



June 2017

FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 2 July – District Rally: First to Bethel Baptist chapel in Llangyndeyrn where Rev Cen Llwyd will give a short history of the chapel whose first Minister was a Unitarian. Then to National Botanic Gardens at Llanarthne – lunch in café (or picnic if preferred). As well as being able to stroll in the beautiful gardens, there will also be an antiques fair to add extra interest. Entrance to the NBG site is £6: Bus - £10.

Saturday 5 August – Copy deadline for the next issue of the District News.

Sunday 20 August – Folk Service at Gellionnen conducted by Rev Alun Wyn Dafis.

DISTRICT AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the South East Wales Unitarian Society was held at Hen Dŷ Cwrdd, Cefncoed at 11am on Sunday, 21 May.

The meeting, marking the end of Tony Foster's 2-year tenure as District President, commenced with Tony leading the Opening Devotions: it continued with him guiding us through the review of the year's work as contained in the Annual Report. Certificates were presented to Sarah Boyce, Hilda Dumpleton, Diana Bianchi, Julie Nedin, and Stephen Wilson (in absentia) in recognition of successfully completing a Rites of Passage course under the tutorship of Rev Eric Jones.

Diana Bianchi was installed as District President for 2017-19, with Alun Watts elected as Vice President. All other Officers were re-elected and, in addition, Rory and Rhys Castle-Jones were elected as IT Facebook co-ordinators.

As a token of appreciation for his work over the past two years, Tony Foster was presented with a small gift by District Secretary Lis Dyson-Jones. Diana Bianchi was given a memento of the occasion by Gwynfa Bowen on behalf of the Cefncoed congregation.

Proceedings were then halted and all decamped to the chapel vestry for a most enjoyable lunch provided, to their usual high standard, by the Hen Dŷ Cwrdd ladies. Following the meal, the gathering returned to the chapel for a short service conducted by the new president.

Our thanks go to the Cefncoed congregation for hosting a most successful event.



Rites of Passage students proudly display their certificates

Photo: Rory Castle-Jones



Tony welcomes Diana as new District President

Photo: Joy Foster

FROM THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

The reason I chose Cefncoed as the place to be installed as President is that I have a family connection through the Rev John Hathren Davies, minister of Hen Dŷ Cwrdd, 1877–1910, who was my grandfather's uncle on my mother's side.

Hathren, as he was called, was born on 15th October 1855 in the Vale of Aeron Cardiganshire. And he was one of eight children born to Deio and Mary Davies who were staunch Unitarians. (Incidentally one of his brothers was the father of Ivor Novello). When Hathren was ten years old he was playing with friends on a neighbouring farm when he decided to explore the workings of a chaffing machine which worked with hydraulic power, so he switched the machine on and his hand got trapped and dragged into the machine. As a result he had to have his arm amputated and that operation took place on the kitchen table without any form of anaesthetic. The operation was done by the local GP at Lampeter.

Deprived of his left hand to earn a living on the land or as a craftsman, Hathren was sent to school to prepare him for a ministerial career. He was sent to The Vale of Aeron Academy which was at that time a seminary of much repute. From there he went to the grammar school at Lampeter run by the Rev Rees Cribyn Jones. In 1873 he passed into the Presbyterian College at Carmarthen. During the vacation in 1876 he preached at Hen Dŷ Cwrdd on several occasions and in 1877 he received an invitation from the church to become its minister. Initially he was torn between accepting the post and the opportunity of emigrating to America to study Theology at Harvard. In the end he decided that he would accept the ministry at Cefn and took up his duties in August 1877 at the age of twenty one.

A minister's salary was not much at the time (Hathren was paid only £60 per annum) so ministers had to find other forms of employment to supplement their salary. Hathren opened a grammar school in the Vestry at Cefn originally known as 'Ysgol Davies', but a local person referred to it as 'Pen Steps Academy' and that name remained until 1901 when it was closed due to Hathren's ill health. At Pensteps Academy Hathren taught English, Welsh, Latin, Greek, Hebrew and French, and he also taught the principles of agriculture to the sons of local farmers who had asked him to do so. He also held the postmastership at Cefn Post Office for 10 years.

As soon as he had established himself at Cefncoed he threw himself with vigour into the vortex of local political life. He was a student at college when squirearchy in Cardiganshire drove Rev Gwilym Marles, and his congregation, out of Llwyn Rhyd Owen chapel in 1876, and the memory of this embittered him against Toryism for the rest of his life. The Merthyr Express in an obituary to him said, "Mr Davies was an ardent Radical both in local and Imperial Politics. Any and every local movement which had for its object the uplifting of humanity and the alleviating of distress and misery, his name was indissolubly connected to it."

Hathren was a member of the Vaynor & Penderyn District Council for 10 years. In addition to his political activities he had many other attributes – here are some of them:-

- He was Secretary of the Aberdare and Merthyr Unitarian Musical Society.
- In 1893 he was President of the South Wales Unitarian Association.
- For twelve years he was Editor of the Ymofynnydd (the Welsh language Unitarian periodical).
- He was well known in Welsh literary circles being an ardent competitor and adjudicator at various Eisteddfods.
- He was twice a winner at the National Eisteddfod for his literary works.
- He was a member of the Vaynor School Board.
- The door of his house was always open to those who needed any help—from writing letters, to giving legal advice and sometimes settling domestic disputes.

The year before he died the members of Cefn congregation presented him with an illustrated certificate and purse of gold in recognition for his services to the church and community over a period of thirty two years.

Hathren died on 12th March, 1910 aged only fifty-four, and lies buried in Hen Dŷ Cwrdd graveyard. Twelve months later, at the unveiling of his memorial, James Keir Hardie, MP expressed his admiration for "a man whose character was as strong as the granite monument which had just been unveiled"

Diana Bianchi



Diana holding a framed copy of Rev Hathren Davies's 1904 election leaflet

Photo: Rory Castle-Jones

GA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE KEY MESSAGES 19-20 MAY 2017

1. Executive Committee Convenor

Marion Baker was appointed as Convenor of the Executive Committee replacing Robert Ince whose term of office on the EC had come to an end.

2. Co-option of Three Executive Committee Members

Following the open application process, we are pleased to announce that Sheena McKinnon, Christina Smith and Rev Dr Rob Whiteman have been co-opted onto the Executive Committee and will formally take up their positions at the next EC meeting on 14 July 2017. They will serve until the close of the Annual Meetings in April 2019. An induction process is currently being arranged for the new members.

Sheena is active in Bradford Unitarians and the Yorkshire Unitarian Union and is also secretary of the Unitarian Association for Lay Ministry. Christina Smith is currently Chief Community Cultivator for Derby Unity (2020 project) and worship Leader for Derby Unitarians. Rob has recently taken up the position of Minister with Dundee Unitarians and had a long career in church administration.

3. Resignation of Gwynn Pritchard

The EC received the resignation of Gwynn Pritchard due to health issues. Gwynn was thanked for his contribution over the last two years, particularly on communications, as link to the two Welsh Districts and serving on the Annual Meetings Panel. The Executive Committee will pro-actively seek a replacement to address any identified geographic and/or skill gaps given its new composition.

4. Next Steps

The Next Steps priorities were reviewed at some length to bring everyone up to speed since the last meeting. An update report was received from Rachel Skelton, Project Manager, on progress with the Training and Education Development (TED) Project and the related Web project, both of which had been showcased at the Annual Meetings in workshops.

5. Identity Project

Good progress was reported on the Identity Project with a detailed presentation from Kate Eden, the consultant who is assisting the General Assembly. The identity project forms part of "Next Steps" and is intended to assist Unitarians create a clear message about who we are and what we stand for. A lively and stimulating workshop had been held at the Annual Meetings. Guidelines on the identity, along with suggestions on how implementation might be delivered, were considered but more work is required for the July EC meeting.

6. Local Leadership Strategy Group (LLSG) – Safeguarding Training

The EC was pleased to learn that safeguarding training arranged by the LLSG will take place on 4 November 2017 at Unitarian New Meeting in Birmingham. Look out for further detailed information.

7. Nightingale Centre

The Nightingale Centre was congratulated on being awarded a grant of £18,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to carry out research into the World War One history of the centre and then share this story with users of the Centre through an information point, and the production of a curriculum-related teaching aid. This is a joint project with Richard Godley of East Peak Countryside Associates. Discussions have also taken place on how the Centre could support the Unitarian Youth programme to promote its events.

8. Future EC Meeting arrangements

The Executive Committee considered its ways of working for the future. It was agreed, with the exception of the annual visit to the Nightingale Centre each September, that meetings in future would be for one day only starting at 9.00am and finishing at 5.30pm.

THOUGHT FOR NOW

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

Let your Credo be this:

Let the lie come into the world, let it even triumph, but not through me.

Aleksander Solzhenitsyn

FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE UNITARIAN WELSH DEPARTMENT

Since the last newsletter the GA Annual meetings have been held at Birmingham. This year the Opening Ceremony was presented by the Unitarians of Wales, and I'm delighted to report that it was a very successful event. The script which was written by Dylan Iorwerth of Capel y Groes told some of the history of Unitarianism in Wales and the struggles faced by our forefathers, whilst also conveying a very powerful message about the struggles many face today. The band, led by Rev Alun-Wyn Dafis, Brondeifi set the tone by playing some lively music for the banner parade which was led by Unitarians from SEWUS. Some 50 people took part in all and it was such a pleasure to see everyone working together, from both Districts and of all ages. The audience joined in enthusiastically in the singing of the hymns which had been translated into English by Dylan. The first verse of every hymn was sung in Welsh and it was great to see so many attempting the Welsh language as well! Everyone on the stage put in a wonderful performance, and the standing ovation at the end was well deserved. The reviews on social media and in the GAZette and The Inquirer have been very complimentary and the current President of the GA has said that it was the best Opening Ceremony that he had seen in 27 years. My heartfelt thanks goes to everyone who supported this event, whether they were on the stage or not. For those who were unable to be there, or even for those who want to re-live it, there is now a DVD available to purchase from Roy Davies, Capel Ciliau Aeron for £6. To order a copy, please phone him on 01570 470 095.

The other notable event of the past few weeks has been the SEWUS AGM at Cefncoed. Many congratulations to Diana Bianchi on becoming the President and I look forward to working together over the next two years. I'd also like to thank the outgoing President Tony Foster for the support he has shown and for the positive contribution he has made to Unitarianism in Wales. Congratulations also to all who were presented with certificates at the AGM. These certificates were a recognition of the hard work and dedication put in by the members, and we are grateful that so many are prepared to sacrifice their precious time to ensure that Rites of Passage services can be offered within the South East Wales area. The one person who did not receive a certificate was probably the one who had worked the hardest by delivering this course – so Diolch yn Fawr iawn Rev Eric Jones!

There are several events coming up over the next few weeks and months which I hope you'll be able to support. On June 11th Rev Eric Jones and Diana Bianchi will be hosting an event at Capel Penrhiw, Sain Ffagan between 2.00 and 4.00 pm sharing some of the history of the building and Unitarianism in Wales. It will be a bilingual event and there are passes available for free parking from Eric or Diana.

The SEWUS Rally will be on the 2nd July and you'll be heading West again to Llangyndeyrn chapel and The National Botanic Gardens. I hope to see you there.

The following weekend the SW district are holding their annual sponsored walk between Caeronnen and Brondeifi chapels and everyone is welcome to come and walk alongside their friends from Ceredigion.

The Sunday School festival will be held at Penrhiw chapel, Sain Ffagan on the 10th September and there will be a coach full of Unitarians coming down from Ceredigion. There will be some free parking passes available, so if you are able to come, please let me know and I'll do my best to get you one!

Arrangements have also been made for the GA President, Rev Charles Van DenBroeder to visit Wales during the last weekend of October and he will be at Nottage at 11am on Sunday October 29th.

The Unitarians Wales Facebook page also has details of events being held by the various congregations, so don't forget, if you intend putting something on – send me the details and we can publicise it for you. I'm also always grateful to receive any photos so that these too can be shared with the wider world.

I hope that you will be able to attend some, if not all Unitarian events and services during the summer, and I look forward to seeing you during the next few months.

Melda Grantham

HEN DŶ CWRDD, TRECYNON:

Eleven friends of Hen Dŷ Cwrdd, Trecynon recently met to hear of the possible developments at the chapel if sufficient grant aid is obtained. Christine Moore, General Secretary of Welsh Chapels Trust, informed the meeting of recent plans. It is hoped to attract grants to enable the development of an educational and arts centre, costing over £500,000 to be opened in Trecynon.

The project includes the building of an additional space at the back of the chapel for activities, teas and a shop; new toilet facilities; employing a person for three years to develop the chapel as a centre of education and the Arts; the latest technology will enable anyone to get information regarding any chapel in Wales, its history and achievements; information about Nonconformity in the Cynon Valley and beyond; Craft Classes; a Welsh heritage cultural centre with Welsh classes; telling the story of Hen Dŷ Cwrdd; overhead projectors and touch screens and much, much more. Schools and history groups could visit.

The local community and supporters are asked for letters from various individuals in support of the project so that we are more likely to receive a favourable response from Grant-aiding bodies. Such letters need to be sent either to Christine Moore or to Alun Watts (Chair) 8 Brondeg Terrace, Aberdare CF44 7PL.

ABERDARE

Women's League

It is with deep regret that I have to report the passing away of Mrs Marian Whippey, a stalwart of Women's League as she had always been active in our branch and in the district. Marian had been President of the branch and district and had also been Minute Secretary for many years. She was a popular authoritative figure. Indeed, she was a fount of wisdom and advice, where the running of the League was concerned. She gave years of service and support and we will miss her wit, kindness and friendship.

I am saddened to report that Mrs Diane Jones and Mrs Christine Roberts suffered losses of close family members. Our sympathy goes out to them.

The District Women's League AGM was held on 22nd March 2017 at Highland Place Church and was attended by Aberdare Women's League and Cefncoed Women's League. Hospitality was provided by the Aberdare Branch and it was an enjoyable afternoon.

The talk on 'The Red Dragon' was well-received and members were very moved by a poignant update of the Zisize charity, long supported by some members of the branch.

A Coffee Morning on Saturday, 8th April 2017, was a pleasant money-making event, enhanced by the treat of a delicious cake baked by Mrs Angela Jones.

Our planning meeting on 19th April 2017 was organised, succinct and swift. This was welcomed as, following the meeting, we proceeded to decamp to the Dare Country Park Café. We had a lovely afternoon, indulging ourselves and enjoying our social gathering.

At our branch AGM, all officers were re-elected and all members were thanked for their contribution and support.

Our programme then continued with a 'Time Travel' exercise but it transpired most members would prefer to live in the here and now! Musical choices, evoking memories, brought great pleasure to members and finally, our thanks to Melda Grantham who undertook a Wool Craft demonstration on 24th May 2017, which brought much laughter and uncovered hidden talents, **or not**, as far as painting was concerned!!

We now look forward to the 'Cynon Valley Hall of Fame' talk to be delivered by Mrs Jennifer George on 31st May 2017.

Anne Watts

It was with sadness that we announced the death of Marian Whippey on 19th of April at the age of 89 years. She had been a loyal member at Highland Place for over 40 years and her presence will be missed as a committee member and a former President of Women's League at Branch and District. She had not been well for some time and was a patient at Ysbyty Cwm Cynon as well as at Prince Charles Hospital. Our sympathy is extended to her two sons Stuart and David and their families in their loss. The funeral was held at Llwydcoed Crematorium on May 3rd with Rev Eric Jones officiating. We also sympathise with Diane Jones, Graig Isaf, on the death of her husband Tom, and Hilary Palmer, Abernant Road on the sudden death of her husband Alan. The funerals took place on April 12th and April 26th with Rev Eric Jones officiating. We also send our condolences to Angela and Richard Jones and family on the death of Richard's mother.

The once a month alternative service continues at Highland Place. On April 2nd we had a music service which was arranged by Jacob Jones, our former organist. Rachel, Head Girl at St John the Baptist school, entertained us with songs and was accompanied by Jacob on keyboard. Grace played the flute and performed a duet with Jacob on viola, and Jacob finished the service with a resounding performance on the church organ. It was a delightful service and we are grateful to the three talented youngsters for performing for us. We were pleased to have Barbara and John Clifford join the congregation on this occasion.

On May 14th, we held a Bread and Cheese lunch with a service on Sacrifice. Members were asked to forego their usual Sunday roast and dessert for a simple meal of bread and cheese, all for the price of £3 each, which was donated to charity. The service was held around tables in our schoolroom, with congregation members giving readings on 'Sacrifice' before and after the meal. Hymns were sung, with Rev Eric Jones accompanying on the organ. It certainly made us aware that our simple sacrifice on one Sunday is nothing compared to the daily suffering of starving people around the world. A total of £130 was donated to Christian Aid.

The next alternative service is our annual Flower Service in July.

Our congratulations go to Alun Watts who was elected Vice President of the District at our AGM held at Cefncoed.

Do you remember the Special Wedding held at Highland Place, arranged by the staff and children of Caradog School? The photo shows the children at the church entrance after the ceremony.

Due to the General Election on June 8th the Annual Highland Place Lecture by Nick Thomas, MP for Torfaen, which was to be given on this date, has now been postponed to later in the year. Details will follow in the next issue of the newsletter.

Congratulations to Dafydd Jones, grandson of Anne and Eric for first place in the Under-19s Ymgom (Dialogue) at this year's Urdd Eisteddfod at Pencoed. Very well done!



Photo: Joy Foster

Tony Foster

CARDIFF UNITARIANS / UNDDODIAID CAERDYDD

Since the General Assembly Meetings in April which four of our members attended, church services have been conducted by members of the congregation and we have welcomed two volunteers from the District Pulpit list. On the 21st May six of our members attended the South East Wales District AGM and proudly witnessed the installation of Diana Bianchi as the 74th President of this district. It was good to see so many of her friends and family offering their support to Diana and her reminiscences of family connections to Hen Dŷ Cwrdd, Cefncoed gave significant depth to the morning.

A few of our members have been feeling unwell of late and we wish them well for the future. It has been good to have Marjorie back among us after her long period of poor health.

In addition to his membership of our congregation, considerable commitment as a member of the Society of Friends and The United Nations, Cardiff, Robin Atfield is also an author of repute. In 2015, the second edition of his book 'The Ethics of the Global Environment' was published and in February 2016, his latest book, 'Wonder, Value and God' became available on Amazon. Robin relates the value present in the natural world and in human creativity to an underlying purpose which is traced to creation. *'In integrating the themes of value, creativity and purpose, the book contributes a new synthesis to the literature of philosophy, environmental studies and theology'* (Amazon Quote)

UNA – Future Meetings

Tuesday 11th July, 7pm Temple of Peace, Cardiff – Life in Occupied Palestine' (Speaker – Iyad Burnat, Palestine Activist)

Thursday 27th July, 7pm (ToP Cardiff) AGM 2017

Warmest wishes for a happy summer, to all our friends in the district.

Quotes for those of us who quilt

'Quilts are the rituals of life. Along with shelter, the quilt safeguards the human body during its greatest vulnerability, sleep' (Helen Kelly)

'There is the charm of a quilt. Like a mother, it wraps its arms around you; so soft, yet sturdy and so comforting. In my grandmother's time the sewing of a quilt would bring friends and neighbours together and in quilting groups and circles today, this lovely tradition continues' (Reba McEntire)

Lis Dyson-Jones

LATE NEWS

As we go into print we hear that Rev Lewis Rees is unwell – we send him our best wishes.

Also the sad news has been received of the deaths of two district members:

Mrs Megan Lewis, Hen Dŷ Cwrdd, Cefncoed, and Mr Colin Morgan, Capel y Graig, Trebanos.

We send our condolences to the bereaved families.

CEFNCOED

Women's League

On 22nd March 8 of us travelled by minibus to Highland Place Church Aberdare to attend the District Women's League AGM. It was an enjoyable afternoon and we thank the Aberdare ladies for their hospitality.

Usually our fortnightly meetings are quite leisurely and relaxed, but recently, as 21st May loomed ever nearer, there was an air of urgency – and a little anxiety. We were committed to organising refreshments for the SEWUS Annual General Meeting that was to be held on that date at Hen Dŷ Cwrdd. How many would be coming? How would we cope? Were there enough chairs and tables? Would there be enough food? In the end the day went very well and, according to the 'feed back' we have so far received, everyone was well fed.

We are saddened by the death of our much loved and faithful league member Gwen Everitt. Gwen was for many years our league branch President until failing health forced her to resign. We will all miss her very much.



Lunchtime at Hen Dŷ Cwrdd vestry

Photo: Rory Castle-Jones

Welcome

We have been pleased to have the company of Marie Williams, Marilyn Murray and Susan Hudson (twice) at Hen Dŷ Cwrdd recently.

Good News

After hospitalization and a short stay in a care home at Hay on Wye, Peter Powell has been a resident in Trenwydd Care Home at Llanfaes, Brecon since last summer. Our latest update on Peter comes from his niece Jane who reports that, "Peter is doing fine."

Sadness

It is with deep sorrow that we report the death of Gwen Everitt who passed away at Prince Charles Hospital, Merthyr Tydfil on 22nd May at the age of 82 years. Her family had been closely connected to Hen Dŷ Cwrdd Cefncoed for generations and Gwen faithfully continued that tradition from birth to her death—as Sunday-school pupil and then teacher, to loyal chapel member and member of the Women's League. Her dedication to Hen Dŷ Cwrdd was total and she attended regularly until illness caused a measure of disruption in their frequency. Our sympathy is extended to her husband Clive, son Emlyn, daughter-in-law Elinor and granddaughters Anya and Lana. Her funeral was held at Hen Dŷ Cwrdd on 2nd June with Rev Eric Jones officiating and with Unitarian friends from the District being present. The service was followed by cremation at Llwydcoed Crematorium,.

Ken Morgan

NOTTAGE

We held a coffee morning in March in aid of Epilepsy Action, and were very pleased to be able to donate £120 as a result.

Lewis conducted a lovely Mother's Day service for us, and at the end of this Liela presented those present with daffodils. We went home 'laden' with daffs that day, because as usual Jonathan Thomas presented us all with a bunch of daffodils each. Jonathan started this simple act of kindness because he does not have a grandmother to give flowers, so he gives to his chapel family instead. We are very lucky to have him in our family.

Most folk have to wait 100 years for a card from the Queen, but our friends Joan and Ken Gadd had one after 60 years.....of marriage! They are a lovely couple who join us when they are able, at both coffee mornings and services. They consider themselves lucky to have been together so long, and we consider ourselves lucky to be their friends. Congratulations!

We had a most enjoyable coffee morning on Good Friday this year. Lewis started our time together with devotions, and as time went on there were 15 of us, and June Pattimore and family were able to join us also. June had not been well enough to attend services or coffee mornings since before Christmas, but is

beginning to improve, so we were her first 'outing'. I'm pleased to say she has also been able to attend services, she was sorely missed.

Lewis has not let the grass grow under his feet, and has been on weed duty outside the chapel! it's a big improvement and we are very grateful! We are also pleased he has had his driving licence restored, it will make a big difference to his 'taxi driver' Cheryl also.

We are looking forward to 'sleepover' guests in July. Nine Unitarian students from Prague are using our schoolroom as a base—they are going to London and Manchester first, and ending their stay in the UK with us. We are hoping to entertain them with a 'Fish & Chip Supper' when they arrive, and then a visit to Capel Penrhiw on Saturday 29th. If any of you would like to join us that day we hope to be at Penrhiw about 11am for some hymn singing.

Avril Protheroe

SWANSEA

We were very pleased to welcome Hilary back after breaking her ankle. It is good to see her getting back to normal.

Our church is enjoying some attention as we are now on Facebook! This is thanks to Rory and Rhys who not only set it up but are also making sure our Facebook page is kept up to date. We are very grateful to them both. We have as a result welcomed several new faces to our services.

We are continuing with the maintenance of the church building. We are having the guttering cleaned and checked. Also Lynn has arranged for plants to be delivered so that the hanging baskets and pots can be made up. They made a lovely show in our forecourt last summer. Hopefully they will be the same this year.

Five of the congregation enjoyed the trip to Cefn Coed for the SE Wales AGM. It was a pleasure to meet up with fellow Unitarians. I am sure the district rally will be as enjoyable.

Hilda Dumpleton

TREBANOS

CAPEL Y GRAIG

This poem by Colin Morgan was prompted by some bad weather over a long period. It is now a very timely reminder of the possible consequences of President Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

CLIMATE CHANGE

What is happening, I feel so sad?
It is hurting every lass and lad.
We now have sunshine followed by rain,
Forecasting weather is all in vain.
But when we enjoy a rare fine day,
Rain, snow and ice come our way.
We have all four seasons in one week,
And better weather we all now seek!

Some countries have too much rain – it's bad,
Whilst others have droughts, it's all so sad.
Problems are caused by global warming,
For we never heed nature's warning.
We drive our cars and poison fresh air,
For our families' future, is this fair?
To all the world we must kinder be,
For healthier people, disease free!

All flowers, trees, birds and bumble bee,
Are very confused as we can see,
And tree buds peep out in winter sun,
Birds are nesting early, having fun,
Flowers bloom out of season – it's rare,
And sharp frost arrives and strips them bare.
Nature's world suffers, it hurts us all,
Resist climate change and let's walk tall!

In all things affecting people's fate,
Let's be more thoughtful and moderate.
Please think of others and careful be,
Not wasting resources, which are free.
Saving energy too would be good,
As decent citizens, so we should.
Be wise, 'waste not – want not' as they say.
Only taking what we need each day.

GELLIONNEN

We are aware of two wedding anniversaries recently; Julie Nedin and Martyn Edwards celebrated their twenty-fourth having been married at Gellionnen by the Rev Christopher Owen and Norma Phillips came to service on the actual date that she and Eirion were married thirty-five years ago by Dr Elwyn Davies.

The marriage of Brenda Price and Paul Griffiths took place in May and we were all invited to the evening celebrations. Usually, on a Sunday morning before service Paul will have run ten miles or more, but presumably not on his wedding day! It was a beautiful service crafted by Brenda and Paul and delivered by Eric.

Eight of our congregation attended the AGM at Cefncoed, four of whom had not been at any previous AGMs. We saw Julie Nedin awarded her certificate having completed a course on Rites of Passage. Rory and Rhys Castle-Jones have taken on IT Facebook for the district – they have already shown their considerable expertise in this field.

Our Saturday evening concert was a great success with several people attending who had not been in the chapel before. Also, there are local friends who will always endeavour to turn out when there is a special event. The Eclectics sang songs from around the world, Anne Jameson brought two of her cello pupils, the resulting trio was beautiful, and Lawrence did us proud on the keyboard as he always does. Perhaps all we needed was a story or a long poem and this would have been a typical Welsh chapel evening of entertainment from fifty or more years ago. Our sincere thanks go to the bakers of cakes and brewers of tea for the rounding off of this event. Whenever we have a special event we share the proceeds, but this one was for us. We have kitchen improvements in mind.



Photo: Rory Castle-Jones

In August the Rev Alun Wyn Dafis will conduct our Folk Service. If you want to join us and bring a song you will be very welcome.

Marian Littlepage

WICK

An item of interest for all our former Llanmadog campers. Over many years we have spent great holidays together with friends from our South Wales chapels ... even with YPL-ers from 'over the Border'! The camp has changed almost beyond recognition, gone are the huts and separate washing and toilet—can we call them accommodation? Remember the iron bunk beds and those mattresses? The only building remaining on the field itself is the *manse* – as we called it. The Camp is now called the St Madog Centre, and caters for many school groups for study sessions and holidays as well as church groups. They have a livestock area with chickens and two pigs and a pond with ducks and other pond life. Vegetables, flowers and herbs are grown in poly-tunnels and, as well as supplying the camp, any extras are sold in a local market.

The sleeping, washing and eating areas are quite luxurious compared to those in our days there. Although an ex-trustee, I still retain an interest in the camp and the Secretary took me on an exploratory visit recently. They welcome any interested visitors. My visit brought back many memories, in particular the visit and entertainment given us by Max Boyce. Rev Elwyn Davies, who helped him with his Welsh translations, brought him. He is still performing the songs he sang to us all those years ago!

Wick's annual Flower Service will be held on Sunday June 11th. This is a popular service and quite a few visitors usually join us. A warm welcome awaits anyone who would like to come.

Our treasurer, Mansel Lalis, has had some bad news about his sister's health. She was rushed to hospital so Mansel has had to travel to London. We send them both our love and prayers.

Best wishes to all our friends in the District.

Julianne Morgan

MEN'S GROUP

The Men's Group continue their travels around South East Wales. On March 21st, we met at the Royal Mint in Llantrisant. We had an excellent tour around the mint with explanations on what metals are used, the machinery required and the engraving processes. We were then shown the machinery in action and told which machines were minting coins for countries around the world. We had the opportunity to mint our own £1 coin. None of us took up the offer, £5 for a £1 coin didn't seem very good value to the canny members of the Men's Group. I think we were justified when we saw that you didn't actually mint the coin yourself, the blank had to be given to the machine operator to mint it. Health and Safety! We had a photograph taken surrounded by £1,000,000 in pound coins. There followed a talk on the history of the Mint and there was an excellent display of artefacts from the London and Llantrisant Mints. Our thanks to Rev Eric Jones for the arrangements. A delicious lunch was consumed at the Caesar's Arms in Dinas Powys.



At the Royal Mint : Ken, Bill, Tony, Alun, Eric and Phil

On April 25th, we visited the Senedd Building in Cardiff Bay. We had an excellent guided tour of the building and learned some interesting facts about the building's construction. We were taken into one of the committee rooms, and were told that a petition needs only fifty signatures to have it debated in the committee rooms. We were then taken into the chamber, something that is not offered to all visitors. It is interesting to know that rooms at the Senedd can be hired free of charge with the Welsh government's policy of making the building accessible to all. Lunch followed at the nearby Demiro's restaurant. Our thanks to Alun and Gareth Watts for all the arrangements.



At the Senedd : David, Eric, Alun, Humphrey, Tony, Bill, and Gwynn

Tony Foster

DISTRICT AGM (continued)



Diana and family members at the District AGM
Photo: Rory Castle-Jones

	<p>VAYNOR AND PENDERYNN DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTION MONDAY, MARCH 28th, 1904</p> <p>John Hathren Davies</p> <p>An Old and Tried Member, the Organizer and Secretary of the Committee for Boarding-out Orphan and Deserted Children in Comfortable and Happy Homes, thereby helping to save the "Wise Ones," and relieving the Rates, Solicits your VOTE and SYMPATHY in the above Election.</p> <p>JOHN HATHREN DAVIES' record for the past three years is</p> <p>District Council 59 Attendances, out of a possible 60</p> <p>Board of Guardians 153 Attendances, out of a possible 156.</p> <p>Every Voter has 4 Votes, but 1 only can be given to each Candidate.</p> <p>The POLLING-BOOTH will be at the BOARD SCHOOLS, CEFN, and will be open from 12 to 8 o'clock.</p>
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Rev John Hathren Davies's 1904 election leaflet
Photo: Ken Morgan

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

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