

Y

Edition 21



Bont

June 2005

The Community Newspaper for Carrog and LIdiart y Parc

This edition is our coming of age - 21 editions of Y Bont, all started by a conversation on a cross channel ferry! As with all such anniversaries perhaps it is now time to re-evaluate where we are and to ask the question, "Where we are going"? and "What do YOU want from 'Y Bont'?"

We actually receive very little feedback from the community. In general we understand people enjoy and, more importantly, do read each edition. We know people greatly enjoy 'Wellies and Wheelbarrows', largely because if Gareth misses one edition there is such an outcry.

The old photographs initially seemed to spark great interest but those published more recently have provoked no response whatsoever. It does take a lot of effort to publish and deliver each edition, with people writing articles, submitting photographs, typesetting, editing and delivering each edition. So we really need to know all the effort is being targeted in the right direction.

The original concept was for a simple newsheet for Carrog and Parc. However, we quickly grew into a newspaper simply because of the amount of articles etc. submitted by people. We now have historical articles, Health Matters, poetry, general news items, campaigns, and a letters page, besides the photographs and 'Wellies'. Further, the initial editions were only distributed very locally and we printed 200 copies. We now print 350 copies and due to demand distribute to Glyndyfrdwy and Corwen. Many copies are sent on to all parts of the world and even to the Isle of Man. For the future we hope to soon have full copies of Y Bont available on the web, thanks to the generosity and hard work of Graham Hindley.

All of this has been done on a shoestring budget, helped by A5s extremely favourable printing costs, but we still rely heavily upon sponsorship and the Y Bont Bash to keep us going. If you have sponsored us in the past you will shortly be getting a 'begging letter', if you haven't sponsored us but would like to do so we should be very grateful to hear from you.

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

A committee meeting was held on Monday 23rd May at which the following matters were discussed:

* Petty vandalism continues to affect the Neuadd with the newly painted doors being scratched once again. However, a new community police officer has been appointed and their contact number is to be displayed so that incidents of vandalism can be reported and logged.

* A programme of work is to be started which will include the redecoration of the interior, the rotting kitchen window and the hanging of the curtains. More permanent arrangements for the shop/post office are also to be discussed. It was agreed that no ball games (other than table tennis) should be played inside the Neuadd and the use of blue tack should be banned. Proper notice boards will be erected for displays etc.

* Every organisation using the Neuadd should ensure they have a representative present at every meeting otherwise matters affecting them may be discussed and decided upon without their input.

* Concern was expressed regarding access to the snooker room and balcony during private events and it was agreed that anybody hiring the Neuadd would normally only have access to the facilities on the ground floor.

*Future Events - 17th September - Y Bont bash.

12th November - 40s evening to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the end of 2nd World War

* Urdd Fundraising - Brynle Hughes will be organising a series of fund raising events for the Urdd Eisteddfod and during this period there will be no fundraising events for the Neuadd.

* Whilst the Neuadd is now in a more secure financial position, this is in a large part due to the Neuadd Lottery. Membership now stands at 35 but we really do need more members. If you are a member encourage others to join, if you aren't a member please join.

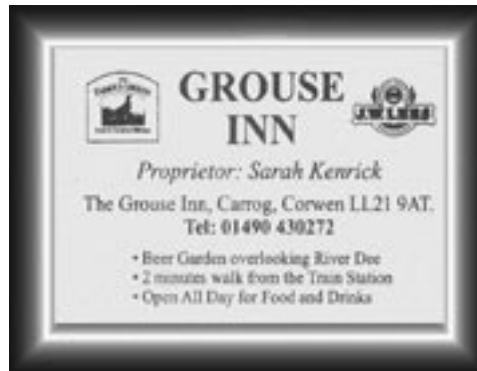
Copies of the minutes of the meeting are obtainable from the Secretary Mrs Janice Sheasby.

INTERNATIONAL EISTEDDFOD - MANX VISITORS - ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED

The first ever dance group from the Isle of Man to compete in the Llangollen Eisteddfod will be staying in Carrog for the duration of their visit - this was the group that stayed here last year and entertained us so well. Some of the group will be arriving on Thursday 7th July and the rest on Friday 8th. July and staying until Sunday 10th. July. We have made arrangements for some of the group to stay in the Neuadd, but if there is anyone in the community who can "host" any group members in their houses for their stay it would be very helpful. The Eisteddfod will pay a bed and breakfast fee directly to the "hosts" - if you can help and offer such accommodation then please contact any of the editors.

URDD APPEAL COMMITTEE (Carrog)

A warm welcome to anyone who is interested in organising or supporting events that all proceeds will go towards the appeal fund for the Urdd Eisteddfod being held in Ruthin in 2006. The next meeting will be held Tuesday June 7th 7:30 at Carrog Village Hall, or 'phone 01490 430324 for details



St. DAVIDS UPDATE

Please not there will be a public meeting at 7.00pm on Friday 17th June at 7.00pm in the Neuadd.

An application by Professor David Jones for information under the Freedom of Information Act regarding the application by St. Davids for hospital status was turned down by the Care Standards Inspectorate Wales and details of the grounds for the refusal were supplied in a letter. The grounds were basically because the release of information would not have been in the public interest of the Company, Mental Health Care. An appeal will now be lodged with the Ombudsman.

The problem was and is the total lack of communication with Mental Health Care UK who did not attend the last public meeting and appear unlikely to attend this one. When there is such apparent disregard for the concerns of the surrounding communities and a total lack of information it is not surprising that the normal response will be opposition.

ANNA CULSHAW

The most suitable of three donors has now been identified for Anna, who attended Alder Hey Hospital on Monday where she was given a provisional date for the transplant at the end of June. Anna will initially undergo two weeks chemotherapy treatment, followed by the marrow transplant and then several weeks in isolation because of the risk of infection.

The public concern generated by Anna's illness has greatly increased the number of people applying to become marrow donors, with both the Anthony Nolan Trust and the Welsh Blood Transfusion Service seeing an increase. In fact the Transfusion Service who normally have 200 applications per month saw this increase to 1000 in March alone.

Anyone wishing to become a donor can contact the Anthony Nolan Trust by telephoning 09018 822234.

Anna remains very bright and is quite well at the moment and Eddie and Sian would like to thank everyone for the gifts, cards and best wishes, which have flowed in. Many of these have come from total strangers and from all over the British Isles.

We know the whole community will be wishing Anna well.

PUBLIC TELEPHONE BOX

Due to the amount of vandalism the telephone box has been subject to and the low usage rate, British Telecom have notified their intention to remove it. If anyone objects to the removal they should submit their objections in writing to the Community Council as soon as possible.

MAY DAY WALK

A party of over 20 local residents and friends walked from Llidiart y Parc to Moel Fferna and on to Llanarmon for lunch to celebrate the May Bank Holiday weekend. The route chosen gave an opportunity for newer residents to visit and appreciate some of the most beautiful hill country in Wales - the Berwyn Mountains, which is right on our own doorstep.

TSUNAMI APPEAL

The appeal, which closed at the end of April, now stands at £750. This money will now be given to Jean Mosley, an occupational therapist in Bronllys Hospital. In a professional capacity she and a colleague will be visiting Sri Lanka this summer and she will place the money with a registered charity that is rebuilding schools. She will bring photographs and details of the project on her return.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Joe Culshaw who was voted under 12s footballer of the year by Ruthin Town Youth Team.

YSGOL CARROG

Kate Poyner from the Forestry Commission visited the school to give a very interesting talk to KS2 pupils about trees. They learnt to identify different types of trees and played a game related to what things a tree needs for growth. All pupils walked the Carrog mile on Friday May 20th and raised £33. The milk bottles were emptied and counted with a further £33 making a total of £66 for the Tsunami Fund.

Alice Gonzales, Sioned Roberts and Eleanor Sansom have all passed their Grade 1 Woodwind exam with merit. They played in the Woodwind Band together with Amber Boydell and Cody Jones to open the Glyndwr festival in Corwen. All the junior children enjoyed a puppet show about Sigeric in the Gallery in Corwen. The children had an opportunity to ask Heather Burley the organiser, questions about the show and handle the rod puppets.



A PAIR OF WELLIES AND WHEELBARROWS

With most of my staff being retired and enjoying their pensions of 365 bowls of Pero per year I decided it was time to bring some new blood into the firm, and so with this in mind I went out and bought myself a young pup. For the first few weeks of his life under new management the pup was known as Sion but as nobody (including the pup) seemed to like the name, I renamed him Henson. The only problem I have now is that Sion/Henson is totally confused and seems to be going through some kind of doggy identity crisis.

Lambing time is more or less over, with only a few of the girls left to go. I have a feeling that they've worked out that the longer they stay in lamb the more meal they will get and so they are in no rush to get on with the job. Unfortunately for them next week when the meal runs out I won't be buying any more so they'll just have to slum it and eat grass.

With Arwel Bach booked to come and spread muck I thought it might be a good idea to fix the muck fork on the loader. I spent an hour or so straightening the bent tines and even bought new ones to replace the ones that were beyond repair. So, with a full compliment of tines on the loader I was confident that maximum efficiency would be achieved.

On the day, however, it soon became obvious that if I wanted to achieve maximum efficiency rather than fixing the tines on the loader my time would have been better spent learning to drive. Loading a muck spreader is hardly complicated - any fool can do it. Yet I seem to find it impossible. On several occasions I managed to drive the tractor straight into the spreader and every three or four loads, I managed to miss the spreader altogether and dropped the muck straight back on the yard.

When in my embarrassment I looked over at Arwel he was doubled over and I'm not quite sure whether the tears he was crying were tears of laughter or tears of despair. Still we persevered and after a few days the job was done.

All but two of the cows have now calved and gone out to enjoy the summer. I'm glad to say none of them required my midwifery skills this year.

With no sign of the new calves passports in the post I thought I'd better ring the British Cattle Movement Services in Workington to see where they were. As soon as the 'phone was answered I recognised the voice - it was Aled Hughes. We chatted for about ten minutes and I filled him in on the local gossip. It was only when we said 'ta ra' and I put the 'phone down I realised I'd forgotten to ask about the passports!

The cold weather has made grass growth very slow this year, however, the thistles, nettles and docks don't appear to be affected by the temperature and are thriving in the Llan. No matter how much I spray the hay fields I never seem to get them clean. So it looks like anyone carrying hay this year is going to have to invest in a good pair of gloves.

I've got a feeling that the powers that be have got my name stuck in a computer somewhere and can't seem to get rid of it. In the last six months I've had DEFRA inspect all my cattle tags and passports, I've had the Trading Standards inspect all my animal movement records. The Environment Agency fancied a day out of the office and came to check my sheep dip and dip disposal facilities and to cap it all a vet from the farm assurance scheme came to inspect everything that everyone else had already inspected. As everything was in order I'm hoping it will be a long time before I see any of them again.

On Saturday March 19th two marvellous things occurred - Wales won the Grand Slam and I hung two new sliding doors on my shed, to finally complete the job. I was considering smashing a bottle of champagne against it to declare it officially open but I thought it might damage the paintwork.

Gareth Llan

TOURISM ACTION PLAN

Jeremy Knibbs, Denbighshire's Rural Action Co-ordinator has commissioned a Tourism Action Plan for the Dee Valley, which obviously involves us!

The object is to produce a plan to promote and market the Dee Valley's heritage. This should attract what are described as "the more discerning visitors from the UK and beyond"! Being at the heart of what was marketed not many years ago as "Glyndwr Country" we are sure that the natural attractions and rich heritage of our immediate area will form an important part of any such plan. Consultation meetings have already taken place between the Corwen Partnership (which also includes us!) and Parkin Heritage & Tourism, who are producing the plan. Anyone requiring further information or wishing to contribute to the study can contact Jeremy on 01978 861785.

THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

The participants of both teams have been steadily building up their fitness in readiness for the challenge, which is now only a few days away.

Reconnaissance trips have been made to all three mountains although to date there is a high level of secrecy as to how long has been spent on each ascent and even which routes will be taken. When the teams set off from the base of Snowdon on Friday 10th June they will be attempting to match or beat the time set in 2000 by the veterans, who completed the challenge in 22 hours and 13 minutes, well inside the 24-hour target. The teams will be meeting their own expenses, but in the spirit of the 2000 Challenge are seeking sponsorship of their nominated charity, Hope House. All donations for this cause can be made through any of the team members.

WEDDING CONGRATULATIONS

To David and Renate, Y Felin who are to be married at 1.30pm on Saturday 11th June at Ruthin Registry Office.

This will be followed by a toast to the event at the Peacock Room in Ruthin Castle.

Transport will be available from the Village and anyone wishing to use it should contact David and Renata. Rumours that this day was chosen because the most disruptive members of the community will be away on the Three Peaks Challenge have been strongly denied.

NEUADD LOTTERY

1st Prize No. 11 - Mrs. Jo Hopkins £20

2nd Prize No. 9 - Mrs. Nia Roberts

LETTERS

All letters must be accompanied by the full name and address of the writer.

Opinions expressed in letters submitted for publication in Y Bont are purely those of the authors but the editors reserve the right to edit or not to publish letters submitted.

Dear Editor,

Through the pages of Y Bont I would like to congratulate Ysgol Carrog on their excellent presentation to Denbighshire CC at the recent open meeting. The whole occasion was so professional and dignified and yet genuinely sincere throughout.

DCC cannot have failed to be impressed with all the information given to them and we must remain hopeful for a successful outcome.

Christine Fisher



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Contributions to Y Bont may be made by telephoning the editors on 01490 - 430625, 430558 or 430397 or by e-mail to editor@ybont.deevalley.com

PUBLIC MEETING - YSGOL CARROG

The positive case for keeping Ysgol Carrog

On 24th May, Rhiannon Hughes and almost a dozen other councillors and officers of Denbighshire County Council (DCC) joined parents, staff, Governors and members of the community in the Neuadd to hear the positive case for keeping Ysgol Carrog open. The first part of the meeting consisted of presentations by the school, parents and community (outlined below). The overall message was clear - that Ysgol Carrog is not only a successful small rural school, but also the key to maintaining a vibrant, positive community. The open discussion raised some interesting points (both positive and negative) about what has happened and - more importantly - what might happen next, in the Managing School Places programme. DCC was not able to provide any answers but is aware that the current state of 'limbo' is not helping anyone. Informal discussion with individual Councillors afterwards revealed that they were impressed with our case, but were in no position to make promises about the future of the school. We will let you know as soon as we hear anything!

Quality and Caring

The theme of the school presentation was 'Quality and caring' and Mrs Lebbon and Mrs Jones highlighted the strengths of the school, such as the pupils themselves, the glowing inspection reports, the team of highly trained and experienced staff, the good state of maintenance of the buildings, impressive facilities, and the strong Welsh ethos. Links with the community were illustrated, such as the way in which the school and community interact with school events, twinning events, Carnival, Church and Chapel services and the importance given to providing a broad education through having lots of visits out and visitors into the school.

Passion

'Passion' was the theme of the presentation given on behalf of parents by Mrs Jane Knight. She explored the passion that parents feel about having choice about the school that their child attends, the importance of having access to the best quality education, valuing the broad perspective provided by lots of visits out and visitors in, the strong Welsh ethos and the need for a flexible, local support system (such as that provided by the nursery and after school club). Jayne also highlighted some of the concerns that parents have about the area schools that are proposed as an alternative if small rural schools are closed. These included fears that area schools might mean larger year groups, more problems with truancy, drugs and bullying, transporting children as young as 4 years on unsupervised buses for up to 45 minutes, loss of the strong Welsh ethos, and a variety of negative effects on the local rural community.

Harmony and Balance

The presentation on behalf of the community was delivered by Community Councillor and long-standing school Governor, Brynle Hughes. He explained the ways in which the community and school interact and how the community of Carrog adds 'harmony and balance' to the passion provided by parents and the quality and caring provided by the school. He pointed out that the community supported each child's education and development, and was also an environment where a child learned the importance of living within and contributing to a community, and the need to value and recognize all individuals. Brynle expressed concern about the ways in which the closure of the school might impact on the community, including further erosion of the quality of rural life, loss of valuable resources (e.g. local nursery and after school club), job losses, and fewer services in the Church and Chapel to name just a few. In short - to Carrog, the closure of its local school might condemn the village to the status of just another passive rural 'dormitory' serving the urban areas of Corwen and Llangollen.

Dr Sarah Smith, Chair of the Board of Governors of Ysgol Carrog