



## South East Wales Unitarian News

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June 2014

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### FOR YOUR DIARY

**Thursday 26 June** – 2014 Annual lecture at Highland Place Aberdare at 7pm. Dr Martin Wright will speak on 'Wales and Socialism since the 1880s'. (See Aberdare news, below, for further details.)

**Sunday 6 July – Annual District Rally** (See *From the District President*, below, for details.)

**Saturday 12 July** – at Gellionnen Chapel (from 5pm) Mary Webb's *Precious Bane* performed by The Village Quire with reader Phil Smith. Admission £5. (See Gellionnen news, below, for further details.)

**Sunday 13 July – Ceredigion Sponsored Walk** (See Melda's report below and also *From the District President*.)

**Saturday 9 August** – Copy deadline for the next issue of South East Wales Unitarian News.

### DEPARTMENT FOR UNITARIANS IN WALES

It's been 45 days and well over a thousand miles since the official start of my new duties and I'd like to take advantage of this opportunity to thank you all for making it such a positive experience. The decision to leave my post as Superintendent Registrar of Ceredigion – to walk away from a job that I was entirely comfortable with having spent over a quarter of a century in the service, was an enormous decision. To actually leave colleagues who were also good friends, who I could depend on to support me whatever the circumstances was actually very scary. There were more than a few raised eyebrows when I made my decision public and the question everybody asked was "Why?" Well, I still can't explain it exactly, but I do know that so far, I haven't had any regrets. Everything that I've seen, heard and experienced within the Unitarian movement in Wales has confirmed that it was the right decision.

I have felt so completely at home wherever I've visited. The welcome and support shown by everybody has been overwhelming and I really can't thank you enough for making this transitional part of my life journey so easy and enjoyable. The members of the Welsh department have been extremely supportive, providing valuable insight, advice and guidance whilst still allowing me the freedom to choose my own path. True Unitarians! Each and every person that I've met in the SEWUS congregations has made a favourable impression – kind, lovely, warm, generous people – and this makes me feel so positive and hopeful for the future.

Our numbers may be small, but why should that stop us? Together – we can make a difference. This is why I would really like to provide more opportunities for us Unitarians in Wales to come together to share our experiences, to exchange ideas and just to get to know each other a little bit better. This will make planning and building for the future so much easier. I hope that you'll all make the effort to come up to Llwynrhydowen on the 13<sup>th</sup> July to join the South Wales District on the annual sponsored walk. It's going to be a good day with a visit to the old chapel, a talk on Dylan Thomas and his family connection to Gwilym Marles, followed by tea and a chance to mingle. Incidentally, – you don't have to walk – come for the talk, the tea or just the chat – you'll be just as welcome.

I'm also looking forward to the SEWUS rally on the 7<sup>th</sup> July. It looks as if quite a few members of the SW District will be coming along to Swansea. The event at Gellionnen on the 12<sup>th</sup> July is also circled in my diary. And don't forget the National Eisteddfod in Llanelli at the beginning of August. I'm looking for volunteers, so please do contact me at [mgrantham@unitarian.org.uk](mailto:mgrantham@unitarian.org.uk) or call me on 01559 36 2392. So, all in all, the next few weeks look as if they're going to be very busy, but also hugely enjoyable in the company of fellow Unitarians who I now consider to be new friends.

*Melda*

(Melda Grantham, Secretary of Unitarians in Wales)

## **GA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE KEY MESSAGES 16 & 17 MAY 2014**

### **1. New Executive Committee Convenor**

Robert Ince was appointed the new Convenor for the forthcoming year following the planned resignation of Rev Martin Whitell in view of his retirement from the Executive Committee in April 2015. The Executive Committee expressed its thanks to Martin for his work and commitment as Convenor since November 2010.

### **2. General Assembly President**

The President of the General Assembly Marion Baker attended the meeting as an observer to improve communication and awareness and has an open invitation to come to future meetings.

### **3. Call for President and Vice-President 2015-2016**

Member bodies of the General Assembly - congregations, districts and affiliated societies - will shortly be invited to forward suggestions of suitable individuals for the positions of President and Vice-President for the year 2015-16. These should be sent to the Chief Officer to enable the Executive Committee to consider nominations in November 2014.

### **4. Annual Meeting 2014**

Initial feedback from the 2014 Annual Meeting at Whittlebury Hall indicates that it was a successful meeting and many people enjoyed the new style of hotel venue. We value comments in planning for 2015 and there is still an opportunity to complete the [online survey](#) for attendees which can be found at Unitarian website.

### **5. fm Scottish Pilot**

A report was received from Iain Brown on the future ministry (fm) Scottish Pilot. The pilot has now been concluded. Whilst the training for worship leaders and other Scottish activists was seen as useful and value for money there do not appear to be any general lessons learnt that could be applied elsewhere on supporting spiritual leadership of congregations without full-time professional ministers - the aim of the fm project. It was agreed that a summary of the report would be prepared and circulated to districts and that the conclusions would contribute to strategic thinking for the future of ministry.

### **6. Safeguarding Update**

The Chief Officer provided an update on current safeguarding issues following the revised Safeguarding Policy put in place in January 2013. An audit of the safeguarding arrangements in congregations will take place later in 2014 to help us gauge the extent to which national policy guidance is actually being implemented locally. Districts will be approached to ensure a 100% response and to help each of their congregations to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

### **7. Vision Day 6th September 2014**

The General Assembly's current five year strategy comes to an end in 2015 and it is timely to review together our vision for the future for the national Unitarian Movement. Invitations will shortly be sent out to a Vision Day on the 6 September 2014. The outcome of this day will contribute to the development of a shared vision which will be launched at the 2015 Annual Meeting.

### **8. Congregational Survey**

A summary of the results of the congregational survey, which has been given wide circulation in The Inquirer, was considered. The number of visitors to congregations was a positive finding along with the overall numbers. The results will contribute to the thinking for the Vision Day and future strategy.

### **9. International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) and International Association of Liberal Religious Women (IALRW)**

The 34th Congress of the IARF will take place in Birmingham, UK from 24 - 27 August 2014 and a message of welcome and support was agreed by the Executive Committee. This is a great opportunity for British Unitarians to engage in inter-faith dialogue on challenges for religious freedom in the digital age. The Congress will be preceded by a conference arranged by the IALRW on the theme "Raising our Voices for Change Towards a Sustainable World" and Unitarian women are encouraged to attend. It was agreed to offer funding support for young adults to attend the Congress.

### **10. Secretary of Unitarians in Wales**

Melda Grantham was welcomed to the position of Secretary of Unitarians in Wales and attended the Annual Meetings as part of her induction.

### **11. Appointments**

The Executive Committee made the following appointments and thanked Philip and Alan for serving: Visibility Strategy Group - Philip Colfox    Sustentation Fund Trusteeship - Alan Eastwood

## LAST EVER SENIORS' REPORT

(Seniors' Report – March 2014)

So this is it. The final hurrah. For myself, the final Unitarian youth event. For you lovely readers, the final Unitarian youth report. As always, it was marvellous. This year our theme of the weekend for 14-17 year olds was "The Truman Show"; "The Truman Show" is a film that was released in 1998 with Jim Carrey playing the lead. It tells the story of an insurance salesman who discovers that his entire life is actually a TV show. I won't give any more away but I highly recommend the film, not just because I think that Jim Carrey is hilarious, but because it is a timeless classic that asks you different questions every time you watch it. Of course, every TV show needs a director and this led us into discussions as to whether we are the directors of our own lives, or is there a higher being and we simply follow its plans? Maybe we are simply beings of circumstance and the events around us lead us to make decisions that navigate our path through life. Don't let anyone tell you that these weekends are not extremely thought-provoking!

The last youth weekend meant my last walk to Eyam, my last credo group and my final circle time. In true John Harley fashion we took a new route to Eyam in which we DEFINITELY knew where we were going and we did NOT just happen to stumble upon the right way to go. My final credo group left me feeling very appreciative of the close knit friends that I have made, that even though I may only see them 3 times a year, we can still all sit down and have a good chat as if we saw each other only yesterday. My final circle time was led by myself and another youth leaver (and a fabulous human being) and it was beautiful. It was quiet and serene and there were candles. I know we Unitarians love our candles!

On the last day, the Sunday, after chapel service, it is obligatory that whatever youths are leaving the programme that they either jump into a trough full of water or have water thrown over them. Most people get their swimming costumes on and a tee-shirt and get in the trough or opt to stand, often fully clothed, and have water poured over them. Myself and Annabel however (the other leaver) are way way more courageous than that. We got down to our bikinis and jumped into that trough like it was a sauna. Obviously, it was *not* a sauna as it was March and we were in Derbyshire so, in reality, it was absolutely freezing. But, well worth it!

It's hard to believe that I'll never be going back to Hucklow as a youth. I would like to thank all the youth leaders that have supported me and have made the last 7 years so incredible and for creating the perfect space for me to grow into the person I have become. I can't explain how much Hucklow means to each and every one of us who attend there. You know you've found somewhere special when, even when you leave there, you don't feel like it's really ever gone. It stays in your heart forever. Everyone should have somewhere like that and I am grateful that I have been given the opportunity to have somewhere like it.

*Elizabeth Rosenberg – 18 years young  
Live long and prosper*



A cold watery ordeal for departing seniors

## GWERSYLL CWMWRDU

The charity Gwersyll Cwmwrdu has now been dissolved and decisions regarding the future use of the building are in the hands of the chapel trustees. The secretary has been asked to send the remaining funds of approximately £123 to the Send a Child to Hucklow Fund.

Thanks are due to the many volunteers who kept Cwmwrdu running over half a century.

*Sheila Cousins*

## FROM THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

It may be unusual to witness joyful chatter at the AGM of any organisation but that is what we heard in May when we met in Aberdare!

There was certainly a buzz in the air as old friends welcomed new ones – Melda Grantham, now in post as Secretary for Unitarians in Wales, being one. We had good reason for joy as we ‘counted our blessings’ in devotions before the business. In between the two we looked at displays and a slide show of the many activities of the past year—evidence that there has been, and still is, such a lot going on.

My thanks to all who contributed to the devotions, exhibition, and lunchtime refreshments as well as the washing up afterwards. I will be sending a donation to Water Aid from my first year as SEWUS President and am delighted that a number of you gave a contribution that day in the charity box for my chosen presidential charity – thank you.

The activities in our children’s clubs and women’s league, and the events held in SEWUS and South Wales Districts congregations, some of them jointly, displayed our strength in connecting together. It is this strength that we are going to need to move forward with renewed vision and purpose.

Our purpose needs to be one of attracting new faces and appealing to the spiritual side of many who are nervous of what lies behind our doors. That is why events such as the St Fagans procession and our District joint events are so important – they show the outside world what we do and they boost our morale.

Our July 6<sup>th</sup> District Rally in Swansea will be a time to relax together and have fun and will follow a Dylan Thomas theme. Dylan’s great uncle, Rev William Thomas (*Gwilym Marles*) was minister at Llwynrhydown Chapel in Ceredigion. We meet at the Dylan Thomas Centre, Swansea at 11 am ( car park opposite). We’ll have a short talk followed by a chance to look at the Dylan Thomas exhibition which now includes Dylan’s early note books. These have been brought back to Wales from the USA by the National Library of Wales, funded by the National lottery. They are being shared between Swansea and the National Library in Aberystwyth and are a fascinating insight into the young Dylan’s development as a poet.

We’ll have Sunday lunch at the Yacht Club nearby. After lunch we’ll visit Dylan Thomas’s house at Cwmdonkin Drive in Swansea with a guided tour commencing at 2.15, entrance to this is at a special rate of £5 each. Although we requested bookings by 15<sup>th</sup> June, if you haven’t yet done so it would be worth asking Keith Lewis-Jones if there are any places left. Keith can be contacted on 01443 742498.

I hope we’ll be joined on the 6<sup>th</sup> by some of our West Wales Unitarian friends. In return we have an invitation to their sponsored walk on July 13<sup>th</sup> – meeting at the Llwynrhydown vestry at about one o’clock. Walkers will then be ferried to the start of the walk which will be at the birthplace of D Jacob Davies. The Dylan Thomas theme continues as we’ll walk to the Old Llwynrhydown Chapel (about 3 miles) where there’ll be a talk on Dylan and his Unitarian connection through his great uncle.

If you can’t manage the walk you are still very welcome to join the event, with the promise of tea afterwards. Sponsorship is for a charity called Apêl Elain, set up to support services to Elain, a severely disabled young girl, and to the Welsh Department.

I look forward to these events and making further connections with fellow Unitarians.

*Julie Nedin*

## THOUGHT FOR NOW

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

This is the miracle that happens every time to those who really love: the more they give, the more they possess of that precious nourishing love from which flowers and children have their strength and which could help all human beings if they would take it without doubting.

*Rainer Maria Rilke.*

If you carry your own sunshine with you, there will be fewer dark places in your life.

*Anon.*

Never be sad for what is over, be glad it was once yours.

*Anon.*

## ABERDARE

Greetings from Highland Place

Women's League continues weekly with numbers increasing with the better weather!

On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June from 10am to 4pm we will be holding a grand 'Nearly New' sale to which all are welcome. Members of League have enjoyed a variety of talks from visitors and from our own talented group, e.g. Anne Watts on the emancipation of women after the Great War and Dilys Evans on 'Art'.

Mrs Edna Jones and Iris Davies are still poorly but enjoyed visits from other church members.

The Welsh Department Secretary, Melda Grantham, visited us on the 4<sup>th</sup> May and introduced herself to the congregation. She was also present at the District Annual General Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May, when the church was full. The day started with a short service taken by the District President, Julie Nedin, then the AGM and finished with a shared lunch provided by district members. The church was beautifully decorated with displays by Women's League, Uni'Club Children's Group, the Cardiff Children's Group and Julie Nedin's chosen charity 'Water Aid'. The atmosphere was wonderful and everyone was obviously enjoying themselves. The sun shone and everyone smiled!

It is lovely to see Eric and Anne back among us after the traumatic time they have endured – they were sorely missed.

*Marian Whipey*

### **2014 Annual Lecture at Highland Place – Thursday June 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm**

The Annual Lecture will be given by Dr Martin Wright who currently lectures in History at Cardiff University, where he specialises in the labour and radical history of Wales and Britain.

Dr Wright was born in Northampton which he describes as "a centre of old radicalism". He moved to Wales in 1984 to go to University in Lampeter, and has lived in Wales ever since. He studied history to masters' level at Lampeter, and subsequently worked in the Extra Mural Department of the University of Wales at Aberystwyth, where he taught history and served as Head of Continuing Education. Since leaving Aberystwyth in 2004, he has worked for the Universities of Huddersfield, Lampeter and Cardiff, researching and teaching history. Martin completed his PhD at Cardiff in 2011.

The title of his lecture is '**Wales and Socialism since the 1880s**'.

When I asked him what had prompted his particular interest in Welsh Social History he explained that his commitment to socialism has deep roots which he has held since the early 1980s and moreover, to a love of Wales which goes back to his childhood. Dr Wright is an excellent lecturer who has a passion for his subject which is infectious.

The Lecture is free and *anyone* who is interested will be welcome. Please feel at liberty to bring this event to the notice of anyone outside Unitarian 'circles' who might also like to attend.

*Ella Lewis-Jones*

## CARDIFF UNITARIANS / UNDO DIAID CAERDYDD

Our delegate at this year's General Assembly Annual Meetings was Sarah Boyce where she and Joy Foster from Highland Place gave a talk to re-launch REvolution. This was quite a feather in the cap for South East Wales as they were able to talk about the success of the Children's Clubs at both churches which started as a result of both women attending the first REvolution training. The Cardiff Children's Club continue to be inspired on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month and there are currently 10 children involved.

Following the GA Meetings, Sarah compiled a file of interesting, information and experiences of her time there and this has been passed around members of the congregation.

Following decisions taken by the Worship Group, an amended style of services is now forming the pattern for our English language worship. We are grateful for the visiting worship leaders who have engaged and supported us with this. We now have a printed Order of Service each Sunday.

We offer congratulations to Diana Bianchi on becoming President of the District Women's League and she will shortly be arranging for the Cardiff League to re-convene. It is intended that the members will meet every few months to begin with. The National WL President, Mrs Shelagh Stott will address the next District League meeting at the Society of Friends Meeting House, Charles Street on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October at 2.15pm. Cardiff members will host the occasion.

The Rev'd Lindy Latham (Bristol) will conduct the joint summer service (Aberdare, Cardiff and Cefn Coed) at 3pm on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July at the Friends Meeting House, Charles Street, Cardiff. This will be followed by afternoon tea.

The post of Development Officer has come to an end and we thank Dewi Owen for his work and service. We are pleased he continues to attend services with us. Pat Simpson will now produce the church Calendar.

We offer sincere condolences to Mrs Eluned Davies and her sister Olwen following the death of their brother. We extend our thoughts to all of the family.

The congregation were pleased to meet Mrs Melda Grantham, the new Welsh Department Secretary, when she joined us at our service on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

There will be a United Nations meeting at the Temple of Peace, Cardiff on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm. The speaker will be Mr John Rees and he will speak about Syria. We continue to be committed as corporate members, to the work of the UN.

*Lis Dyson-Jones*

## **CEFNCOED**

### **Women's League**

We met three times in April. On the last Wednesday we were so pleased to have Anne Watts come to speak to us. Her theme was, "The Scandal of the Royal Families." It was really enjoyable – Anne knows how to make a talk interesting. She has promised to come again.

We had a terrible May with so many people not well. We should have had Lis Dyson-Jones come to speak to us on the 14<sup>th</sup> May but sadly we had to cancel. We are twelve members but at the moment we are down to six. On 20<sup>th</sup> April, Shirley was taken into hospital. We are so pleased she is now home. Gwynfa has had her knee operation. She is with her daughter Elizabeth at the moment. Bobby and Barbara also have problems with their knees. *Where is it going to end?* We've had to cancel our planned trip to Barry in June. *'Roll on next month,'* I say. To all our invalids we send our love and best wishes.

*Vera Tomsett*

### **Visit by Melda**

We were pleased to welcome Melda Grantham, the new Secretary of Unitarians in Wales, when she joined us at our service on 4<sup>th</sup> May. This was Melda's second visit to Hen Dŷ Cwrdd – the first was in June 2006 as a member of a coach-party from Ceredigion on a day-trip organised, for his 'flock', by the Rev Wyn Thomas.

It was good also, on the following Sunday, to hear Melda being interviewed about her new post by John Roberts on Bwrw Golwg, the Welsh Religious Affairs programme broadcast on Radio Cymru.

### **You are missed**

It's good to have Shirley Douglas able to attend service again after a number of weeks at Prince Charles Hospital. Good news also that Gwynfa Bowen is making steady progress after undergoing a knee operation at Llandough Hospital. Gwynfa is recuperating at her daughter Elizabeth's home in Llandaff – we look forward to seeing her in chapel again before too long.

Margaret Thomas has been admitted as a patient at Cwm Cynon Hospital, Mountain Ash. We send our best wishes to Margaret, and to all of our members who are unable to attend service.

### **District AGM**

Several members attended the SEWUS AGM at Highland Place on 18<sup>th</sup> May. It was good to meet up with friends from other congregations and enjoy a chat over a shared-lunch.

### **Mrs Megan Crandon**

We have been saddened by the death of one of our members – Mrs Megan Crandon, who suffered ill health for quite some time. Megan passed away on 1<sup>st</sup> June at Prince Charles Hospital where she had been a patient for six weeks. Her funeral service at Hen Dŷ Cwrdd on 10<sup>th</sup> June was conducted by the Rev Eric Jones. We offer sincere condolences to Megan's husband Harry, son Marek, daughter-in-law Gail, and all members of the family.

*Ken Morgan*

## NOTTAGE

We are pleased to report that Harry Hales is up and well after his hospital procedure. Jennifer Evans is coping with her chemotherapy with her usual positivity, and we have enjoyed her and Tudor's company twice since her treatment has begun.

We have a charity box in chapel which was started when Beverley Littlepage was our Lay Pastor, at the suggestion of the late Aileen Pendle. When we started the money raised was for the schools and hospital in the Khasi Hills, but since then we have added the Swansea Bay Asylum Seekers Support Group. Each time the collecting box is full it is emptied and the proceeds divided, this time £110 was shared between the Margaret Barr Hospital in India and the SBASSG.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April Julianne conducted a service to which we were invited to take along our teddy bears to illustrate that our families are all the same, while being different. We were delighted to be joined by Reverend John Clifford and his lovely wife Barbara, it was a real treat to have our congregation enlarged by such a well known couple in the District.

At our Easter Service, again conducted by Julianne, our blessings were many and various. We had a congregation of 15 which was a rare treat. Gwladys Howell joined us on her first attendance since moving into her residential home. Jan & Harry Hales joined us after Harry's hospital visit. Rose Owen was celebrating a birthday the following day, so her grandchildren made cup cakes for us all to enjoy with our tea after the service, and Julianne sent us home with chocolate Bunnies.

We were very pleased to welcome Melda Grantham to our chapel for a service. We were her first call since taking up her new post, and I think we all enjoyed each others company.

Jonathan Thomas and Shaun Steele are two of our congregation who lost their jobs last year when Remploy closed in Bridgend. Jonathan is working for Fords, but while pleased to continue with the work he was doing, misses his friends greatly. Shaun has had problems with his health, so was not able to work for some time, but we are delighted to say that recently he has been taken on by our local council to maintain verges. We are so pleased he has been able to resume work, and wish them both well after a difficult year.

Our congratulations go to Elizabeth Rosenberg who recently was able to vote for the first time, and passed her Grade 8 flute exam with a merit. Good Luck in University!

*Avril Protheroe*

## TREBANOS

### GELLIONNEN

We have tried out a walk in silent meditation and it was very good. Leaving from the chapel, we took a circular route, returning 40 minutes later for a cup of tea and comments; it was very different. We Unitarians are a busy, talkative lot and the "silent" walk proved refreshing. It was actually full of the sound of birds and our own footsteps. We must thank Julie Nedin for leading this different form of Sunday worship.

It was good to meet up at the AGM in Aberdare with friends from out other chapels, and also of course with our new Secretary for Wales, Melda Grantham. She had already visited with us at Gellionnen Chapel.

We have recently met up again with Elen Bowman who, as a youngster at Ystalyfera Comprehensive School, sang with Alun Wyn Dafis, Philip Harris and Eva Miles at our Christmas midnight services. Obviously, the Swansea Valley still tugs at her heartstrings. Welcome back, We hope to see you as often as you can make it.

Two sixteenth birthdays have been celebrated recently, they belong to Katy Clark and Siân Evans. Both are at present in the middle of exams, we wish them well and a year of good happenings.

*Marian Littlepage*

**Music at Gellionnen Chapel, Pontardawe  
on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2014 7.30 pm. £5 entrance**

**The Village Quire and Phil Smith**

Through song and spoken word The Village Quire and actor Phil Smith tell the story of Precious Bane, Mary Webb's story of love and ambition

**Informal entertainment from Aneirin & friends  
at 5 pm**

Welsh traditional music -no charge for this- beforehand.

**Bring your own picnic**

For directions and up to date news go to  
[www.ukunitarians.org.uk/gellionnenandgraiq/](http://www.ukunitarians.org.uk/gellionnenandgraiq/)

## THE MEDITATION FELLOWSHIP

The May TMF Weekend was transferred from Ivy House, Warminster to Sarum College, Salisbury. I was sad to hear of the closure on economic grounds of the Ivy House Retreat Centre and especially to know that I would not be able to walk in the gorgeous gardens of Ivy House. However, we were transferred to Sarum College, Salisbury and therefore did not lose our weekend. The date had to be rearranged and so I had the opportunity of attending our service and AGM in Aberdare.

Marie Rosenberg and I set off by train for Salisbury and discovered that Sarum College is within easy walking distance of the railway station—the person who thought of putting wheels on suitcases deserves a knighthood. The weekend talks and meditations were conducted by Richard Bober, participants came from several of our churches and chapels. Richard is a practicing Buddhist, lecturing and teaching Buddhist practice and so it must be very much a busman's holiday to him. It was a thoughtful and inspiring weekend and I have brought away a comment of his which will hopefully remain at the front of my thoughts – “If your insight is not compassionate, then it is not insight.”

The next TMF weekend takes place in Sarum College in November. Accommodation is very comfortable, college staff very helpful and cost reasonable. I shall keep you posted.

*Marian Littlepage*

## CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Matthew Brown who recently launched his children's Book “Compton Valance” at the Hay Festival.

Compton Valance is described as the “Most Powerful Boy in the Universe” and the title is taken from the name of the village Compton Valance in Dorset.

Matthew was brought up in Cowbridge and attended West Grove Unitarian Church when he lived in the area.

Matthew is indebted to his inspiring history teacher at Cowbridge, Mrs Williams-Davies for her encouragement during his school years, not forgetting the inspiration provided by his two sons, Sam who is eight and Joe who is five.

Two of the characters in the book are Barry Wales—because Matthew's mother lives in Barry and letters and cards are always sent to Barry Wales, and Allan Exit—taken from the signs seen above doors in cinemas and other public buildings in Wales, Allan (*Welsh, meaning out*) and Exit.

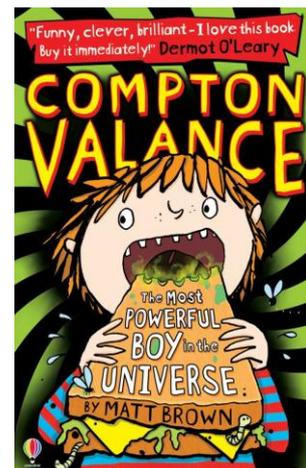
To know a little more about the book, you can ask Matthew's mother, Lis Dyson-Jones—she is the mum who lives in Barry Wales.

*Eric Jones*



Matt Brown

Photo: Courtesy—Wales On Line



## ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

Copy-deadline for the next issue of the *South East Wales Unitarian News* is **Saturday 9 August 2014**. Items for publication should be sent by to:- [kenneth.morgan25@tesco.net](mailto:kenneth.morgan25@tesco.net) or Ken Morgan, 25c Holford Street, Cefn Coed y Cymer, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 2RW. Tel: 01685 379016