

Canolfan in the Community

The Newsletter of Canolfan y Fron

January 2021

A very Happy New Year to everyone. Let us hope that 2021 will be a much better year than the one that has just ended.

The Siop

The enlargement of the Siop is largely complete and an application to sell alcohol has been prepared. Conversion of the office next to the Siop into a stock room has allowed stock levels to be increased so if you don't see what you want just ask, it may well be in the stock room. The availability of milk continues to cause concern because demand seems to fluctuate considerably. We are conducting a survey of milk sales over the next few weeks in order to better understand demand.



Dalton Pringle ready and willing to serve Christmas customers in the enlarged Siop.

The Caffi

Last month we said – watch this space! Due to Covid-19 we are unable to reopen Caffi yr Ellifant for eat-in dining but we are delighted to report that it has reopened as a takeaway serving Pizzas, Flatbreads and Burgers. See Page 4 to find out more!

The Llety

We have now fitted kettle stations in the rooms so that guests can make tea and coffee. We had also just procured Breakfast Bags for sale to guests when Wales went back into lockdown. As a result, we have had to close the Llety and cancel several reservations for the Christmas and New Year break. We have refreshed the paint in the rooms but anticipate that it is unlikely that the Llety will be allowed to reopen before Easter. As a result of this lockdown, we have mothballed the Llety with a resultant hit on Canolfan revenues.

Hall Rental

Hall rental business was returning prior to the current lockdown; there were Yoga, Pilates and dog training classes plus a few business and ramblers meetings. Sadly, these have all had to be put on hold until the current lockdown is relaxed.

Staff Changes

The closure of the Llety has, for the time being, meant that we cannot renew the contract of the Llety Marketing Manager, Jim Embrey. Dalton Pringle, who was cleaning the Llety, had already been partially redeployed to the Siop while bookings were low due to Covid-19. He will focus solely on the Siop while the Llety is mothballed. Cadi Glyn, who was in the Siop, has headed off to university in Liverpool.

The Board

Alison Palmer has joined the Board as a co-opted member.

Eiriona Williams, who recently became a co-opted member, has taken over responsibility for managing the stock in the Siop. However, she has recently been ill with a short spell in Ysbyty Gwynedd. Eiriona is now much better but has been advised to shield. We wish her a speedy return to full health.

Volunteers

The Canolfan was set up on the idea that the work we do will be sourced from a mix of paid Staff and Volunteers from the local area. At our last General Meeting we identified that the ideal number of 100 hours of voluntary work a week to ensure we could open 7 days a week and provide the services we hope for. We have a dedicated band of people who are doing a fantastic job. Their services are wide ranging including fetching the papers from Dolydd, manning the shop at the weekend, helping to restart the takeaway from the Caffi, ensuring we are all healthy and safe (an even more vital role during COVID), looking after HR issues, ensuring the bills are paid and that routine maintenance is done. We have many more activities and are thinking about the gardening, events organising, marketing and advertising to name a few. At the moment we have a number of volunteers who are busy with other aspects of their lives so can't give as much time as we would like, can you leap into action? We have a regular team who collect the papers but need extra volunteers to cover absences due, for example, to medical issues or visits to Covid bubble relatives. Our shop always welcomes new faces and as we extend our opening times with paid Staff, volunteers can take the nice afternoon slots that will appear.

If you have even a few hours a week to spare or can make time to collect the papers on a morning, please email me at mandy@canolfanyfron.org. This is a great opportunity to be involved in the community and meet many new or even familiar faces.

Even if you don't have time to Volunteer, please consider being a member of the Canolfan Y Fron. Membership applications are available on the website or in the shop. Help us to decide the course we will take in the coming years.

If you would like to be involved in managing the Canolfan, please consider being a Director. All our Directors are volunteers and we work as a team to ensure the facilities are available for use now and in the future. If you are interested, please contact john@canolfanyfron.org.

Notes from the Chair

I've been told to keep it short this month! (some hope – Ed) Absolutely brilliant effort by the Volunteers and Staff at CYF again this month. Big thanks to all of you who supported the Canolfan over this last month. The shop sales are on the increase. A fond farewell to Cadi Glyn, it's been a joy working with you. Best wishes to you for your studies in Liverpool and we hope to see you back during holidays.

Have you noticed that the Caffi has reopened as a takeaway and is bustling? We grasped an opportunity for additional funding to pay for an experienced consultant Chef who became available due to lockdown. Shortly Chef will assist recruitment of a qualified chef to join the CYF team to take the Caffi forward.

The pandemic continues to throw curveballs at us. Lockdown has again closed the Llety accommodation. During the closure improvements have been made (see Llety report, page 1) but, sadly, it has meant a further staff cut. Until the Llety is reopened we cannot renew the contract of our Llety Marketing Manager Jim Embrey. We wish Jim well, he has been great asset to the Ganolfan. A big thank you for all the great paid and voluntary work he has done over the past few years. We hope that he will not away for too long.

Comments I made on social media regarding dyslexia upset some and I accept that Facebook was the wrong medium. I was diagnosed in my 30's after I struggled with a Nebosh course to help with the construction industry. I passed at the second attempt. There was no malice intended in the post, I was trying to point out that dyslexia is not a reason to not do stuff. We dyslexics have to work that little bit harder to get stuff right.

There is still a small minority in the village who seem to take a view that I or the whole Board are enemies who must be removed at any cost! I wish they would talk rather than taking out their personal vendettas on Board members. Improved communications is key but the current Articles are outdated and do not cover the current situation. I will call a postal vote on changes to allow us to keep in touch with members via email or other media and generally make it easier to let our members know what's going on. Doing this without increasing workload is essential because the Board is made up of Volunteers some of whom have full time employment, a home or business to run. I'm a big believer in positivity and CYF is on full power positive.

Just one more thing, the Siop will soon be going online with its own online store on Facebook. So if your looking at getting rid or recycling items get in touch to donate these items. You will be able to send a photo of item to a group message and we do the rest!

A very Happy New Year to you all and all the very best for a safe and healthy 2021. *John Rowlands*

2020 Income & Expenditure Accounts

Income and Expenditure Accounts for the year ended 28th February 2020 are awaiting final sign-off. With Covid-19 severely affecting the business from March 2020 through to at least mid 2021, they will be the last accounts for some time that will give a true reflection of the business opportunity for Canolfan y Fron. As soon as they are signed off full will be published on the web site www.canolfanyfron.org. After they have been published we aim to hold an open Zoom community briefing meeting.

Treasurer's Report

We have been working for many months to automate our financial system using Sage software. We are planning for it to go fully live on the 17th January. It will enable us to keep much tighter control of finances. Covid-19 has hit the finances of the Canolfan very hard; we had to make staff cuts and even with those cuts it has survived only due to emergency Government grants. We aim to provide a general Trading Statement in the next edition of **Canolfan in the Community**.

Mandy Hindle – Rock Chick, Trekkie or Hell's Angel?

Any Welsh speakers who have been slightly puzzled to hear Welsh spoken in the Canolfan with a Yorkshire accent will have encountered Mandy Hindle, the Board member responsible for Human Resources and Volunteering. The eldest of three children, she was born and brought up in Leeds. At the age of 15 she met a guy called Steve at a party many years later they are still together. In the early days neither had a driving licence so they developed a shared interest in motorbiking. At the age of 18 she landed a dream job in the Insurance industry, and soon after her parents and sisters moved to Qatar leaving Mandy in charge of the house. Steve moved in, although Mandy swears that she does not recall inviting him! If anyone has a copy of the Guinness Book of Records would they please check the record for the longest staying uninvited guest – we may have a record holder in Fron. After 2 years they moved to Qatar for a year before returning to Leeds. Mandy and Steve were a couple for 13 years but had no plans to marry until a sudden change of mind was triggered by Mandy becoming pregnant. They decided to get married on the spur of the moment, no need to worry about inviting guests, taking photographs or even having someone to there to witness the marriage. Not having anyone to witness the marriage was a bit tricky, but fortunately they had a friend on a local market stall who was persuaded step in at the last minute. So, when their daughter arrived, Mandy and Steve were a married couple.

The question that intrigued me was how a Yorkshire lass ended up in Fron, a place that is not one of the best known in North Wales. The answer, it transpires, started in New Zealand, a country that can be described as 'North Wales on steroids'. There they got a taste for travelled around in a campervan so on their return they bought one. Steve had an interest in climbing and Mandy would help despite her claims that she has no head for heights. The area around here became their favourite place to travel in their campervan, although Mandy does not remember coming to Fron. When Mandy's job relocated to North Wales and they jumped at the chance. They found a house in Fron that needed of some tender loving care, then jumped in the campervan to start administering that care. 17 years on there is a rumour that they have nearly finished working on the house, but it is a rumour that uses a zimmer frame! Mandy developed an interest in Welsh culture; sending her daughter to Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle, learning Welsh for 15 years and also singing in a choir of Welsh learners. However, choral singing is not the whole musical picture as Mandy and Steve are also dedicated Fredheads; fans of Canadian alternative country singer-songwriter Fred Eaglesmith. In 2019 they attended several of his concerts in the Netherlands. Mandy also loves Science Fiction and fantasy novels such as Lord of the Rings. In recent years she has been working for a Debt Collection company and very recently she switched from an Administrative role to Client Care. All this as well as volunteering at the Canolfan and helping with her two grandchildren who attend Ysgol Bro Llifon in Groeslon. Steve works on gas installations in North Wales and Ireland.

My final question was how do you describe Mandy Hindle? Is she a Fredhead Rock Chick, a SciFi Trekkie or a Hell's Angel? Mandy felt that none of these really fitted. She sees herself as someone who is sociable and who likes to get to know people. She always has a positive attitude to life.

Mike Elsdon

The Canolfan Magazine – a review of events

Cegin Fron

Caffi yr Eliffant has been closed since March due to Covid-19 restrictions. Even the Fish & Chips takeaway had to close due to work to deal with serious leaks in the café and in the south wall of the hall. That work is now complete but with the December lockdown forcing the closure of restaurants across Wales we could not reopen it as a café. On the 16th December it reopened instead as a takeaway. The picture below shows the café with its new counter complete with Covid-19 screen and social distancing markers. The initial results are very encouraging with 89 dishes served one evening. In January we will be working to refine both the menu and the opening hours. There is now a freezer full of puds!





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FLATBREADS

Lamb kofta, mint yogurt chilli, mixed salad	£10.95
Donner kebab, chilli mayonnaise, mixed salad	£8.95
Peri peri chicken, garlic mayo, mixed salad	£8.95
Crispy chicken, sticky sweet chilli, sesame, mixed salad	£8.95
Halloumi / mixed vegetables	£7.95



12" STONE BAKED PIZZA

Margerita	£6.50
Garlic & Cheese	£6.50
Pepperoni	£6.75
BBQ Chicken	£7.50
Ham & Pineapple	£7.25
Meat Feast	£8.50
Vegetable	£7.25



BURGERS

Steak burger, bacon & cheese, burger sauce	£7.95
Iceberg lettuce, French Fries	
Crispy chicken burger, mayo, Iceberg lettuce, French Fries	£7.95
Halloumi burger, sweet chilli, Iceberg lettuce, French Fries	£7.95

SIDES

French Fries	£1.95
Chicken Strips (4)	£3.45
Garlic Fries	£2.20
Side Salad	£2.45
Onion Rings	£2.45
Mozzarella Sticks	£3.25

OPENING HOURS

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	Pizza night 16:00-20:00
Thursday	Themed night 16:00-20:00
Friday	Menu+specials 16:00-20:30
Saturday	Menu+specials 14:00-20:30
Sunday	Bacon Bap £1.50 10:00-12:00 Hog Roast Bap, Roasties & Gravy £5.95 12:00-15:00

It'll be all right on the (second) night.

The first night of the takeaway was a bit problematic because calls dropped out due to poor cordless phone signal in the café. Next day Mike Elsdén used his rusty phone expertise plus an elderly rotary dial Trimphone to prove that the line near to the kitchen was working. A dash to Bangor to get a cordless phone for the line solved the problem and next day Steven Whitten moved its base station into the café.

Updates from December

The defibrillator cabinet has arrived, electrician awaited to connect it up. The roof repair is ongoing.

Vanishing Signs

Spare a thought for the residents of Rhostryn and Rhosgadfan who since July have had to travel to the A487 via Fron due to drainage works in Rhostryfan. Many of them were unaware that there was a shop in Fron which could save them a much longer journey down to Penygroes. Signs were put up to alert them to the existence of Siop Fron and in came new customers. Recently somebody stole **all** the signs. The good people of Rhostryn and Rhosgadfan now know about the shop so the signs have done their job, but on principle we have put up new ones. A message to the thief - please don't do it again.



..... and finally

There a serious rumour that on January 24th directors will be embarking a mission to tidy up litter from the area in and around the Canolfan. With his marketing hat on, Mike Elsdén has been pondering how to make such an event both newsworthy and relevant to the brand image of the Canolfan. So, if anyone has ready access to a source of hot and steaming elephant poo, please call Mike on 01286 880882.