



August 2010

## FOR YOUR DIARY

### Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> December – at 3pm

A grand 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary service will take place with members of the South East Wales Unitarian Society taking part. The National President of the General Assembly, Neville Kenyon, will be present along with local dignitaries. These include Mrs Kate Thomas (Lord Lieutenant), Counsellor Simon Lloyd, (The Mayor), Ann Clwyd (MP) and Christine Chapman (AM). Refreshments will be served following the service.

Please see Aberdare News for information on a number of other events held as part of the Highland Place Church 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

## ANNOUNCEMENT!

**The GA Annual Meetings are coming to Swansea in 2011! Please make a note in your diary now.**

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> – Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April at Swansea University  
'Valuing and Celebrating Our Volunteers'**

**COME AND BE INSPIRED!**

**COME AND JOIN IN THE CELEBRATION!**

**COME AND SING!**

Please contact Lis Dyson-Jones if you are willing to act as a Volunteer Guide during the Meetings. It is important that we all do our bit to ensure that the Annual Meetings in 2011 will be remembered as the best yet!

Lis Dyson-Jones, 9, Hollyrood Close, BARRY CF62 8AY

Tel: 01446 409066 Email: [lis.dysonjones@ntlworld.com](mailto:lis.dysonjones@ntlworld.com)

## DISTRICT SUMMER RALLY AT LLANMADOG St Madoc Christian Youth Camp

On Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> July, from points near and far in the District, we headed for a remote spot on the Gower peninsula. Llanmadog Camp is a place of unspoilt beauty where, over the years, many generations of young Unitarians have spent happy summer holidays. The 76-acre site with a mile of shoreline was owned by two Swansea Unitarians who, towards the end of the Second World War, donated it in the hope of its being of value to the youth of Wales—as we were reminded by an inscription in the barn-cum-chapel...

*These buildings and site were given to the trustees of the St Madoc Christian Youth Camp by Mr and Mrs J W Burr, 21<sup>st</sup> August 1944, 'While life was being shattered this place was given for the healing of the soul.'*

Mr James William Burr and his wife Mrs Alice Maud Burr were Londoners who moved to Swansea when Mr Burr became Borough Electrical Engineer in 1914. They came to Llanmadog, first in 1924 for weekends and holidays, and in 1939 for retirement.



Happy Campers, Whitsun 1946

In the centre, behind the front row of ladies is Rev Marles Thomas. On the left in Row 2 is Rev Aubrey Martin and behind him is Rev Alan Taylor, and over Alan Taylor's left shoulder is Rev Basil Viney.

Also included are five attractive young ladies – Joan Davies, Joyce Wathan, Edna Morgan, Thelma Morgan, and Sheila Rogers – seated in Row 2, and Mrs Elizabeth Watkins (mother of Gwen Everitt), Mrs Mary Thomas (wife of Marles), Mrs Adams, Mrs Nan Dunley and Miss Bessie Morgan, all of Hen Dŷ Cwrdd, Cefncoed. Do you recognise anyone else?

(Aubrey Martin had just resigned from Cribyn and Capelygroes and was about to start as minister at Stockton on Tees. He came from Casllwchwr around the corner of the north Gower coast and not far from Llanmadog.)

The old wooden huts are now gone – all that remains are the concrete outlines of the foundations on which they once stood. In their place is a complex of new buildings offering accommodation and facilities in keeping with the expectations of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. ‘Old Stagers’ were amazed by the marvellous en-suite toilet and shower facilities now available, a far cry from the primitive conditions they had experienced in their time.



Marian Littlepage, Heather Davies, Sharon Hellard,  
Rev Eric Jones, Julianne Morgan  
Photo: Shirley Davies



Llanmadog Seascape, 2010  
Photo: Keith Lewis-Jones

On arrival we gathered in the chapel for a short service of prayer and meditation led by the District President, Sarah Boyce. Short reminiscences of the Llanmadog of yesteryear were given by Rev Eric Jones, Julianne Morgan and Sheila Cousins—reviving happy memories for many of those present who had, at some time or other, experienced the joy of staying there. Included in our hymn singing was *When the summer sun is shining over golden land an sea* by Rev Sydney Knight, written by him while on a stay at Llanmadog in the late 1960s. The weather had been overcast and dreary as we made our way to the camp and we had feared rain but, as if in response to Sydney’s words, when the service was over we emerged into glorious sunshine and could not have wished for better conditions to visit this tranquil haven.

We are grateful to the Camp Trustees and Staff for allowing us to visit. We were made very welcome and we thank them for the refreshments which were provided gratis.

In true camping spirit we had a short singsong (but not around a campfire) and then took the opportunity to mingle, recalling friends (and escapades) from our youth, wandering as we pleased. Those who were able took the familiar old paths to the headland to experience once again the wonderful panoramic view of sea and shore.

It was a day of nostalgia with so many happy memories, captured perfectly by the closing lines of Sydney Knight’s hymn...

*Then my heart is full of yearning,  
Hopes and memories flood the whole  
Of my being, reaching inwards  
To the corners of my soul.*

## UNITARIANS AT THE NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD



Rev Dr Ann Peart and Rev Wyn Thomas admire the giant metal  
chalice  
Photo: Joyce Ashworth



Rev Eric Jones, Megan Jones, Lis Dyson-Jones, Rev Dr Ann Peart,  
Rev Wyn Thomas, Ann Jones  
Photo: Joyce Ashworth

There were almost 1,500 stalls representing various organisations from Wales and beyond at this year's National Eisteddfod which was held at Ebbw Vale from Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> July to Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> August. Unitarians were among them and welcomed a large number of people, offering them refreshments and an opportunity to have a rest. Many of those were members in one or another of our twenty congregations in Wales. Many of the callers were "lapsed Unitarians" who may have attended a Unitarian Sunday School or moved away to an area where there is no Unitarian congregation. It was good to keep in touch and to know that they still regard us as being an important influence in their life.

There were some people who wanted to know more and we were able to give them pamphlets in either Welsh or English and an invitation to ask for further information if they wished and at the same time, draw their attention to our various Websites. This year, we were able to boast a Unitarian Group at Bangor in North Wales and Nia Roberts from the Bangor Group was with us on one of the days; a lady from Abergavenny had corresponded for 16 years with a member of a Unitarian Universalist church in America and was pleased to set foot in our stall; a small group from West Wales used our tent for a quick practice in choral recitation (and they won!); a young person from South Wales was a member of NUF and wanted to know how he could be more active within the denomination; Donna Edwards, star of S4C Soap Opera "Pobl y Cwm" called in and spoke eloquently on the influence of Unitarianism on her life. She brought with her the First Secretary of the High Commissioner of Lesotho. He enjoyed his cup of tea. I was pleased to meet an artist who was commissioned to create a water colour painting for me when I retired. He brought his family along with him.

Wednesday was a busy day all round with large crowds around the stall. Surprise visitors during the day were Joyce Ashworth and Ann Peart - both of whom had travelled from Manchester and graced us with their presence. They also enjoyed the experience of the day at the event. Some people would call and tell us that there are Unitarians in their village or town, or living across the road to them and they wanted to identify themselves with us. A middle aged man called to enquire about an old Unitarian friend, with whom he had lost touch. The general secretary of Churches Together called in to give his greetings. We were the only religious group with a stall of our own. Nine other Christian Groups joined together in one large pavilion. The BBC called in to ask why we were left to do our own thing and we managed a slot on radio, pointing out some of the history and ethos of Unitarians.

Our thanks to the 30 or so volunteers who helped with the week's activities at the stall - a good number of them from our District.

We are sometimes asked why we have a presence at this event and the answer is not mainly to sell books or distribute pamphlets to win large numbers of people to Unitarianism but to maintain a high profile within the community and to let people know that we are alive and well even though we are not included in the Churches Together Tent - but we have a unique message and as long as we believe in that message, we need to be there.

*Eric Jones*

### **MONDAY AT THE EISTEDDFOD**

The Unitarian Tent looked fresh and welcoming with *big* vases of fresh flowers, laminated photographs taken at various events, free leaflets and some books to buy.

There were tables with checked tablecloths and I was offered tea or coffee with Welsh cakes or teisen lap —what a welcome. A friend picked up one of the leaflets and took it home for her husband who, upon reading it, said he was very impressed.

The Unitarian stall was well placed - I came upon it not far from the entrance onto the eisteddfod field. Arrangements must have taken considerable thought, time and effort, and to drop in was a pleasure. Thank you.

*Marian Littlepage*

### **GETTING TO KNOW YOU ...Informal interviews with local Unitarians**

The interview in this issue is with Annette Marsh, who is the Congregational Leader and Lay person in Charge at The General Baptist and Unitarian Chapel, Nottage, Porthcawl. Annette took her first service at Nottage in 1997 and became the 'Appointed person' to conduct the Civil/Legal side of weddings the same year.

Annette, a former nurse, is a wife and mother, and proud grandmother to four wonderful grandsons. Thomas aged 10, William aged 5, Trystan aged 2, and the most recent addition Reuben aged 4 months.

A trained counsellor, Annette has worked alongside her husband David as a caseworker for SSAFA Forces Help for the past seven years.

Annette also trained to become a Reiki practitioner at Sandville Court Hospice several years ago, and not long after began a successful Healing Group at Nottage, which still runs on a Monday evening at 7pm. In her spare time, she enjoys Long Bow Archery along with David who introduced her to the sport some fifteen years ago.

*Ella Lewis-Jones*

***Have you always been a Unitarian?***

No, I had never heard of Unitarianism until 1995, which was the year I joined the Nottage congregation.

***What is your earliest memory?***

Playing with two newborn lambs on the side of a mountain in the `Garw Valley` watched over by my late Grandfather who had a small holding there.

***If you could live your life again, would you change anything?***

My belief is that we are all here to learn and develop spiritually. I admit to having made many mistakes in my life and have had to learn life's lessons the hard way. However, without these lessons I would not be the person I am today...So no...Probably not!

***When were you happiest?***

I have been fortunate to have had many happy times, but one of the happiest has to be my wedding day at Nottage Chapel in August 1996.

***What trait do you most deplore in others?***

Dishonesty and a lack of integrity!

***What or whom is the love of your life?***

My husband and Family.

***Do you have a possession which you treasure?***

I count myself as very lucky to own many material possessions that are important to me. However, if I had to give them up I would...and have done! My extensive home library of some 600 plus books is another matter though!

***On your life journey, have you met people who influenced you, and if so, in what way?***

That's an easy one! The late Dr Beverley Littlepage and his wife Marian. They came into our life at a time when my husband David and I were at a crossroads and were finding life difficult...as a newly married couple, but, with the baggage of a previous life! We will be eternally grateful for their friendship, love and wise counsel over the years.

***What do you owe your parents?***

Everything – they have always been there for me and my brothers, giving support, encouragement and advice. I only wish I had heeded their advice more in my formative years though!

***To whom would you most like to say sorry, and why?***

My daughters! Until our divorce their father and I were proprietors of a coach company, and consequently we worked very long hours driving and often far away from home, which meant that Nichola and Karen either came along with us or were looked after by a nanny who lived in. I often felt guilty that I could not spend longer with them as they were growing up. However, thirty years on... this seems to bother me far more than it bothers either of them.

***Do you have a favourite place?***

Yes! In the loving arms of my husband David.

***What is the best advice you have ever received?***

Keep smiling.....even if you do not feel like it!

***How would you like to be remembered?***

Just to be remembered would be nice. However, if anything, I would like to be thought of as someone who would do somebody a good turn before a bad one!

## **BRIDGING REPORT**

Once again, I've found myself making the incredibly long journey to Great Hucklow in the Derbyshire countryside. But this time, I was attending a programme that I'd never been to before, a 'Bridging Weekend'. This is a combination of the oldest people in the youth programme with the youngest of BUYAN (British Unitarian Young Adult Network), in the hope of making an easier transition from the youth into the young adult network. The theme of the weekend was, (drum roll please...) 'Life Skills'.

Not one of the topics I tend to think about if I'm honest! However, this weekend proved to be totally different from any weekend I have ever experienced. The times of the sessions weren't set; we could have them when we felt ready, and best of all, there was no set bedtime! No sneaking into each other's rooms in the early hours of the morning! The sessions also proved to be more useful than I expected. One was about budgeting, which was really helpful, if not slightly depressing when you learn how much tax you have to pay the Government! Another session was about getting on with your housemates. In this session, we role-played different scenarios and afterwards we discussed how we could have each handled our situations better. On Saturday afternoon, we all went swimming, which was so much fun! But afterwards the boys didn't seem to want to come shopping with us girls (shockingly!), so we left them watching football while we explored the shops in Sheffield. The rest of the weekend involved midnight walks, catching up on each other's lives, and a *lot* of laughter! As there were only nine of us, I feel that we have made a really great group of friends and I would encourage any 16-21 years olds (ish!) to come along next year!

*Isabelle Rosenberg (17)*

## **KEY MESSAGES FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2 July 2010**

- **Difficult Choices**

The Executive Committee has received a further sixty completed questionnaires from congregations, districts and individuals. The overwhelming response to date is that the Movement wants investment in leadership, both Ministerial and Lay. We all want thriving local congregations and the key to this is seen to be good local leadership. This is coming across very strongly and is supported by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee will not make the final decisions on "Difficult Choices" and the accompanying budgets for 2010 to 2011 until it meets in September 2010. Feedback will be taken account of in the decision-making. [*The deadline for feedback of the questionnaire was the end of July. Editor*]

- An Expenses Policy for Executive Committee, Commission and Panels members, volunteers and staff was approved and will be placed on the GA website (along with the Conflicts of Interests Policy agreed at the last meeting)
- The Executive Committee approved the recommendations of the Interview Panel that:
  1. Bob Pounder be entered on the Roll of Ministers with Probationary Status on successful completion of his academic studies
  2. Danny Crosby be entered on the Roll of Ministers with Probationary Status on successful completion of his academic studies
  3. Daniel Costley be entered on the Roll of Ministers with Probationary Status on successful completion of his academic studies and his student pastorate.
- Annual Meetings Swansea 15-18 April 2011 – discussions have taken place with the two Welsh Districts and there will be a significant Welsh flavour to the event – look out for details
- Risk registers – the Executive Committee risk register template is to be placed on the GA website for use by congregations and other Unitarian bodies if they wish

*Lis Dyson-Jones*

## **THOUGHT FOR NOW**

*(We are indebted to Anne Jones for bringing the following to our attention.)*

Prayer:

Let us appreciate wonder and beauty in the ordinary,  
and the many good things we enjoy every day.  
May we give something back  
by cultivating generosity towards all creation's creatures,  
responding to suffering with Love in action.

*Rev. Angus Parker.*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Many thanks to those who attended the Summer District Rally on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July at the St Madoc Centre, Llanmadog and who have helped set up, staff the tent or who visited the Unitarian (Undodiaid) tent from 30<sup>th</sup> July till the 7<sup>th</sup> August 2010.

We look forward to the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events and Christmas Rally at Highland Place, Aberdare and also to the General Assembly Meetings in Swansea from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011. I urge those members who can help at the meetings, in addition to members from Swansea Unitarian church, to contact Lis Dyson-Jones.

Five young girls, Rebecca, Caroline, Isabelle, Elizabeth and Bethan attended the youth course 'Fun Days Away' which was held from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of August at The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow. The theme of the OWL course (Our Whole Lives) was 'Sexuality'. My daughter, as one of them, said it was very educational and learnt and took away a lot from it. The girls had a great time and wish to go back in November for the Inters/Senior Weekend. The leaving ceremony for some of the older members (nearly 18 years) going on to BUYAN is reported to have consisted of being showered with three buckets of water. Despite some of the youngsters only having two hours sleep on the last night, several of them said to parents that they would like the course to go on longer because they enjoyed it so much and that they didn't want to go home!

Forthcoming events for younger members in the district will include the opportunity to attend a Family/Children's Christmas service at St Fagans on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December at either 6.30pm or 7pm. Children and adults are welcome to come along to Penrhiw Chapel in Victorian clothes (optional) and join in a bilingual Carol Service and traditional Christmas storytelling session.

These two sessions have been arranged by Cardiff Unitarians/Undodiaid Caerdydd but other chapels will be able to have leaflets or publicity available to the general public at this event. For further information please contact Diana Bianchi on 029 2021 6536 or Sarah Boyce on 029 2033 3658

Finally, to close with some words of reflection:

*In the business of life, may I take time out to Stop, Look and Listen.*

*Look at the stars at night, marvel at the vastness of space and the Life Force motivating it...and then listen.*

*I am part of this wondrous world in its joy and sorrow....and give thanks.*

*Sarah Boyce*

## ABERDARE

### WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Yet again Highland Place Women's League found an excuse to party! We began our weekly meeting with the usual 'business', and when that was done and dusted we had great fun with a quiz. This was compiled and conducted by league member Jan Morris. We were arranged in teams of four and there were multiple choice answers. Some of the questions were thought provoking, and one in particular provided inspiration for the service taken on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> July by Anne Jones.

It was a quite close result. We all had a good laugh and our brain cells were challenged in the process. I only wish I had tried harder when I saw the excellent prizes that Jan had provided for each member of the winning team. Well done Jan and thank you. This was then followed by a fabulous 'Bastille Day' Tea (14<sup>th</sup> July), provided by our National President, Dilys Evans.

We had delicious French fare. The tea also raised money for our latest project, providing a library for the Margaret Barr Children's Village in the Khasi Hills, Kharang, India. We all had a lovely afternoon, with a very happy atmosphere. We strive to do what we can to raise funds for good causes in our own community and world wide. Our Women's League is thriving and is a place where friendship and caring is paramount to us all. Best wishes to all members of the District's Women's Leagues.

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> July was the last meeting of the Summer for Highland Place Women's League. We celebrated 'in style' with a trip to Labels of Ross on Wye. It was a huge store full of lovely things, which some of our contingent made the most of. We had coffee and a light bite at their cafeteria. Then it was back on the coach for a short journey to Ledbury. A pleasant afternoon was spent having food yet again, as we 'Leaguettes' love to eat mm mm mm! Then we also explored this delightful little town.

Then it was back on the coach again and home to Aberdare. The usual raffle was held on the bus, raising valuable funds for our coffers and project. We came home via the Brecon Beacons and through Penderyn. We were held up for a short time near Storey Arms whilst some filming was taking place.

The question on everyone's lips was, 'What programme are they filming for?' *Doctor Who* and *Pobl y Cwm* were favourites. A grand time was had by all.

We now look forward to the first meeting of the Autumn, which is on 8<sup>th</sup> September. We start the new season with 'Holiday Memories'.

*Joy Foster*

## **150<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

The One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary celebration programme continues apace. Anyone who is interested in any of the events listed below is more than welcome to join with us.

### ***Open Weekend***

On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September between 10.30am and 1pm and again between 2pm and 4.30 pm and on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September between 4pm and 6pm, Highland Place will be open to all who are interested and would like to find out more about the church and its history.

The church will be decorated in anticipation of The Harvest of Life service, there will be photographic displays and literature illustrating the current activities of the congregation. Information will also be available on the History of the building and Unitarianism. Light refreshments will be served.

### ***Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September at 3pm***

Members from Cardiff and Cefn Coed will join the Highland Place congregation for a thanksgiving service to celebrate The Harvest of Life. This service will include the personal testimonies of some individuals who wish to express their gratitude on some aspect of their life's journey.

### ***Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm***

The third and final lecture entitled "Notable Unitarian Women" will be delivered by Rev Dr Ann Peart. The lecture will feature two well known Unitarian women, namely Elizabeth Gaskell, whose bicentenary occurs this year, and Francis Power Cobbe.

### ***Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30 pm***

There will be a concert given by the Aberdare section of "Only Boys Aloud" which will be led by Wyn Davies of "Only Men Aloud". Tickets will be on sale at the beginning of September.

### ***Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November (Provisional date)***

A concert with items from five of the local Secondary Schools including: Rhydywaun Welsh School, Aberdare High School, Aberdare Girls' Comprehensive, Blaengwawr Comprehensive and Mountain Ash Comprehensive will take place. Tickets will be available at the end of September.

### ***Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 3pm***

A grand 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary service will take place with members of the South East Wales Unitarian Society taking part. The National President of the General Assembly, Neville Kenyon, will be present along with local dignitaries. These include Mrs Kate Thomas (Lord Lieutenant), Counsellor Simon Lloyd, (The Mayor), Ann Clwyd (MP) and Christine Chapman (AM). Refreshments will be served following the service.

### ***Thursday February 3<sup>d</sup>***

An evening dinner at the Golf Club will conclude the celebrations

### ***One other event for your diary***

The Autumn Fair will take place in the schoolroom on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> November at 2pm.

*Ella Lewis-Jones*

## **CARDIFF UNITARIANS / UNDO DIAID CAERDYDD**

The summer has been relatively quiet with several members on holiday and it is hard to realize that time has come round again, for the District News report. Some members have been spending happy times welcoming families from overseas. This includes Pat's brother and Ivy's son Stephen and his wife,

Margaret from Australia and Sally and Gareth's daughters, Lis and husband Wynn from New Zealand and Mair, Emilio and Paulo from Spain. Lis will also celebrate her Open University Degree with her family.

At the end of June the newly formed Growth group met to discuss ideas for promoting Unitarian services and other projects in the city. We have decided to concentrate initially, on trying to attract families and to this end have arranged for an intergenerational craft day to be held at the Friend's Meeting House during the October half-Term holiday. There will also be a programme for children at St Fagan's on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December in the early evening. This will be organized by the Cardiff growth

group but will be part of the special pre – Christmas celebrations at the Museum and will be advertised to the general public. More details of both events will be sent to congregations in the District and we hope to welcome as many of you as possible to join in the fun. There are further plans for our growth initiative after Christmas including a public lecture, given by TJ Jones, the Archdruid and these too will be widely publicized.

We have had some visitors to our services throughout July and August and have been pleased to welcome Franziska and her daughter Hannah, also Helen Smith and her 4yr old twins, Lily and William. A further visitor, Ann from Aberystwyth has shown a keen interest in Unitarianism and hopes to visit us again when she next visits Cardiff. She attended our service as a result of seeing a simple A5 flier we put in the Unitarian tent at the National Eisteddfod.

At the end of July, I was fortunate to be invited to attend one of the Queen's summer Garden Parties at Buckingham Palace, as a representative of the denomination. It was a glorious day and from starting to queue until finally arriving back in Cardiff the whole experience was memorable. I can't say I am a Royalist but that apart, could not help but admire and appreciate the organization and beauty of the day (including the best afternoon tea I have ever tasted!). Incidentally, the hat I wore was made by Joy Foster of Highland Place and is available for hire (any proceeds will contribute to paying towards the employment of the new Welsh Department Secretary!)



All dressed up with somewhere to go!  
GA President Neville Kenyon, his wife Betty, Lis's daughter  
Samantha Bradwick, and Lis on the steps of Essex Hall  
Photo: James Barry

Several members were able to visit the National Eisteddfod at Ebbw Vale, in August and it was good to welcome past GA President, Joyce Ashworth and introduce her to her first Eisteddfod. I was also happy to meet up with GA vice-President, the Rev Dr Ann Peart at the Unitarian tent. Lyn Davies and her sister Olwen performed as members of one of the choirs at the Eisteddfod.

A few of our members have been able to visit Mr. Lloyd Williams, former member of the Swansea Church. Mr Williams is now living at the Court Nursing Home, St Fagan's, close to the home of his daughter.

We send our best wishes to Caroline Boyce who has just returned from attending 'Five Days Away' at Great Hucklow and who awaits her GCSE results. Her brother James will begin a course in Computer Science at Cardiff University in September.

We send warm wishes to Arthur Saunders, Paul David and Nye Jones and wish them good health as they recover from times spent in hospital.

#### Thought for Now

*'Take care of yourself: take care of your soul. Keep the different parts of yourself in touch with one another. Listen for quiet clues about the path your life should be following. Be aware of what kind of world you are helping to make each day.*

*Take good care. (Robert Walsh 2002)*

*Lis Dyson-Jones*

## **CEFNCOED**

### **WOMEN'S LEAGUE**

Our annual get-together was a great success this year. We spent our morning browsing in the Abergavenny shops, finding bargains in the charity shops and partaking of a light lunch.

We spent a few hours in the Tithe Barn, a very interesting building which housed a beautiful tapestry. We heard how several local ladies had volunteered and spent many hours embroidering the tapestry depicting the story of Abergavenny, as a way of celebrating the new millennium in 2000.

We then visited Raglan Garden Centre before returning to the café at the Tithe Barn where we sat down to a delicious tea.

We had a very pleasant day – good food, good company, and the weather was kind to us. Many thanks to the organisers, even the coach and driver were excellent.

Recently we held a quiz afternoon with Vera's granddaughter Emily as 'Quizmaster'. Some of our answers produced much merriment (in truth, loud laughter!) but we persevered. There were two winners – Barbara Hopkins and Marlene Aubrey.

Vera Tomsett, our hard-working League Treasurer, has gone into Prince Charles Hospital to have her long-awaited operation. We wish her well and look forward to seeing her in League and chapel, 'fit and well'. We also send best wishes for a speedy recovery to our dear friend Arthur Saunders who is in the Royal Glamorgan Hospital.

*Gwen Everrit*

Hen Dŷ Cwrdd features in two books currently being written by local historians. One, recording the life-stories of three chapel members (1 male, 2 female) whose lives impacted markedly on the wider community, has been thoroughly researched and is now nearing publication. The other, dealing with the histories of places of worship in the Merthyr area in general, is still in its early stages and we were pleased to be visited by its author on two occasions recently.

Our Sunday services during the summer months have involved a little roaming. On 20<sup>th</sup> June we, as did friends from Aberdare, travelled to Friends Meeting House join Cardiff Unitarians in their Flower Service, and on 4<sup>th</sup> July we joined others from our South East Wales congregations for the Rally at Llanmadog. Both events were successful and much enjoyed, giving us the opportunity to refresh old friendships and forge new ones.

A visitor to the Unitarian Tent at the National Eisteddfod in Ebbw Vale was Dafydd Price. Dafydd, now living in Llandudno, still remembers once taking our service at Hen Dŷ Cwrdd when he was a teacher at Vaynor & Penderyn Comprehensive School in the village – **43-years-ago(!)**. He sends his regards to all.

*Ken Morgan*

## **NOTTAGE**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> May, baby Emyr Morgan Hales came into the world, he is a grandson for Janet and Harry Hales - we send them all our congratulations. Harry Hales has had an eventful few months, he has recently had his second knee replacement operation and I'm pleased to say he is progressing well and has resumed driving.

Five members of the Nottage congregation were able to join others at their sister-chapel Wick for their Open Evening, and then three of us attended Wick's service to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Julianne being their Lay Leader. We were very pleased to be at both events and able to join with other Unitarians.

A number of us were also pleased to join in with the District at the Summer Rally, but for the second year had transport problems, let's hope it will be 'third time lucky'!

At the end of July after living in Porthcawl for 34 years, Glenys Rosenfield moved to Scotland to be near her son. She is living in Dalgety Bay and on past visits has attended the Edinburgh Unitarian church, perhaps our loss will be their gain! Glenys has been part of Nottage for years, and has been secretary, taken services for us, and the first to suggest "Fish & Chip Suppers", while quietly drinking *two* cups of tea after service while the rest of us had *one*! She will be missed, but we sincerely hope she will soon settle and make new friends ..... life begins at 70?!

*Avril Protheroe*

## **SWANSEA**

The summer months bring nice surprises. We usually have one or two visitors from other parts of Britain, but this year two charming Dutchmen joined us for a service. They had such good command of English that we were able to have a very meaningful conversation over tea and biscuits. They love coming to Wales to enjoy the mountains.

We thank our visiting worship leaders who have given us interesting addresses and we are grateful to Mr Brad Williams who, once again, has made a wonderful job of filling our courtyard with a floral display of hanging baskets and troughs – a very welcoming approach to church.

*Pamela Taylor*

## TREBANOS

### GELLIONNEN

Congratulations *again* to Phil and Katherine Harris whose second granddaughter, Elvie Seren weighed in at 7lb 7oz. And there is another grandchild on the way – you can't have too much of a good thing.

Paul and Helen Temblett arrived for service one beautiful sunny morning bringing with them little Bryn Robert. He is a beautiful baby. We hope to watch his progress.

Rosie Evans, daughter of Gareth and Sheila will now be back in America having visited Bulgaria with a toy library scheme. The idea is to allow children in orphanages an element of choice, something they perhaps rarely have. Rosie did this trip last year also, her parents must be very proud of her for undertaking a job that not all of us would want to do.

When Ken Morgan took service for us we poached two of the Cefn Coed ladies. Thank you Ann Lewis and Vera Tomsett for coming and thank you Ken for bringing them. Please come again!

We are extremely grateful to Geraint Price who on a Sunday morning smartly escorted some eighteen cows back out through our big gates and onto the common land. On several occasions our graveyard has been churned up by bovine feet and it takes the ground quite a while to settle down again.

At one of our services we sang a hymn tune by our own Ernie Sanford Francis. He had not been warned beforehand and it was a great pleasure to watch his face as recognition dawned. He has not yet given it a name so now we call it 'Ernie's Tune'.

Sandor Nemeth has written a number of songs and we sometimes hear him sing one of these in the chapel.

Many years ago the Unitarians of this area published a hymnal entitled 'Psalmu Ar Y Mynydd' – the seeds of new word and melody are obviously still with us.

Dolores and Colin Morgan and I had the great pleasure of visiting Llanmadog Holiday Camp when the SE Wales Unitarian District chose to use this as our summertime meeting-place. Lots of folk came, the sun shone and people brought photographs and fond memories with them. The trees have matured now, some of the sand-hills are green with ferns not golden as I remembered them, but the beach and shoreline are more breathtaking than ever. The camp itself is much better equipped, but the little barn/chapel remains simple and beautiful. Sharon Hellard and Heather and Shirley Davies have grown up! It was such a pleasure to meet you—in my mind I see children where now mature adults stand. Sorry about that, but the memories are marvellous aren't they?

### 'Gone Wrong' Chapel Notices

The fasting and prayer conference includes meals.

A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.

*Marian Littlepage*

## WICK

Wick Chapel, being in the midst of a farming community –its original building and grounds were given by a group of six farmers– has always had a break in services during August. This was because the members were all involved in harvesting and haymaking for the month, so the final service in July has always been rather special.



Photos by Helen Bhanaut



This year it was even more so because it coincided with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Julianne becoming their GA recognised Lay Leader. She had conducted services at Wick for many years previously, and so this was a memorable occasion. A very large congregation sang Julianne's favourite hymns and took part in the service. Ages ranged from 2 to over 90 and even Gilli our four-footed member took up her usual pew. Helen Lewis our Chairperson and organist spoke on behalf of the congregation and presented Julianne with a gift on their behalf. After service Julianne cut a special cake –a complete surprise– and all enjoyed refreshments in a party atmosphere. It was lovely to welcome friends from Nottage. In the past Wick and Nottage congregations have shared several ministries and it is heart-warming that we remain close.

The next service at Wick will be on 12<sup>th</sup> September, with our Harvest Thanksgiving Service on September 26<sup>th</sup>. This year the Thanksgiving Service will be conducted by Helen Bhanaut.

Our best wishes to all our District friends – and if you are ever in the beautiful Vale of Glamorgan please visit us. The Rev Wyn Thomas and a busload of his members did – on July 11<sup>th</sup>. Our Welsh-speaking member, Mansel Lalis met them and gave a brief history of the chapel before Wyn conducted a short service and all enjoyed a picnic lunch in the chapel before they continued their bus trip to Caerleon. A truly magical occasion. Here's to many more!

The Open Evening on 29th June 2010 was well attended with a lot of support from other congregations including Nottage, Aberdare, Gellionnen and Cardiff. Thanks to all of them! There were also some people from the village who were in the Chapel for the first time. We had a talk with a Power Point presentation about "Wick Chapel – past, present and future". This traced the origins of Wick Chapel back to the seventeenth century Baptists in Ilston, Gower through a controversial period when the General and Particular Baptists separated right up to the present day. Pictures of Chapel life in recent years were displayed and the challenges of the future confronted. Everyone seemed interested in the history of Wick Chapel but hopefully this evening will be remembered as the start of a new and exciting chapter for Wick.

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world, indeed it's the only thing that ever has.*

*Julianne Morgan & Helen Bhanaut*

## **UNITARIAN EXPERIENCE WEEK      July 2010 in Hucklow, Derbyshire**

For me these weeks have usually been good but this one was AWESOMELY good. We enjoyed a huge range of activities. There was the mind-blowing talk on Climate Change from Vic Mason, one time scientific advisor to the government with passionate views somewhat different from "the norm". He finished up with a huge sign which said DON'T PANIC! Mike Dadson and Phil Silk spoke on Universalism. They feel this is a more acceptable title for our movement than Unitarian, it has however many different meanings to different people. We ended by a riotous singing of "up the sunshine mountain" which has been ringing through my head ever since. Richard Merrit gave us a brilliant history of Music. Workshops are too many to list, covering arts, yoga, walking, serious subjects and more light-hearted ones. The folk evening and the Friday Social were full of fun and amazing talent; band and singing group and dancing. The services morning and evening were splendid; often very moving with music of all kinds, poetry and prose and sometimes the delight of inclusivity when folk lit candles and spoke on a theme. This I feel is the way of the future but we also sang hymns with great gusto from both green and purple books. Geoff Usher's Sunday service in the Chapel on the subject of Being Miserable was extremely funny and said a great deal. The committee had worked their socks off to give us such a week and the staff of Nightingale could not have been more friendly and helpful. Newcomers were absorbed into the group at once as is always the way. So where is the Welsh contingent? We hope to see you in 2011 (July 23<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>). Early bookings are popular with the Nightingale staff and our committee so for now you can phone me on 02380555333 to show your interest.

*Brenda Knopf*

*[This report came to me from Brenda who lives in Southampton. Brenda has been attending the UEW in our Nightingale Centre in Great Hucklow for years. The centre was built by Unitarians and is well used throughout the year. Accommodation is comfortable, meals are good and the surrounding countryside is incredibly beautiful. I can personally recommend a stay there at any time of the year. For further information: The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow, Tideswell, Buxton, Derbyshire. Tel: (01298) 871218 ; e-mail: [info@great-hucklow.org.uk](mailto:info@great-hucklow.org.uk) Marian Littlepage*

## **AN APPEAL TO ALL WOMEN'S LEAGUE MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS**

Next year's GA takes place at Swansea - our home turf. Unfortunately, our AGM at Nottingham was rather disappointing for two reasons:-

- 1) Clashes with other meetings.
- 2) Members are finding it too expensive.

Next year we as Welsh members have the opportunity to make our mark by turning up at the GA in force.

I also believe that we can make our mark on the Women's League stand. Last year there was very little on it to make a person stop and look. This year let's give it a Welsh twist! Could we perhaps have Welsh cakes etc. to sell for League ? Would you like to suggest any other content ?

PLEASE let me have your views and suggestions for content on the stand by the beginning of October. Also, if you are prepared to man the stall at any time during the GA, please let me know. The S E Wales District President and I will be present each day. It would be wonderful if Welsh members could assume exclusive responsibility this year.

I shall also be sending this appeal to members in the S Wales District.

*Dilys Evans (National President).*

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### **ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION**

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Items for publication should be sent by to:-

Ken Morgan, 25c Holford Street, Cefn Coed y Cymer, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 2RW. Tel: 01685 379016.  
Copy may also be e-mailed to [kenneth.morgan25@tesco.net](mailto:kenneth.morgan25@tesco.net) or to [Philip@philipgriffiths.co.uk](mailto:Philip@philipgriffiths.co.uk)

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The annual SEWUS membership fee for 2010 remains at **£5**.

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