having been employed at various times as a farm hand and 'lengthman' on the roads.

In his retirement he would enjoy Friday or Saturday evening trips to the Con Club in Brecon to meet up with his chums, and many will recollect Mel standing on the A40 at Scethrog knowing that someone would pass who knew him and offer him a lift into Brecon. He would get a taxi back, and almost be 'emptied' onto the pavement outside his bungalow.

Mel can also claim to be featured in a famous photograph from the front page of the Daily Mirror. He carried this paper cutting with him albeit a bit grubby and folded and which showed him leaning on shovel staring into the big hole left by the Army explosive lorry blowing up in 1950's. Bits of the engine of the lorry were found 100 of yards away but thankfully the driver and his colleague had escaped uninjured by the skin of their teeth.

He had a fall in his bungalow in early June was admitted to Neville Hall hospital where he passed away 3 weeks later. He was 82 years old and leaves a sister Lorraine who lives in Derby. Scethrog will miss him dearly.

Peter Seaman

Wildlife from on foot—a nature walk from Talybont

This is one of the popular walks in our Brec-on series and today was probably one of the best walks I have had in the beautiful Usk Valley with an excellent diversity of birds and plants. Read what delights were on offer today.

Our walk began from the Star Inn public house in the village of Tal-y-Bont and species seen included Swallows, Blackbirds, Woodpeckers, House Sparrows, Dunnock, Blue Tits, Ravens and Chaffinches. The route took me onto the Henry Vaughan Walk and the Brinore Tramroad. This part of the route is flanked by high hedgerows overlooking open fields and escarpments and there were plenty of flowers on show such as Field Speedwell, Wild Hop, Red Campion, Meadowsweet, Common Cleavers, Greater Stitchwort and Rose Bay Willow-herb - the latter is also known as Fireweed in reference to its ability to grow once the ground has either been burnt or disturbed. The seeds can lay dormant for many years waiting for such occasions.

Carrion Crows, Robin, Blackcaps, numerous singing Wrens, Chiffchaffs, Mistle Thrush and Pied wagtails were also seen as the path took me into the forestry section. Mature European Larch, Norway Spruce, Sitka Spruce and Birch dominated the scene and Coal Tits, Song Thrush, Jay and Nuthatches were all heard. Speckled Wood butterflies were enjoying the sunny glades and there was an abundance of Hart's Tongue Fern growing on the banks - a good indicator of limestone. As the Brinore Tramroad opened up slightly to reveal more open spaces, Bullfinches, a Common Redstart and a Common Buzzard was heard. The tramroad was opened in 1815 and was an early horse-drawn and gravity powered modern railway linking the coal-fields of Tredegar with the limestone quarries of Trefil. Many features of this past heritage can be seen along this section of the walk.

Soon I left the forestry and walked into open fields surrounded by mountains with views over the valleys beyond. Willow Warblers were the first species to be heard along with two more Common Redstarts which were chasing each other, flyover Lesser Black-backed Gulls, singing Skylarks and several Linnets. The fields of long grass swayed gently to and fro in the breeze and interspersed with the grasses was White Clover, Meadow Buttercups, Pignuts, Meadowsweet and Field Speedwell. Several Herring Gulls flew overhead as did a small group of noisy Rooks. A Tree Pipit displayed climbing quickly to a good height then calling as it spiralled down to land skilfully on the top of a bush.



Banded Demoiselle Damselfly

The open hillside looks beautiful in the strong sunlight with patches of mature Birch interspersed with Hawthorn and Blackthorn and the occasional Rowan (Mountain Ash). A small spring gently flowed alongside the path where Water Forget Me Nots was growing in dense clumps taking advantage of this little but important water source. The gentle yellow flowers of Tormentil grew in their own areas close to patches of Foxgloves and small clumps of Gorse. A Great Spotted Woodpecker flew past as did several family groups of Linnets, a family group of Chiffchaffs, several Long Tailed Tits, another displaying Tree Pipit and a Chaffinch which perched to sing on a bare branch only to be chased off by a Goldcrest which despite its small size (9 grammes in weight) obviously felt confident and brave.

As I walked into the area known as Bwlch-y-Waun I had a nice view of a pair of Ring Ouzels which was a lovely surprise. They are very similar to our Blackbirds but the male in particular has a distinctive white collar, less so in the female. A family group of Stonechats was flying around the dense Bracken. A stop under a Hawthorn tree for lunch with views over an escarpment gave me more Common Buzzards, Ravens and a pair of Red Kites. Common Swifts were aerial feeding close by. After lunch and some tea I headed slowly downhill into the valley watching more Tree Pipts, House Martins, Pheasants and Goldfinches as I walked. A telegraph pole in the field below held a pair of Stock Doves which was nice to see. The vegetation changed slightly now with Foxglove being the dominant species with patches of Heath Bedstraw below and several clumps of Spear Thistles in the fields.

As I walked past a disused barn I stopped to watch a pair of Spotted Flycatchers on a fence darting off quickly to catch an unsuspecting fly before returning to the same perch. A nice group of Navelwort was growing close by. Another Red Kite was seen overhead. I always check inside the barn hoping one day to find a roosting Owl but so far luck has not been on my side. The valley holds numerous barns - maybe they are in one of those?

Finally the valley descended onto the canal for the return back to the village with a family group of Pied Wagtails seen feeding on a manure pile. Feather remains of a young Tawny Owl were found which was a surprise and left me wondering how it had met this sad end? A Treecreeper was calling from a Birch copse and a Magpie called overhead. The canal itself was still apart from the ripples left by a few passing barges, but the bankside vegetation was full of species of Umbellifers including Hemlock Water Dropwort and Cow Parsley. Broad Leaved Willowherb grew alongside Meadowsweet, Hemp Agrimony, Mugwort and Yellow Flag Iris.

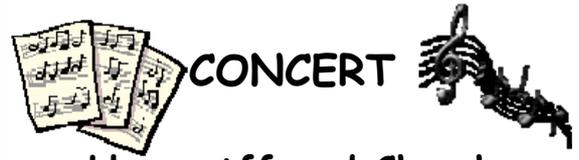
A Fritillary was briefly seen but it disappeared before a positive identification could be made. This was not the case however with a Banded Demoiselle Damselfly fluttering around and landing on the nearby foliage without a care in the world. Speckled Wood and Small White butterflies were also seen. A Grey Wagtail preening itself was the last species to be seen on this very memorable and species rich walk.

Neville Davies

Neville Davies's website
www.ecologycymru.co.uk
has had a complete overhaul
and looks great—take a look!

Neville is looking to do a
bird identification course
in Crickhowell
in August
if anyone is interested

(see the website for details)



CONCERT
Llansantffraed Church
Saturday 10th October
7:30pm

Aberhonddu Male Voice Choir
and local soloists,

Tickets £8
to include light refreshments

Members of Brecon U3A

Cordially invite you to a vintage style

Coffee Morning 10.30—12 noon £2.50

Cream Tea 2.30—4.30pm £5.00

Thursday, 6th August

**** Raffle Books Plants Bric a Brac ****

To take place in the garden of:

15 Maesmawr Close, Talybont on Usk, LD3 7JG

All proceeds to benefit:

Community Action Nepal (CAN)

CAN is a UK charity whose aim is to help the mountain people
of Nepal. It was founded by Doug Scott CBE, who in 1975
made the first British ascent of Everest. It is supported by
mountaineers & mountain lovers from across the globe.

CAN is responding to the devastating earthquakes. They hope to
help rebuild the lives of Nepal's mountain people.

Can Registered Charity Number: 1067772

**** Parking available at Talybont Market ****

Newsletter for Talybont-on-Usk,
Aber, Buckland, Llansantffraed,
Pencelli and Scethrog

Produced by: **Acer Trading Ltd.**
Retiring Editor: Claire Gray
New Editor: David Meacham

For future issues, please send
articles & contact details to
the new Editor:
David Meacham
Email:
talybont@pickledegg.org.uk



Talybont-on-Usk website:
<http://talybontonusk.com>

Talybont Community Council website:
<http://www.talybont.org>

Talybont-on-Usk Energy website:
<http://www.talybontenergy.co.uk>

Church News

Dear Friends

This is just a brief note to thank everyone from our churches and communities who have given me such a warm and kind welcome since I arrived here in Talybont last May.

I am slowly working my way through visiting and taking services at each church, but with eleven churches in total in both the Usk Valley and around Llangors Lake it's taking a while! But don't worry, I will get there...

With best wishes
Kelvin

"We plough the fields and scatter..."

During these lazy long days of holidays and Summer sunshine (well in theory!) it's perhaps odd to start thinking about the days getting shorter and Autumnal chills, but they'll soon be upon us, and with them our thoughts turn to Harvest Thanksgiving. At the time of writing we haven't yet finalised the pattern of our Harvest Services in the various churches, but when we do shortly you will find full details on the community website at <http://www.talybont.org/church-services.html> and on the church noticeboards.

Kelvin Richards

FAMILY CHURCH

11 am IN HENDERSON HALL - FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

SUNDAY 2nd AUGUST - *The Bread of Life*
SUNDAY 6th SEPTEMBER - *People who are different*



½ HOUR OF FUN, SONGS & COFFEE!

ALL WELCOME (YOUNG & NOT-SO-YOUNG)



TALYBONT-ON-USK & DISTRICT GARDENING ASSOCIATION



We are a very informal group with regular speakers & garden trips out during summer months. Indoor meetings are held in the Henderson Hall, always ending up with tea, coffee and biscuits!!



7:30 pm at the Hall
NEW MEMBERS ALWAYS WELCOME
- JUST COME ALONG!

Saturday 29th August: Talybont Show Day
EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Wednesday 16th September: Show Discussion and Reports

Friday 23rd October: Keith Noble, Brecon: slides and talk on
"Wildlife in My Garden"

For any further information please contact either the
Chairman: Mr Gareth Davies 01874 676200 or the
Secretary: Mrs Sandra Briskham 01874 676297



I am Liz Bramley. Let me introduce myself as your new Deacon (last on right)



My family moved to Llanhamlach in 1960; I thought I had got away when I moved to London as a student, married Mervyn and lived and worked in England and abroad with our 3 children. However, we were very happy to "retire" here when my mother died.

I will serve on the team for the 11 churches of the Beacons Benefice and Llyn Safaddan, where I have been a Lay Reader for some years.

What does a Deacon do? 'Serve' is the key word, in all kinds of ways, so it is a very broad job description, and includes laying the table for Communion and clearing up afterwards, which has a familiar ring! At work I have always been a language teacher, and hope to help people talk more confidently to God – and to listen!

Liz Bramley

