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

Talybont Matters

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

Editorial

We are certainly living through unusual and challenging times at the moment and, as I sit down to edit the latest edition of Talybont Matters, we are looking at a few more weeks in our lockdown period aimed at bringing the Covid 19 virus under control.

As a result, this edition will be an online version only. It will be impossible to get our usual 350 copies printed and subsequently distributed by our volunteers. So could I ask that, if you are able, please could you forward a copy to friends or family who you think may not be on my email list.

It has certainly been a challenge over the past few weeks although I personally cannot think of a better place to be forced to stay than here, in the Brecon Beacons. I have also been bowled over by the fantastic community spirit that is being displayed. Here in Pencelli everyone is mucking in and generally coping well. Our Thursday night **Clap for Carers** brings out the whole village and a particular thank you to Howard Morgan for his NHS support displays as he drives through the village in an array of decked out farm vehicles.

Hopefully by the time this edition is published we will be nearing some lifting of the restrictions but, in the meantime, stay safe and, if anyone needs help please do not hesitate to contact the support groups that have been set up around the area.

Richard Abram

Help is at Hand

My name is Keren Bender and I am the Clerk for the Talybont-on-Usk Community Council.

I am co-ordinating support from the Community Council for those in isolation or in need of support during the Coronavirus pandemic.

We currently have over 50 volunteers from the Community Council area. We cover Aber, Pencelli and Talybont villages, Llandetty, Llanfeugan, Llansantffraed, Scethrog and all bits in between.

If you need groceries delivered, a prescription picked up, an errand run or just a chat, please get in touch. By contacting the number below I can allocate one of our fantastic volunteers to help.

We are coordinating with Talybont stores to get in vital supplies and we can also pick up from Brecon.

It's absolutely no trouble so, if you, or anyone you know, wants support, please

RING 07814 513455

Email kerenbender1@gmail.com

Thank you Keren

Issue 69
Spring 2020

Many thanks to the volunteers and Talybont Stores who help in the distribution of this newsletter. Also to the individuals, groups and societies who have contributed articles for this edition.

THE VILLAGE IN LOCKDOWN

When my wife and I went out to Africa in early March Covid 19 was just starting to get into the news, a few cases in the UK, certainly no suggestion of the events to come. We just managed to escape Africa before the airlines stopped flying, returning to a different world.

The lockdown had just been put in place, many shops were shut, all pubs and restaurants closed, areas of the National Park out of bounds and people fighting over toilet roll, pasta and cleaning products. Schools were closed and many families were and remain fearful for their older members who have been told to remain completely isolated. Thankfully at least some of the combat now seems to have stopped.

The community responded quickly in line with the new guidelines, and with local advice from our Councillor Liam Fitzpatrick. The village hall was closed, with all its activities that involve groups of people essentially stopped at present. The car park is closed and the recycling facilities are not in use. The Community Council has closed the children's play area but the playing field remains accessible for those people who want to use it for their daily exercise in line with government guidelines. The external toilets are still open as is the bike wash. At the time of writing, just after the Easter bank holiday these arrangements seem to be proving to be satisfactory. There are local people exercising on the field in ones and twos, there have been occasional larger groups but by and large these are local people and larger families, there was little evidence of any influx of visitors to the village over the bank holiday. The external toilets are still being used half a dozen times during the week, the bike wash not at all. There is the occasional clink of glass as someone creeps in to deposit a bottle in the bottle bank but overall as you would expect people are respecting these lockdown guidelines. We think these measures are working satisfactorily at present and do not propose to change them until or unless circumstances change.

Billy Dunne, our Community Police Officer is calling in most days and I have asked him just to keep an eye on the Hall and field when he is in the village.

Keren Bender on behalf of the community council has been active in organising support for members of our community who have been advised to remain completely isolated. Keren is co-ordinating support for those in isolation or in need of support for Talybont-on-Usk Community Council during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

There are over 50 volunteers from the Community Council area. They cover Aber, Pencelli and Talybont Villages, Llandetty, Llanfeugan, Llansantffraed, Scethrog and all the isolated homes and farms within that area.
If you need a prescription picked up, groceries delivered or just a chat please get in touch.
Keren is working closely with Rob and Regan at Talybont Village Stores to get essential supplies to residents, pick up can also be arranged from Brecon. If anyone needs assistance or anyone is aware of someone who has slipped through the net do contact Keren on , kerenbender1@gmail.com , 07814513455 ,it is essential that we all contribute to efforts to keep all members of our community safe.

I have only received one complaint, that being a Facebook survey conducted by the village dogs. One retired greyhound who declined to leave his name commented that he was beginning to look like a Dachshund. Several animals were about concerned about weight loss, and one animal said he has had to stop his owner several times from automatically heading down the track off the canal towpath and trying to go into the Star Inn.

More seriously it does seem that life will not return to anything approaching normal for some months, as you would expect the village has responded in a caring and responsible way. We can only applaud the efforts of our local volunteers, more widely NHS staff and other key workers in keeping us safe, they are doing a fantastic job at times at some considerable personal risk. Certainly, talking to my family in the West Midlands and London we are rather better off here than in many other parts of the UK. On behalf of the Hall committee and Community Council thanks to all of you for adhering to the lockdown guidelines , for continuing to support those in the village who require it and for trying to do so in reasonably good humour.

Phil Darbyshire on behalf of Hall committee
Keren Bender on behalf of Community Council

Preserving the Past and Securing the Future of Henderson Hall

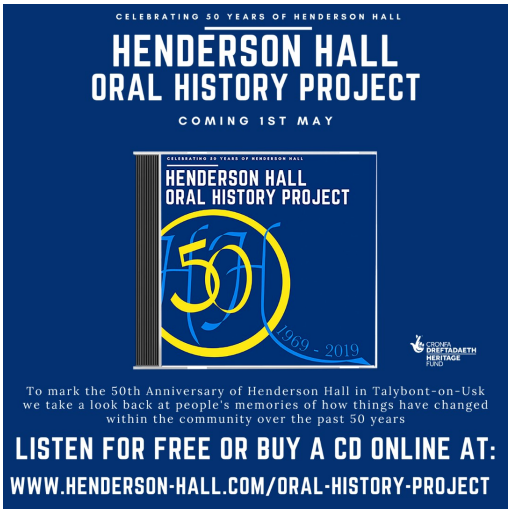
As many of you will be aware, the National Lottery Heritage funded Storyboard and Oral History project was due to be launched on Sunday 19th April, with the Storyboard permanently sited in the Hall and the interview recordings released. We were on track! The consultation on the Storyboard had taken place at the end of February, with over 50 people from the community coming along to see the proposed design and wording and giving us their thoughts and comments. These had then been relayed to the designer, Jon Dixon, who had made the changes, and was preparing for the installation and the printing of 1000 accompanying leaflets. Then, sadly, it all came to a temporary halt.

The Oral History project was a bit more dramatic! The interview recordings took place on the weekend of Storm Dennis, with the interviewees battling the elements and making huge efforts to be there. Working alongside Tim Jones, a local media director, and the technical wizardry of Scott Goodsell, seventeen interviews have now been completed, bringing together a rich range of memories, experiences and personal stories about the Hall. A very big thank you to everyone who took part.

As it has become increasingly evident that the lockdown could go on for some time, with community gatherings unlikely to be allowed for a while, we have decided to re-frame our thinking around the celebratory launch and give the community something positive to focus on that reflects the on-going strength of community spirit which has sustained Talybont village and its surrounds over the years. Whilst the installation of the Storyboard is beyond our control, the plan now is to 'stream' the Oral History interviews online in a number of ways which can be accessed via the Henderson Hall website http://henderson-hall.com/oralhistoryproject.

If you would like a physical copy of the interviews, CDs can be pre-ordered on the Henderson Hall website for £2.00 each, to be collected from Talybont Stores. For those living at a distance, there is also a delivery service
https://oralhistoryproject2020.square.site/

Please be aware that due to the current lockdown restrictions, there may be some delay before the CDs are prepared. If you pre-order through our website, you will receive an email notification when your CD is ready for collection. We encourage you to follow the Government guidelines and only pick up your purchase if you are already visiting Talybont Stores for essential supplies. CDs will also be available to buy directly from Talybont Stores in due course.



We hope you enjoy – and are inspired!

Rhiannon Davies on behalf of the Working Group

Tel: 676617 rhiannon.aber@btinternet.com

Mars Bar Crispy Squares

With the current shortage of flour for baking, this is a no bake recipe using Rice Krispies. It is popular with WI members and their families.

3 Standard size Mars Bars
80 grams butter
2 tablespoons golden syrup
225 grams Rice Krispies
200gm chocolate for top (optional)

1) Grease swiss roll type tray - or square tin
2) Cut Mar Bars into small pieces and melt very slowly in saucepan with butter and golden syrup stirring to mix well
3) Add Rice Krispies and combine
4) Put into tin and press flat
5) Leave to cool
6) Melt chocolate and spread on top if wanted.
7) When set cut into squares

Cherry Jones

HENDERSON HALL 200 CLUB

Henderson Hall runs a 200 Club which helps with the upkeep of the hall, from which we all benefit. It is only £10 per year and the draws take place every quarter – usually at an event in the hall. There are 5 Prizes each time which are £50, £35, £25, £15, and £10

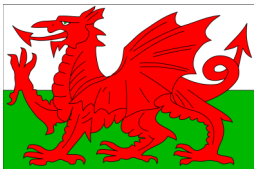
Winners April 2020

£50	Gwyn Jones
£35	Penny Morgan
£25	Karen Farr
£15	Donna Darbyshire
£10	Julia Watkins

WELSH LEARNERS CORNER - CORNEL Y CYMRAEG

Dyn ni ddim yn mynd i'r ysgol heddiw - done-nee-thim-un-min-d-ee-r-us-gol-heth-ee - we are not going to school today

Dyn ni'n aros gartref - done-neen-ar-ros-gar-tref - We are staying at home



Dyn ni ddim yn mynd i'r ganolfan hamdden bore'ma - done-nee-thim-un-min-d-ee-r ga -nol-van-ham-then-bor-reh-ma - we are not going to the leisure centre this morning.

Dyn ni ddim yn bwyta losin cyn te!-done-nee-thim-un-boy-ta-losh-in-cin-teh-We do not eat sweets before tea!

Dyn ni ddim yn gallu dod i'r parti - done-nee-thim-un-gall-ee-dord-ee-r-parr-tee- we cannot come to the party.

Dyn nhw ddim yn gallu dod i'r gyfarfod - done-who-thim-un-gall-ee-dord-ee-r-g-far-fod-They cannot come to the meeting.

Dyna'r tro cynta i ni wneud Zoom ar-lein-done-ar-tro-cyn-ta-ee-nee-were-nade-zoon-ar-laine-This is the first time for us to use Zoom on line.

Some lines to use over this time, there are also lots of apps and learn Welsh opportunities to follow on FaceBook and YouTube. Duo lingo and SSIW (say something in Welsh) are an example of apps and 'learn Welsh' have a FaceBook page which is running a course Mon-Fri every week at 3pm for complete beginners. Join our 'Siop Siarad Talybont at wysg' FaceBook page to find out more too.

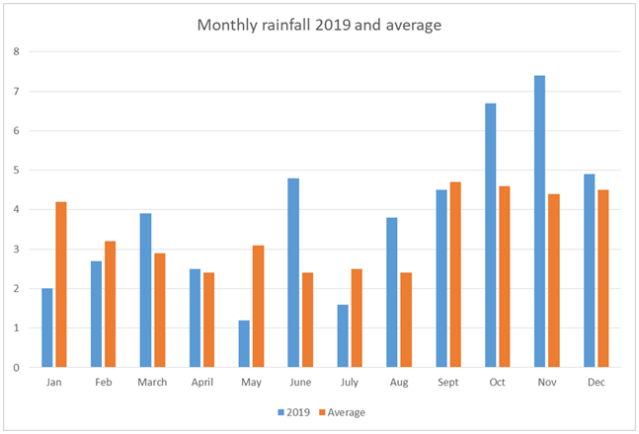
Diolch Rhian

Siop Siarad Dal ati pawb. Darllenwch ein tudalen ar Gweplyfr

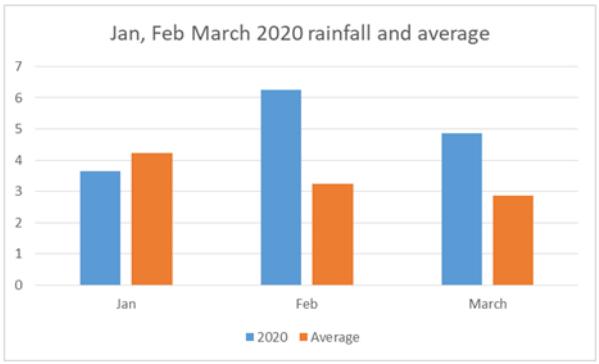
Maureen

Rainfall reports for 2019 and 2020

Here in Scethrog, I try to maintain rainfall (and other weather) records. A health warning – my rainfall collector/measurer is inclined to become blocked with a leaf or bird poo so there may be inaccuracies in the data! Looking at the chart below, we see that of the 12 months of 2019, 6 were wetter than my 23 year average. Although October and November were only the third wettest Octobers and Novembers in my records, the number of wet days in each month was significantly higher than the average with 23 rain days out of 31 in October and again 23 rain days out of 30 in November. This probably contributed to our sense of constant wet and gloom!



We all know that the wet weather continued into 2020 and this is again confirmed from the records for February and March. Once again, these months didn't break any 'total' records individually but I recorded rain on 27 out of 29 days in February.



To conclude, as Saint Basil said, "Many a man curses the rain that falls upon his head, and knows not that it brings abundance to drive away the hunger."

Peter Seaman. April 2020

TALYBONT GARDENING CLUB

Talybont Gardening club have, along with all other clubs and societies, suspended meetings due to the current lockdown situation. As soon as circumstances permit we will resume our extensive range of talks and visits. Our planned programme of summer visits may well have to be adjusted but we still hope to get out and take advantage of some superb gardens that exist around the country. As we can see from our own gardens, nature is really taking advantage of just being left to get on with it.

We did manage to meet in February when Gareth Davies gave us a great talk on growing plants in containers of all shapes and sizes. If you have ever seen Gareth's garden you will see that he commits himself fully to growing in containers and, as a result, could pass on lots of tips as to how we could all enjoy the benefits.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all the best, stay safe and we all look forward to enjoying the great outdoors as soon as possible.

Richard Abram

Talybont WI

When we looked at our program for 2020 back in January we would not have dreamed we would be abandoning our plans so soon. But like other village clubs we hope to get going again as soon as it's safe to meet and pick up the threads of normal life.

Our WI is a bit unusual as we don't have a President. Instead members agree to be in charge of the arrangements for a particular meeting. This means all members participate in drawing up our annual program, which reflects a wide range of interests. Because we all get to be President over the course of the year we can all wear our lovely chain of office, a silver swan. This was presented to the Institute in memory of Morfydd Morgan,by her family.

We started the year by welcoming John Jones to our January meeting. He gave us fascinating preview of his ongoing project to record the history of Talybont in pictures. While giving members an overview from Roman times we were particularly interested to see a rich selection of photos of people and places we could recall.

February brought another talk about local history, this time Robert Stephens from Three Cocks described his family connection with droving. This wasn't as I expected tales of long walks to London along the old droving routes but about farming life in the Black Mountains at the beginning of the last century. Robert's great grandfather had built up a business buying local stock and then droving herds over the hills to Llangynidr, over to Tredegar and then down to the railroad at Caerphilly.

Our March meeting was a complete contrast, we had a local magician, Gerry Walker, come to puzzle us with card tricks and entertain us with stories of past performances and some disasters. It was a jolly evening and we laughed a lot. How lovely to be so carefree.

At the moment our talk by a local vet, our plans for a walking netball evening (plus picnic, this is the WI after all) and summer outing are all on hold. I am scheduled to arrange our September meeting. It's going to be a Quiz plus silly games evening and I hope very much we will all be able to make it.

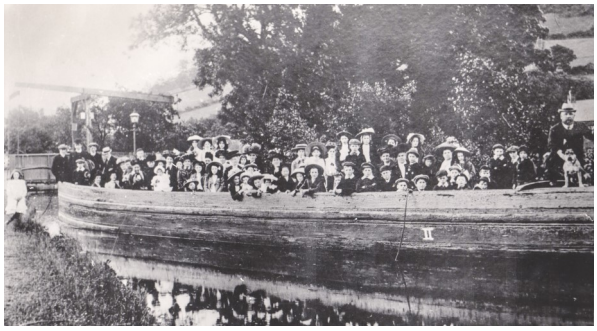
We welcome visitors to our meetings, and if anyone is thinking of joining we are always happy for you to attend several meetings before deciding (try before you buy).

Keep Safe everyone, Anne Jeans

Talybont-on-Usk - Our Community - Past to the Present.

The public launch of this website scheduled for April 3rd was postponed with all other events at the Henderson Hall due to the Covid 19 crisis. Rather than just putting it unheralded on to the internet, we will advertise a new date as soon as circumstances allow.
In the meantime the images show that the canal was used for recreation whilst still operating commercially early in the 1900's with ladylike canoeing and a village outing on a barge.

John Jones



LOCKDOWN

Rainbow Hunt in the house.

Find something Red	Paint a red fruit
Find something Yellow	Paint a yellow animal
Find something Orange	Paint a orange vegetable
Find something Green	Paint a green plant
Find something Blue	Paint something you can see outside that is blue
Find something Purple	Paint a purple flower

Inventor Hunt.

Find something that turns	Find something that rolls
Find something bumpy	Find something squishy
Find something made of metal	Find 3 things that are clear
Find something which can be put together	Find something which bounces
Find 3 round things	Find 3 things made of plastic
Find something shiny	Find a tube

Can you invent something with some or all of these things?

5 Senses Hunt.

Can you make a crunching sound?	How many different sounds can you hear?
Find something that smells good	Find something that smells bad
Find something smooth	Find something that is soft
What can you find that tastes sweet?	Find something that tastes sour
What can you see that is beautiful?	Can you find something white?

Back Garden Hunt.

Find 3 different shaped leaves	Find something purple
Find 2 things that are yellow	Find the smallest flower in your garden
Find a bug	How many shades of green can you find
Spot and identify different 2 birds	Make a bug hotel from things you find in the garden
Find 3 different coloured stones	Sit quietly and spot something you have not noticed before

Finally find something for every letter of your name.

Sue Thorne

Talybont Show 2020

As things stand, at the time of publication, the Talybont village show is still scheduled to go ahead on **Saturday August 22nd** at Henderson Hall. A final decision will be taken nearer the time and, as you can appreciate, things will remain quite 'fluid' for the foreseeable future.

Lots of planning has already gone into booking the events and activities for the day. This year they will include the usual array of entries in the flowers, vegetables, arts and crafts sections. Also old favourites such as the Sports, Fancy Dress, Plant stall, Falconry, Brecon Town Band, craft stalls, Police and Mountain Rescue. The WI will be providing refreshments as usual.

We also have permission from the Community Council to hold a small dog show as a new innovation for this year. Other activities have been planned but booking has been put on hold for a while. All details will follow in the published Show Schedule that we hope to get out by mid June.

However, you will appreciate that, with all the activities planned, it requires quite a lot of helping hands to make it work efficiently. Setting up and taking down are never the problem, it is the need for extra help on the actual day. We always require people for things like car parking, gate duties, the raffle, helping with stalls or sports. Too often the same people end up doing most of it and, in order to extend the range of activities this year we are looking for some new people to get involved.

So, if you feel you can help, or know someone who could, please could you contact one of the following people. It might be that you can help out for just an hour or just do a short stint somewhere. It doesn't matter - every bit of help is better will be appreciated.

Kevin Hollings 01874 676067 kevinhollings@hotmail.com
Richard Abram 01874 665505 richardabram@btinternet.com
Gareth Davies 01874 676200 gebdavies@btinternet.com

******** CHURCH NEWS ********

Due to the lock-down in force because of the coronavirus outbreak there are no services taking place at the moment in any of the churches in the Beacons Benefice. Likewise all other meetings or events have had to be postponed until further notice.

However each week we are producing a short service of prayers and readings for people to use at home. This, along with a weekly video service which people can follow and join in with, is available on the Benefice Benefice website at
https://parish.churchinwales.org.uk/s475/
There are also lots of useful links to many other resources, including streamed services, on the Church in Wales website at https://www.churchinwales.org.uk

If you know anyone who does not have access to the internet but who would like to receive a copy of the weekly service, do please contact me on 01874 676146 or kelvin@beaconssafaddan.plus.com, and we'll arrange to have a copy posted to them.

With Best Wishes

Kelvin Richards

Birdwatching in Mallorca by Neville Davies

This is the most accurate and comprehensive bird book ever done covering Mallorca, and my book covers 31 different sites all across the island and includes all 340 known species of bird. The new road numbers are included in the book along with information on driving on the island, car hire, accommodation, public transport and much more. I have included some places to eat that I recommend when out and about birdwatching all day thus saving the visitor time trying to find a suitable place.

Sites included.

This book covers spring and autumn migration, return migration, winter birdwatching, endemics, a complete species status list and tick list. Sites covered include: Albufera Marsh, Albufereta Marsh, S'Illot, S'Illot waterworks, Boquer Valley, Cap de Formentor, Cases Velles, Alburcutx Tower, Cuber reservoir, Lluc Monastery, Soller, Sallinas de Llevante (the salt pans), Castle de Santuri, Es Trenc, Far de Cap Ses Sallines, La Gola, Puerto Pollensa area, Bee Hive lane, Can Curassa, Albufereta back roads, new viewing platform, Scops Owl sites, Ternelles Valley, Cala San Vicente, Mortitx, S'Amarador, The Arta Mountains, Son Real, Alaro, Paix de Valldemosa, Porto Colom (Dartford and Balearic Warbler sites), Cabrera Island, Dragonera Island and other sites of interest.

I think resident birder Michael Montier sums up how I feel about Mallorca in the foreword which he wrote from the book. ***Neville has been visiting Mallorca for so many years he is now regarded as a resident. He has found so many important species and has also been a pioneer in finding many new places to bird watch, often locations that even the locals didn't know about let alone how good they are. Neville describes these places with his usual enthusiasm and he takes you to where all the species mentioned can be found. Majorca holds many secrets and hidden places where few people venture and Neville has been to them all, expanding our knowledge of this beautiful Island.***

Areas like the Central Plain were not even on the itinerary of visiting birders but we now know that many gems are to be found there. Birds like Montagu's Harriers can be seen, Red throated Pipits and Dotterel are also present during migration times. There are often large numbers of Red-footed Falcons and Lesser Kestrels too.

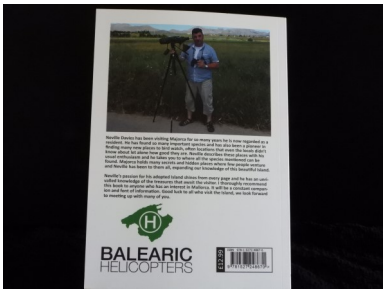
Neville's passion for his adopted Island shines from every page and he has an unrivalled knowledge of the treasures that await the visitor. I thoroughly recommend this book to anyone who has an interest in Mallorca. It will be a constant companion and font of information.

About the book.

This edition dives straight into part one with the main sites and other sites worthy of a visit all covered in full detail with information on exactly where to stop at various points (identified by numbers in each site text), to see the greatest mix of birds on offer. Occasionally, plants of interest and butterflies have been mentioned at some of the sites. The book progresses to cover autumn and winter bird watching along with migration, and offers tips on vehicle hire, getting about, bus times and much more, ending with a complete and concise up to date bird species list, all of which is of interest to not just the first time visitor to Mallorca, but for regular visitors as well.

You will notice that directions to each site start from Puerto Pollensa. The reason for this is that I have always based myself there as it is nearest location to the majority of the main sites. Of course budgets may decide where the visitor may be staying and it is always advisable to purchase a good road map of the island especially if you are hiring a vehicle.

There is a good bus network across the island and there are services available that go to both Cap de Formentor and past Cuber Reservoir .I know of bird watchers for example that catch an early bus that goes to Soller, and get off at Cuber Reservoir, spend some of the day there and get one of the return buses back to Puerto Pollensa (or Alcudia) depending on where they are staying. This can also be done for Cap de Formentor and is an ideal way to cover two very good sites if you are not relying on hiring a vehicle. However, hiring a vehicle is by far the best way to travel around the island and offers flexibility and freedom.



This book has been based solely on my extensive knowledge of the birds and the bird sites throughout the island, and it is this love and passion for Majorca which I want to share with you. For those who already visit Mallorca, you will know what I am talking about, for those of you yet to visit; you will soon understand my enthusiasm and passion for the place.

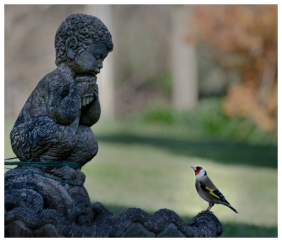
I would personally like to thank my sponsor for the book Jonny Greenall of BALEARIC HELICOPTERS

Neville Davies

Nature and the garden during isolation

Margaret and I love our garden and it is providing considerable solace and interest during these strange times. We do not have a particularly 'wild' garden as we grow for floral interest and vegetable supplies. Nevertheless, the gorgeous weather we have all experienced in recent weeks and with more time on our hands, we have looked more closely at our fauna and flora. Scethrog has a large Rookery – your car may have experienced it as you drove along the A40. We now have a Rookery annexe of just 3 nests in a tall Ash tree close to the house. It has been a delight to observe them reconstructing their nests and now sitting on eggs. We have been struck by the range of calls and 'noises' of the Rooks especially when one returns to the other on the nest. A strange 'gurgling' is one call. Here is an image one of a couple of our new neighbours.

We put up a Tawny Owl box last year and was rather hopeful that it might be occupied by owls this spring. However Jackdaws got there first and are now actively nesting in it and guarding the entrance. We are not that upset as Jackdaws are great characters and recent high winds have caused the loss of trees where they have regularly nested. If anyone has any tips to further encourage Owls, please let us know. We have noticed an absence of calling owls in Scethrog at night. Perhaps they have moved elsewhere. This photo shows one of the Jackdaws at the entrance to the owl box which is mounted at 45 degrees according to best advice for owls.



Our feeders attract a range of seed eater birds. We use chopped sun flower hearts which are not expensive, and together with a pond and a bird bath, we can provide important energy and water for the Tit family, Robins, Goldfinches, Siskins (sometimes), Greater Spotted Woodpecker, House Sparrows, Starlings in the winter, and very pleasingly, Greenfinches which have suffered nationally from a nasty infection. I rather like this photo I took but was not able to guess the conversation

Whilst birds have always been my main interest, with time on my hands I have also been on the lookout for insects. This is of a Speckled Wood butterfly. It is not particularly unusual but apparently the date of my sighting of it in a hedgerow near my house, was the first for the year in Brecknock. They are difficult to photograph during this spell of warm weather as they are constantly on the move. I have also Orange Tips, Holly Blues (both gorgeous) and Small Whites. We are avoiding all insecticide use in the garden and I have just netted my Red Cabbages and Calabrese against the Small and Large Whites.

For years, Margaret and I have been intrigued by the appearance in the Spring of little 'pyramids' or 'cones' of soil each about an 1 ½ inches high and with a vertical hole from the tip down into the soil. You may think it was rather sad of me to do this, but I spent over an hour in the last few days sitting on a chair with camera in hand to see what was using these 'nests'. Our suspicions had always been that they were a type of solitary bee, and I was delighted when patience was rewarded and I got one emerging from a hole. It is about the size of a Honey Bee, although it has the 'fluffy' appearance of a Bumble Bee. My identification of it, using Google I have to say, was confirmed by an expert, the County Bee Recorder. She told me "It is a Tawny Mining Bee, Andrena fulva. A solitary bee species that is found fairly frequently in Wales. It has an interesting cleptoparasite associated with it, a nomada bee called Nomada signata which is also worth looking out for." Once more I turned to Google which told me that "a cleptoparasite is an organism which lives off the alimentary supplies collected by another species, robbing them furtively (lestobiosis) or in an aggressive way, like in the case of Chrysidids, whose larvae kill the host larva in order to eat the supplies accumulated in the nest."

Finally, I was delighted to see a Yellowhammer in the lane through Scethrog. I grew up in Norfolk and as a boy spent a lot of time on my grandfather's farm. Then – in the 1950's/60's Yellowhammers were numerous. It is a specialist feeding bird that has not adapted to changes in agriculture so I was thrilled to see one here. This is my photograph of it. However this single bird that I saw was well beaten by the 10 or more seen by a friend of mine who lives near Hay. Peter Seaman. April 2020.

THE TALYBONT TOMBLES

Our last Litter Pick was scheduled to take place on Saturday 15th February but that was the day that Storm Dennis decided to arrive! We therefore changed our plans and went out the following Saturday. We were 8 on the day (with Mike and Clare later in the week), and the weather was slightly drier that the previous Saturday! The general consensus was that there wasn't much around due to the wind having done it for us and blown it away to other areas!

The number of bags placed by the bus stop amounted to around 3½ but 1½ bags were from Tim and Anne who did a massive "Pick" up the Reservoir a few weeks prior, so the amount collected on the day was in fact around 2 bags. Linda had a heavy bag collected from the back road from Cross Oak (nothing on the tow path only lots and lots of wet mud!!), Sue Large went across the towpath towards Ashford Tunnel and also collected a substantial amount from the road back to the village apologising for returning a muddy picker! Gareth and Eirona did their usual route on the main road through the village and down Station Road, and Anne and Tim checked out the Dram Road and the Vaughan Garden reporting back that a tree had fallen by the entrance of the Garden and there was masses of stone and rubble by the entrance where the rain had washed it down – bit too much to go in their bags! Margaret Robinson and I concentrated on the Hall area, Penpentre, the OAP bungalows - back and front, the parking area over the drawbridge, and in the undergrowth leading up to the towpath by the bus shelter – which was quite a challenge! Mike and Clare who were unable to join us on the day went out the following week and duly "Picked" along the road past Cui Parc and then along the back road from Cross Oak, and managed to fill 3 bags!

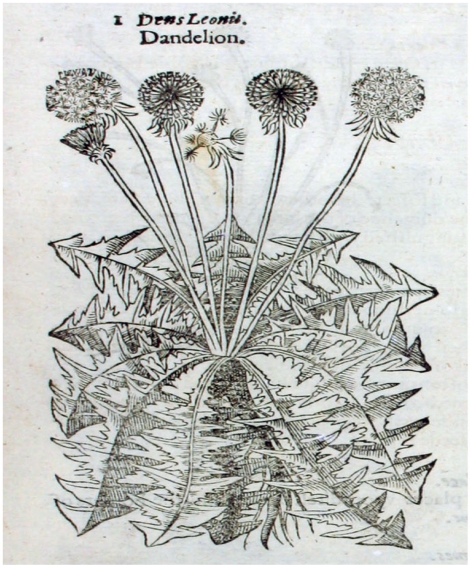
"Catch the Community Spirit"

During lockdown, and while taking his daily exercise, Richard has managed to litter pick from the Pencelli canal basin at the storehouse all the way down to Talybont. He has also done a pick around Pencelli village itself. Pleasingly he didn't find much litter at all, apart from full, discarded dog poo bags along the canal towpath! Including two within sight of the dog bin at Pencelli! Why do people do that!

So once again thank you all for your continued support, next one – well who knows! Meanwhile if anyone notices litter whilst out on their daily exercise walks and would like to borrow the relevant equipment please feel free to contact me and I can leave out what you require – obviously maintaining social distancing! I have bags, hoops and litter pickers.

Sandra Briskham, Organiser sandra.briskham@btinternet.com or phone 676297

Medicinal Herbs in the Henry Vaughan Garden - The Dandelion



The Garden is just springing into life. Herbs are green and lush and bees and other insects make the most of any flowers in bloom. One such is the humble dandelion. Bright yellow flowers sing out everywhere announcing the spring. It has been used throughout history, from essential greens for vitamins in the early months of the year, to the making of medicines and country wines and tonics from the flowerheads. In Wales it is said they grate or chop up dandelion roots two years old and mix them with leaves in salad.

The *Herb* was much employed by Master Wilhelmus a surgeon, who on account of its virtues, in 1485 likened it to "eynem lewen zan, gennant zu latin Dens leonis" (a lions tooth, called in Latin *Dens leonis*) - Dant y Llew, in Welsh. Also known by another name, priest's crown, perhaps after the bare heads revealed when the seeds have been blown away by the wind.

There are over 200 different varieties of dandelions in the UK and at The National Museum of Wales 14 species have been recorded on the lawns at the Cardiff site alone.

Image with thanks from http://caliban.mpipz.mpg.de/gerarde/index.html

THE STAR INN

Hello everyone! We hope that you are all well and staying safe... we would like to inform you that our takeaway menu will be available from Friday 24th April. Our opening days and hours will be Friday, Saturday and Sunday 5 till 9pm.

The menu will vary week to week, with new mains and sides, depending on the availability of supplies. So please ring ahead to check. The current menus are shown below.

How to order...

We would prefer all orders to be placed a day in advance (where possible) via telephone **01874 676635** to avoid disappointment and to book your time slot.

How to pay...

All payments are to be taken over the phone (where possible)
THIS IS A TAKEAWAY SERVICE however we will deliver to our residents of the village who are unable to collect.

Where to collect...

All orders will be available to collect from the front of the pub where we have taken measures to adhere to the social distancing rules to keep us all safe.

Thank you all for your support

Talybont Stores, Canalside Cafe and Post Office

01874 676663 www.talybontstores.co.uk enquiries@talybontstores.co.uk

Due to the current circumstances and how quiet the shop is we have had to reduce our opening times too:

Monday to Saturday 8.00am to 5.00pm
Sunday 8.00am until 4.00pm

We can arrange delivery of shopping and newspapers, as we are coordinating with Keren, the Clerk to the Community Council, with the help of the 50 volunteers

SO PLEASE IF YOU NEED ANY

Fresh Fruit and Vegetables **Fresh daily Bread and roll**
Milk, cheese and Yoghurts **Groceries**
Homemade frozen ready meals **Newspapers**
Logs and kindling **Lottery**
Or anything else that we stock we can get it in for you the next day

Fresh Meat

Is being delivered to us on a Wednesday, so if you require and ham, sausages, bacon, mince, chicken, steaks, gammon, joints etc
Please let us know by a Monday

Please either give us a call on 01874 676663
Or
Keren on
07814513455 kerenbender1@gmail.com

We can set up a monthly account for you, so you can pay by either cheque or BACS payments

At this very uncertain time, we need your support to help keep the shop and Post Office open. So if you can please buy local to help keep your
Local community shop and Post Office open
Thank you
Regan, Rob and all the staff at Talybont Stores

Talybont 1940: Invasion!

Many, when heading up Glyn Collyn, will have noticed the line of substantial blocks constructed of local stone that are aligned either side of the bridge over the Nant Tarthwyni. The bridge is about a mile beyond the dam. These were anti-tank defences erected in 1940. They were commanded by a pill-box, a gun emplacement, higher up and closer to the dam. You may be scratching your head and wondering 'Who thought panzers would be trundling down Glyn Collyn in 1940?' Simple answer -Winston Churchill.

All reminiscences of a possible German invasion in 1940 have been focussed on the south-east coast of England, witness Dad's Army, but anti-invasion defences were constructed all along the eastern, southern and southwestern coasts of England, and in Wales. A major construction effort led to the creation of more than fifty 'Stop Lines' to oppose the panzers. In South and West Wales, they were mainly aligned with river valleys.

Churchill had been shocked by the rapid seizure of the Low Countries by the Nazis using glider-borne and parachute troops. He had greatly resented the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922, and in 1940, viewed the intentions of the Irish Premier Eamon de Valera with grave suspicion. At first, it may just have been German disinformation, but the British Intelligence heard rumours about Plan Green, a German invasion of Ireland that would follow Operation Sealion, the attack on the southeast coast of England. There would be an invasion of Pembrokeshire launched from Ireland. Churchill immediately ordered the urgent construction of Stop Lines in Wales.

The Usk Valley defences were Stop Line 26. Its tangible remnants in our part of the valley, apart from the Nant Tarthwyni blocks, consist of nine pill-boxes. There are two near the Scethrog Tower, two in Buckland's land close to the Talybont bridge and commanding Maes Mawr fields, one on a bend of the Usk, commanding two straight stretches of the river, and five more in elevated positions between the now derelict Buckland suspension bridge and Cilwich. There is also one overlooking the A40 as it bends upward towards Bwlch. All these pill-boxes are on private land and may only be visited with the permission of the landowner. Some are very difficult to find having being greatly overgrown. There is no pillbox in front of Buckland Hall, a Headquarters in 1940, possibly for the Home Guard. Maybe the Hall itself could be considered a rather large fortification commanding a great sward of green down to the river. There's a local rumour that Canadian troops were stationed in the Hall in 1940 and practised their marksmanship of the marble statuary in the grounds.

After the war, when German High Command papers became available, Plan Green was revealed to be a detailed and realistic plan for the invasion of Ireland.

Seamus Hamill-Keays

Talybont Matters is a Community Council Publication

This edition edited by:
Richard Abram

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.

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