



ABERHAFESP

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2020 Edition

From the Editor: Well here is yet another edition of our village newsletter, unsurprisingly with limited news. However, I do hope you enjoy reading what I have been able to put together while there are still so many restrictions.

COMMUNITY CENTRE

Unfortunately we were unable to hold the AGM this year, so my annual report and the treasurer's report have been sent out by email and are available on the [village website](#). Anyone without email who would like a printed copy please contact Marilyn. Thankfully the committee members have agreed to continue in their posts, apart from Elaine Benbow who wished to pass on the mantle of Hall bookings after doing such an excellent job for a long time. We all wish to thank her for managing this role so well, and are very grateful to Graham Green who has now taken this over so very enthusiastically. Unfortunately it is of course not currently possible to plan any events at the hall so, unless the situation changes before Christmas it is unlikely that we will manage any social gatherings until the new year, when maybe we can give you all something to look forward to in our January newsletter. *Maddy Thornton.*

FACE MASKS

Please remember, face masks and gloves must not be recycled. Put them in your general waste.

200 CLUB WINNERS

1 st	£50	Gwyn Jones, Ennerdale, Llanwnog
2 nd	£25	Charlie Shearer, Bryncoch, Tregynon
3 rd	£25	Tony Mole, Cae Nant, Aberhafesp
4 th	£25	Anne Griffiths, The Hall, Aberhafesp
5 th	£25	Caroline Jones, Glanyafon, Caersws
6 th	£25	Caroline Davies, Haulfryn, Hillcrest, Aberhafesp
7 th	£15	Donna Richards, c/o CastleWood Llanwnog
8 th	£15	Eileen Williams, Penlluest, Tregynon
9 th	£15	SMike Richards, Aberhafesp
10 th	£15	Jack Woosnam, Ael Y Bryn, Aberhafesp

This draw (for April) was held at Maddy Thornton's house on Wednesday 16th September. Due to the current Covid-19 situation it has been decided that no annual renewals (due July) will be collected. Hopefully we can resume again when life gets back to some normality.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Although our members had been keeping in touch through phone calls, emails and the county newsletter we had not been able to meet since March so we arranged a get together outdoors at the Community centre in August. We brought our own chairs and drinks and of course we had to have cakes. We were not allowed to bring our own food so for once it was cupcakes from Tesco. A group of ladies sitting outside the door at the centre and a yard full of cars as we were not allowed to car share must have looked very strange to those passing by.

We had invited Eleri Williams to talk about Welsh costume at our September meeting but as the centre was still not able to open this had to be cancelled. We decided to have an informal meeting outdoors again, weather permitting. We arrived with our brollies and coats, chairs, flasks of coffee and yet more Tesco cakes. It was a little chilly but the sun came out in time. Our business meeting was very short as most events have been cancelled or postponed until next year, including W.I's Got Talent which we had been looking forward to taking part in. It would have been a busy few months for our sporting ladies but bowls, croquet and kurling have all been cancelled, nothing at all to look forward to. Maddy Thornton lifted our spirits giving us a sneak preview of her hilarious 500 word piece entitled "What I heard on the bus" which she has entered for the Denman Cup competition. We wish her luck with it. Some members went for a walk afterwards while others remained for a chat.

We all enjoyed the afternoon and agreed how important it is to keep in touch in any way we can during these strange and unusual times. With Autumn fast approaching it will not be much fun sitting outdoors and with the Community centre unlikely to be open for some time, all we can say to our members is "we'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when, but I know we WILL meet again some sunny day". *Elaine Benbow, President.*

HILLCREST GATHERING

With an eye on the weather forecast and an ear listening to the latest news on Covid restrictions a get-together on the Village Green at Hillcrest was arranged at short notice. It is a pleasant place to meet thanks to Lynn who cuts the grass.

On Wednesday 6th September a group of 20 met for a coffee break and enjoyed an hour renewing acquaintances and exchanging news and some local produce. Edward Parry brought us up to date on Community Centre news. Luckily for us in Wales at that time up to 30 people were allowed to gather out of doors albeit keeping the regulation 2m apart. The number for England had just been reduced to six. Conversations were had about missing weekly table tennis and short mat bowls sessions and there was a suggestion of Badminton on the green as a temporary alternative while the weather is good. A badminton net, racquets and shuttlecocks have been sourced and anyone wanting to play can contact Richard Amy on 01686 621490

We'd like to meet again; any future arrangements will depend on the regulations in force at the time, of course. For now, let's look ahead with hope and meet on the Village Green on **Saturday evening the 31st October at 6 pm** when we'll combine Halloween and Bonfire night with a parade of pumpkin lanterns. So, as soon as they're harvested, get carving! Fireworks are not allowed on the Green but, if you can obtain them, the traditional sparkler would brighten up the scene. *Anne Griffiths.*



LOCAL FARMERS

Unfortunately, due to the current Covid-19 rules all our plans have again been put on hold. The National YFC are holding a meeting at the end of September to discuss the situation. For any further details contact: *Annie Unwin* Secretary on 07342675626

ST GWYNOG'S CHURCH

On Sunday 20th September we held an open air service and the sun could not have been better. It was the first time we had been able to meet together since March, and were delighted to see so many familiar faces even if they were behind a mask.

We have for the past few weeks been able to open the church for private prayer and quiet reflection. We open on a Sunday afternoon from 2-4pm – all are welcome.

Since the beginning of March we have been unable to have our usual Fair Trade coffee mornings so at the beginning of September we have started to provide an afternoon tea once a month for those who may live alone or couples who are isolated and lonely – these are a gift from St. Gwynog's together with a visit to say we continue to care and pray for our community. If you know of anyone who would like a tea please contact Pam on 07710438203. We are a small band of workers but enjoy being able to help in the community.

A small group meet on a weekly basis to pray for our church and community and if you know of anyone who would like to have a prayer mentioned for them please contact either Pam (as above) or the Rev. Nia Wyn Morris on 01686 951395.

We are planning to have a short open air service on **Remembrance Sunday 8th November** at the cenotaph at the bottom of the churchyard and details will be circulated nearer the time. Keep well and keep safe. You can view the Sunday services recorded at All Saints [here](#).

RYDFELIN CHAPEL

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, the chapel will remain closed until the end of October. It will then be reconsidered to decide if it can be open before Christmas or not.

SHORT MAT BOWLS

Although our season ended abruptly when lockdown happened we had luckily completed our league fixtures and had also completed our in house competitions. Our notable success this year was winning the League Cup for the first time. Our end of season presentation evening was cancelled which is a very enjoyable social evening, and we have been informed that the Sir Drefaldwyn League will not be running this year. We were looking forward to the 2020/2021 season starting mid September but this now looks impossible for some time which means we will miss our Tuesday evening club nights and the chance to meet up socially and catch up on all the local news when we have our coffee break!

COINCIDENCE OR WHAT?

Author: Graham Green (Bwylch-y-ffridd)

Are you by any chance an aficionado of Ley Lines? No me neither but if such things should exist, and even more remarkably if they were to take a personal form, then mine surely intersect in the village of Berriew. To be more exact for me everything seems to come together in that delightful little deli-cum-cafe next to the churchyard.

Churchyard Graham? No no, pure coincidence I assure you. However when I enter that popular and therefore generally crowded little establishment strange things have a habit of happening. Nothing startling you understand, nothing to disturb innocent customers at their coffee cups, but weird nonetheless. Let me explain.

In the eight or so years that we have lived in these parts Christine and I have entered these premises on perhaps five occasions. I'm sure it won't be more than that, might even be four times. *The last three visits have resulted in quite amazing coincidences.*

The first and perhaps least surprising occurrence was after we had been shopping for floor tiles in Shrewsbury. We were in the process of converting our attached barn from its former role as workshop and garage into a kitchen diner and wanted tiles that would be in keeping with the barn's antiquity and would hopefully impart a farmhouse kitchen feeling. We had found just what we thought would do the job, porcelain tiles that when placed together look for all the world like nineteenth century quarry tiles. With our purchase in the boot of the car we headed home turning off as we always did in pre-bypass days to take the back lanes from Berriew rather than get caught up in the inevitable tail back of traffic nearing Newtown. Why not stop for a well earned celebratory cup of tea and perhaps a pastry? So we did.

For once the little place was not heaving with customers and as we sat down at a table Christine excitedly said "look at the tiles!"

I was tired and mental agility has never been my forte. "Eh – what? What tiles? Where?"

"On the floor of course, look they're our tiles".

So they were and didn't they look good? I had to look closely to see that they were not what most people would have taken them for, genuine quarry tiles. Until a couple of hours previously we had never seen these tiles and we have never come across them anywhere since. *Just one of those coincidences.*

Not long afterwards we paid another visit and this time the cafe was packed. It is a very popular watering hole and "packed" is its default state.

We squeezed our way in and plonked ourselves down on the only two seats available where a couple of tables had been pushed together. There were already two couples sitting at these tables but before many minutes had elapsed one couple said their farewells to the other and left us with a little more elbow room.

Our tablemates felt like conversation. Where were we from they wanted to know. We told them. They had never heard of Bwlch y Ffridd but we forgave them. Nine years ago I had never heard of Powys. They told us that they were returning home across the border after spending a few days in North Wales.

I can't now remember just where across the border home was but it was well east of Shropshire.

Then of course we had the inevitable question, where they wanted to know had we removed ourselves from when we retired to mid Wales. Northamptonshire. "Oh "they said. I provided a little more detail. South western Northamptonshire, we lived three miles from Silverstone Circuit.

That did it, it always does. Tell most men that and a glazed look comes into their eyes. Mentally they are accelerating down Woodcote before dropping down through the box to enter Becketts then onto Copse and Hanger Straight.

Not so our friends. The husband said nothing but his lady wanted to know if I knew Silverstone at all well. Yes I told her, every twist and turn. Did I then possibly know Lordsfield Farm?

Lordsfield Farm? Oh yes I know it I told her, it's on the Whittlebury Road and farmed by a Welsh couple by the name of Evans, actually the family are Welsh speaking which makes them rather unique in the centre of England to say the least. Mr Evans was a famous sheep dog trialer in his day, I believe a Welsh champion.

"Yes he was" said the lady.

Christine joined in. "When I was with my first husband we used to keep our caravan on that farm" she told them.

Had I ever met Mrs Evans the lady now wanted to know. When I told her that on the last occasion I had visited the farm Mrs Evans had made me a cup of tea and provided a large slice of home made sponge cake she became positively beside herself.

"Mrs Evans is my cousin" she said, "as a little girl I used to go and stay with her family in ----". I think she told us it was Corwen but I can't be certain.

It seemed that the cousins hadn't seen each other in many years but exchanged Christmas cards.

"Fancy that" said our friend, "we happen to stop off for a cup of tea in this cafe and who should sit down at the same table but someone who knows my cousin all those miles away. What an astonishing coincidence".

Now it gets even more exciting – the third occasion. You can feel the tension building can't you? **Say yes.**

This was the last occasion when we paid a visit for a much needed cup of tea and almost certainly we would have been on our way home from Shrewsbury. As ever the place was packed but we managed to grab the last two seats. Opposite me and to my right were a couple engrossed in a crossword puzzle.

When we were ready to leave exiting was slow because of customers buying from the counter and I came to a forced halt right next to this couple who were still puzzling away, she wielding the pen whilst he leaned across the table and presumably read upside down.

I'm fond of a crossword puzzle myself so couldn't resist glancing down at the table. Just as I did so the man thrust his arm across and jabbed the crossword with a finger.

"That will be Graham Greene with an e" he said. Before I could stop myself I said "yes and I'm Graham Green without an e".

The couple gazed at me with astonishment as well they might.

"You are doing a crossword, the answer to the clue you have been pondering is Graham Greene and you come out with the answer just as I, who happens to be Graham Green am passing your table. What are the chances of that happening?"

The man made suitable remarks expressing amazement but his lady friend looked at me with large eyes and started to say "Are you ----"

I assured her that no I wasn't fortunately since the gentleman had been dead for quite some time and anyway I told her I was **the real Graham Green** because the other one was actually Henry Greene whose middle name happened to be Graham.

The queue for the exit started moving taking me with it but just as I neared the door the lady called "do you write?"

That then was the third and perhaps most coincidental of the three.

We haven't been back to the cafe since but I'm sure we will.



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Notice: At present I am continuing to do home visits if anyone is in need. The last thing we need is people falling etc. Taking cross infection control very seriously of course. Anybody in desperate need can contact me, and we can make the decision on the best way forward, as it really depends on their medical condition.



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WELSH SHEEP 2021

A day out in glorious countryside, learning the latest techniques, admiring fine sheep, meeting friends and making new acquaintances is something we're all longing to enjoy.

It makes it especially important to put NSA Welsh Sheep in the diary for **18th May 2021** when the event will take place at **Red House, Aberhafesp.**

Red House extends to 550 acres and is run by Huw and Sioned Owen and their son Dafydd. It rises to 855 feet above sea level, with sweeping views down to the Severn Valley. Huw's father, Bryn Owen of Sandilands Farm, Tywyn, bought the former dairy farm in 2013 for the family, who also run a Caravan Park and farming business in Tywyn. The farm is now owned by Huw, together with his brother Geraint and sisters Sian and Bethan.

Huw, Sioned and Dafydd run 1200 Texel cross ewes, together with a few Welsh Mules and 100 pure Texels and 120 Limousin suckler cows, the majority registered. Dafydd who is 22 and who studied at Glynllifon College and Llysfasi College, has his own flock of Beltex ewes. There is also a full time member of staff. The hugely successful and memorable NSA Welsh Sheep 2019 was held at Glynllifon.

The lambing is all indoors, beginning with Dafydd's 50 ewes at the beginning of February. The Texel cross ewes begin on 1st March. It is a hectic few months, with the family and staff member all hands on and the help of a student. The aim is to keep the Texel crosses in just for the first few days, but sometimes longer if the weather is bad.

The focus is on lamb production and the family are staunch live market supporters, believing they are vital to the future of Welsh farming. Everything is sold at Welshpool, beginning with the pedigree Beltex rams at the end of August, followed by the multi breed sale. They produce a few rams for their own use and a number of rams are also sold directly from the farm. The first batch of finished lambs is sold in June. They continue selling till September, with the lambs all finished. The family keep back around 250 replacement ewes for the main flock. Dafydd, who is still building up his flock keeps back most of his Beltex ewe lambs, but sometimes sells a few yearlings.

The family are confident in the future of the sheep industry, despite the as yet unknown consequences of Covid 19 and Brexit. They are hopeful that one outcome of the pandemic is that consumers will better appreciate the importance of home produced food.

They are looking forward to hosting the NSA Welsh Sheep 2021. Preparation is a continuation of all the work they have been doing fencing and gearing the farm to sheep rather than dairy since purchase.

NSA Welsh Sheep organiser Helen Roberts says she is looking forward to working with the Owen family in 2021. The event will bring together the best of what the Welsh Sheep industry and beyond has to offer in what could be a challenging time for the industry following Covid 19 and the outcome of Brexit.

For details about sponsorship and trade stand space please see the event website:

<https://nationalsheep.org.uk/welshsheep> or

contact Helen Roberts on email helen@nationalsheep.org.uk

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Aberhafesp Community Council held their AGM via Zoom on 16th September, delayed due to Covid. The current chair Nigel Hamer and vice chair Richard Jones will remain in their positions until the 2021 AGM.

Annual Report:

There have been 7 meetings this year up until January, with good attendance, then Covid-19 hit us in March and so all meetings were suspended.

This is our second virtual meeting via Zoom and I must admit the first one went better than expected. Holding virtual meetings will be the new normal for the time being.

We have discussed 9 planning applications during the year, up to the end of March 2020.

Mrs. Sian Griffiths agreed to be our internal auditor as Mrs. Jo Thompson stepped down due to moving away from the area. I would like to thank them both for their work.

After much discussion with residents over several meetings, it was decided to keep the institute land as a carpark, as many residents use it, a sign has been erected to advise that people park at their own risk.

The quiting bed land, again after much discussion with residents, was sold. It is good to see that the land is being cleared and looks much tidier.

We have donated this year to Aberhafesp Community Association, Mr. Jones for his grass cutting of Hillcrest green and also towards the upkeep of the 3 defibrillators in the parish.

Finally, I would like to thank our clerk Rachel Hamer for all her work getting all the paperwork together, also setting up these virtual meetings and keeping us on track with regular financial updates. Chair - *Nigel Hamer*.

Note: Over the summer it was reported to the community council that some tents had been abandoned in Bryn y Pentre woods. We contacted the management of the wood, they advised they would clear them when next in the area, but we decided it was better to clear straight away. I hope that this does not become a regular issue.



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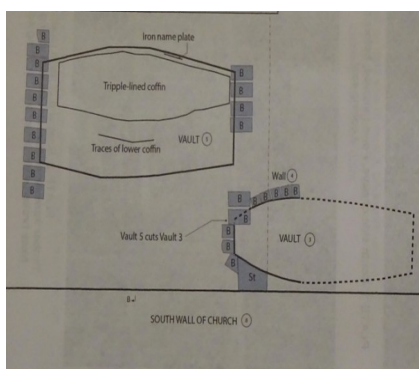
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UNCOVERING HISTORY IN ABERHAFESP CHURCH

A year ago part of the floor in Aberhafesp church was relaid and this was an opportunity for an archaeological examination of the ground beneath the floor. The work was done by Cambrian Archaeological Projects Limited based in Llanidloes and I am grateful to Dr Kevin Blockley, who supervised the excavation, for permission to include information from his report of their findings.

The excavation uncovered two burial vaults aligned parallel to the south wall of the nave. Vault 3 on the plan (the one closer to the wall) was earlier than number 5 as the latter cut into it. Number 5 had two burials in it, one below the other; the upper one had a triple-lined coffin – a wooden inner one, encased in a lead casket with an outer wooden coffin. The vaults were capped by large slate slabs. No skeletons were found, apparently the acidic nature of the soil in much of Wales accounts for their absence.



Plan of the excavated vaults, by permission of Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd.



The slate slabs over vault 5. Photograph EGP

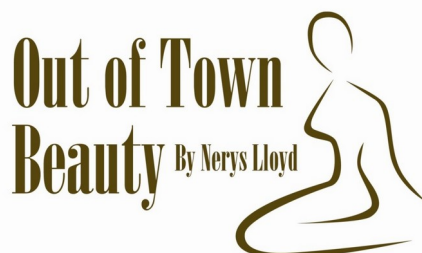
Clearly the people buried here were wealthy and important. Until the nineteenth century (when it was made illegal) burial inside the church was reserved for clerics and people of influence. The vaults uncovered lie below the most impressive funerary monuments in the church, those to the Morgan family who lived at Aberhafesp Hall. The inscriptions on the memorials tell us a good deal about the people they commemorate and it seems very likely that the earlier vault was made for Matthew Morgan who died in 1705 and the second for Frances and Anne Morgan who died in 1710 and 1717 respectively.



The memorial to Matthew Morgan, died 1705
Photograph EGP

A word of explanation about the dates of death given on the monuments: Matthew's is given as 20th March 1705-06, Anne's as 25th January 1716-17. Most of Europe had adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1582 while Britain persisted with the Julian calendar until 1752 which meant the new year began on March 25th. So something which happened between January 1st and March 24th was often given a double date as is the case with these two. Note that Matthew lived to what was a very great age for that period - he was 82 - which means that he was probably responsible for the building of the great staircase at the hall which is one of the finest in the country.

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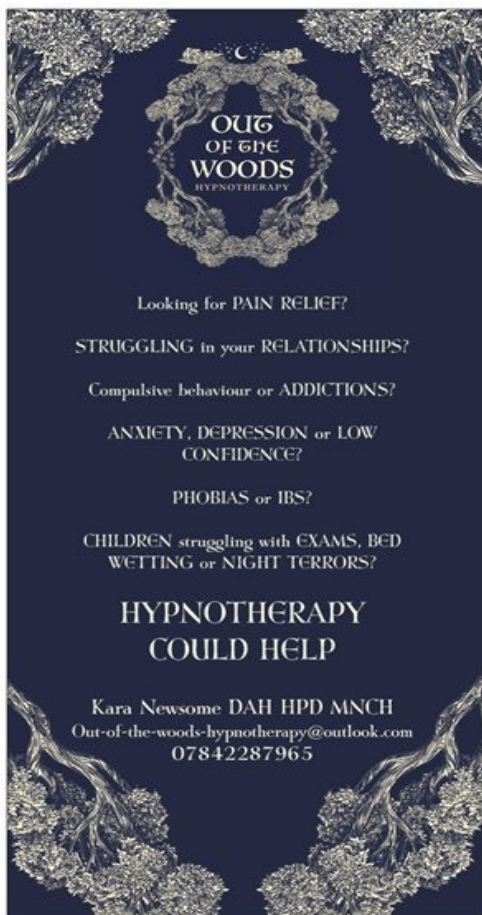
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MOTHERS' UNION

The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted our 2020 diary of events since the beginning of the lockdown in March of this year. The Cedewain Mission Area Wave of Prayer scheduled to be held between November 15th and 21st 2020 may be arranged on Zoom and details will follow. Plans for 2021 are also unknown at present, but if possible, the arrangements for this year could be used. The September e-newsletter from the Mothers' Union announced that their theme for next year will be 'Rebuilding Hope and Confidence' as in 2020. They recognise that the effects of the pandemic will continue to be felt across the world throughout 2021 and developing the 2020 theme would be appropriate. As people seek to come to terms with loss of all kinds, from bereavement to loss of livelihood, relationships, wellbeing and other challenges, our work of rebuilding hope and confidence will be vital.

We all look forward to resuming a MU diary more like we have been used to in the past and in the meantime wish everyone well. *Barbara Moelwyn-Williams*

Morgans

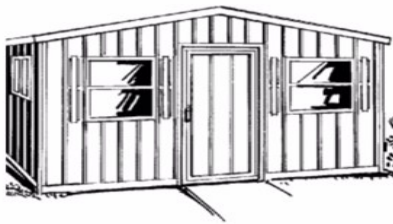
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This newsletter can be accessed from both the website and our [Facebook](#) page

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NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of this newsletter will be published in **January 2021**. Please send any articles of interest to the Editor (mbedworth@gmail.com) no later than the **20th December**.

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