

# e-CADWYN

e-newsletter of Cadwyn Clwyd

issue 1 January 2011

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# £2.4 million boost for rural flintshire

A massive £2.4 million cash boost has poured into rural Flintshire over the last three years to revitalise the area's economy.

The huge funding injection by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Assembly Government through the Rural Development Plan for Wales (RDP) 2007-2013 has been invested by rural development agency Cadwyn Clwyd in a raft of innovative and exciting regeneration projects throughout rural Flintshire.

The projects have celebrated the area's history, encouraged the arts, stimulated businesses and tourism and promoted its landscape, agriculture and produce.

Wales' Rural Affairs Minister, Elin Jones, welcomed the landmark achievement: She said: "I'm very pleased that we have been able to invest such a significant amount of money in so many worthwhile projects that are helping to improve the quality of life in rural Flintshire.

"I have protected the funding for the Rural Development Plan in the Welsh Assembly Government's draft budget so that we are able to continue to do all that we can to increase the competitiveness and encourage the diversification of the rural economy."

The three-year project has been hailed a success by Flintshire County Councillors Carolyn Thomas, a member of the board of Cadwyn Clwyd and member of the Flintshire Rural Partnership, and Matt Wright, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Tourism who is also a member of the Flintshire Rural Partnership.

Cllr Carolyn Thomas said: "Cadwyn Clwyd has funded schemes that have brought communities together, working on initiatives evolved from local groups that would not have happened without the support of their project officers.

"They have helped community groups to fill in the forms, offered advice and made sure that schemes comply with complicated EC rules in order to get grant funding. They have taken people's ideas and helped turned them into reality.

"Quite simply without their expertise and know-how these valuable and innovative schemes would not have happened not just without the funding they have been able to draw on but also without their expertise in bringing organisations, communities and agencies together."

Cllr Matt Wright added: "Cadwyn Clwyd are doing tremendous work and they provide top class support in helping us through the process of filling in the right forms to apply for grants.



Lowri Owain, Cadwyn Clwyd Company Manager, with Flintshire County Councillors Carolyn Thomas, Cadwyn Clwyd Director, and Matt Wright.



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu  
Gwledig: Ewrop yn Buddsoddi  
mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig  
The European Agricultural Fund for  
Rural Development: Europe Investing in  
Rural Areas



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



"There have also been a whole series of projects to provide community facilities or encourage tourism or support rural communities with sustainable projects.

"Over the years there has been money for town centres and areas that are traditionally described as deprived but people often forget that in rural areas they are not all rich people and they have problems of their own so this sort of funding is very important and very useful."

The current three-year plan to revitalise rural communities and their economies in the county ends in February and Cadwyn Clwyd Company Manager Lowri Owain said: "The timing of this has been a perfect antidote to the current economic gloom."

The money has come from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) through the Welsh Assembly Government's Rural Development Plan with additional support from Flintshire County Council and the Flintshire Rural Partnership.

Cultural activities backed have included the annual month-long Flintshire Arts Festival, a Book Festival in Gwaenysgor, the Mold Food Festival and Caerwys's Young Musician of the Year competition.

The area's heritage has benefited from projects as diverse as the Holywell Community History Society and Rhydymwyn's 'Yesterday Once More' which created an oral history of the top secret World War Two work done at the Valley Works. Elsewhere an agri-food initiative has introduced more diverse crops across the county and a Rural Flintshire Enterprise Bursary has helped young people, among them a house doctor and a tree surgeon, set up in business.

A tourism project set up a ground-breaking geo-caching trail for visitors to Coed Nercwys and Coed Moel Famau while eight rural communities now have their own local guides published and important work is being done to make Flintshire's stunning countryside more accessible through its network of footpaths.

Lowri Owain said: "We were incredibly pleased to have secured and delivered this funding which has enabled us to foster innovation, help local businesses and develop the local economy in rural Flintshire.

"We have had eight separate projects supporting a wide range of activities that Cadwyn Clwyd are running in the area from tourism to energy and from heritage to festivals. "It has meant a big pot of money spent in the county over the last three years.

"It has been a broader base of projects than we have ever had in the past and it has increased the resource that is available to help local communities in the area.

"This will provide a lasting legacy for rural Flintshire while at the same time boosting visitor numbers and encouraging innovation and entrepreneurial skills.

"We worked very hard to secure this funding and the benefits of that hard work are now being seen across the county in projects that have been developed in close consultation with the local communities."

Recently Cadwyn Clwyd was involved in the 200th anniversary celebrations of the Jubilee Tower on Moel Famau when 5,000 people, many of them from Merseyside and Cheshire, braved an October night to enjoy the fireworks and light show.

Lowri Owain added: "Here in North East Wales, we are right on the doorstep of a huge mass of population in the North West and the Midlands.

"We have so much to offer and there is a huge amount of scope to tap into the potential of that market so that visitors come and stay in the area.

"The Flintshire Enterprise Bursary is another exciting scheme which is helping young people aged from 18 to 30 start their own businesses by offering them practical advice and hard cash to get off the ground.

"We have been able to help them present well thought out and good business cases to us and we have been able to help them with up to £1,000 of targeted money.

For more information contact Cadwyn Clwyd either by telephone on 01824 705802 or by emailing: [lowri.owain@cadwynclwyd.co.uk](mailto:lowri.owain@cadwynclwyd.co.uk)



Oboist Tom Blomfield competed in the Caerwys Young Musician of the Year competition

# numbers that add up

The numbers are impressive, 14 major projects covering over 150 individual schemes in a period of three years and it all adds up to a massive £5.3 million plus pumped into the rural economies of Denbighshire and Flintshire.

That's the impact being made by rural regeneration agency Cadwyn Clwyd backed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) through the Welsh Assembly Government's Rural Development Plan for Wales 2007-2013.

In Flintshire it has meant an injection of £2.4 million with £2.9 million for Denbighshire and those projects have covered everything from agriculture and food through history and the arts to rural transport and tourism.

They have also seen ground-breaking schemes launched like Wales's first Pub Is The Hub initiative, an extension of the successful venture supported by Prince Charles to save rural pubs and reconnect them with their communities.

An exciting project is also looking at helping those communities take advantage of new government financial incentives to harness water and other renewable power sources for energy. From their Ruthin headquarters the Cadwyn Clwyd team have worked with rural organisations and communities in both counties to get these projects off the drawing board and into action. Anyone interested in Cadwyn Clwyd's Projects can contact them on 01824 705802, e-mail [admin@cadwynclwyd.co.uk](mailto:admin@cadwynclwyd.co.uk) or go to the website [www.cadwynclwyd.co.uk](http://www.cadwynclwyd.co.uk)



# yo ho ho and a bottle of cider – black bart is back

Legendary Welsh pirate Black Bart terrorised the Spanish Main and now he's back and the scourge of the high seas is plundering prizes again. This time though the Black Bart in question hails from a North Wales hillside and is sweet and mellow in nature even if he is proving formidable opposition on the country show circuit. That's because Black Bart is a sweet cider made from apples grown in Wales's highest cider orchard and is the latest recruit to cider-maker Steve Hughes's stable of prize-winning tipples.

The 47-year-old from Llandegla has won a host of awards since starting his business four years ago and with Black Bart joining Rosies Triple D, Wicked Wasp and Rampant Ram the trend is continuing this year.

Now Steve is hoping a brand new website and cider shop venture at the family home at Dafarn Dywyrch, near Llandegla, will bring his product to an even bigger audience.

He has been backed to set up the new website, [www.rosiestripled cider.co.uk](http://www.rosiestripled cider.co.uk), by rural regeneration agency Cadwyn Clwyd through their Denbighshire and Flintshire Agri-Food Projects which will provide 80 per cent of the cost and they are keen to recruit more food and forestry producers from Denbighshire to the scheme.

Project Officer Lowri Williams said: "Steve is an excellent example of the kind of innovation, imagination and sheer hard work that makes for a successful business.

"He is making a superb product from local ingredients, grown here on the farm where his family have lived for generations."

This year at the Welsh Perry and Cider Championships at Abergavenny his Wicked Wasp and Triple D medium ciders won first prizes and there were also runners-up awards for Black Bart and Rampant Ram as well as for the new perry – a pear cider.

Black Bart is matured in Barbados rum casks, all the way from the Caribbean, which once held the famous Mount Gay rum while Steve uses whisky barrels for the Wicked Wasp.

Steve and wife Nicola now have 15 acres of apple trees on the farm and produce 50 tons of apples annually which adds up to 5,000 gallons of cider which he presses and bottles himself.

The farm has a long history – Dafarn Dywyrch means Turf Tavern and Charles Darwin is supposed to have stayed there before the Beagle voyage made his name while the eminent Victorian travel writer George Borrow received short shrift from a Hughes ancestor.

Steve said: "He'd learned Welsh and asked for some beer and some cheese but the lady who kept the tavern then, Martha Hughes, refused to serve him and sent him on his way. She refused to believe that an Englishman could speak Welsh."

*Steve Hughes, pictured with Cadwyn Clwyd's Lowri Williams, can access his new website even while out in his orchard.*





# clwydian ranger bus service is back



*Helen Mrowiec from Heather and Hill Forts with Keira Derbyshire from Cadwyn Clwyd, Jamie Sant, Community Rail Officer for the Borderlands Line Steering Group, Peter Daniels, Passenger Transport Section Manager for Denbighshire County Council, David Bloore, Flintshire County Council Senior Transport Officer, and Margaret Owen from M&H Coaches.*

A special summer bus service again opened up the delights of one of North Wales's most scenic areas – and enlisted visitors to the area in a vital conservation project. The Clwydian Ranger Service started again on Sundays in the summer to give passengers easy access to the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and other spectacular parts of North East Wales.

The new range of services started on Sunday, July 4, and will run until Sunday, September 26, including August Bank Holiday Monday,

from a series of gateways into this beautiful area of the country.

Loggerheads Country Park, between Mold and Ruthin, was the focal point for the bus routes which formed a network of summer services bringing the pleasure of destinations as diverse as the Jubilee Tower on Moel Famau, the World Heritage Site of Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Llyn Brenig, high on the Denbigh Moors, within easy reach.

The Clwydian Ranger Bus Service was provided by a partnership between Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham

County Councils in association with the Heather and Hillforts Project and rural regeneration agency Cadwyn Clwyd. One of the prime movers behind the scheme was the Heather and Hillforts project and Project Manager Helen Mrowiec said: "We encouraged users of the service to play their part in protecting this fantastic natural amenity by joining our campaign against illegal off-roaders on motorbikes and 4x4s who are causing huge amounts of damage. "We urged them to pick up a special number readily available on the buses which would

enable them to join with others who use the countryside's wide open spaces, the farmers, ramblers and others, to report the vandals." Cadwyn Clwyd Project Officer Keira Derbyshire said: "We were delighted to be able to play our part in providing this popular leisure bus service again this year by working in partnership with the Heather and Hillforts Campaign, Countryside Services and County Councils and allowing people to use public transport to visit the outstanding heritage and countryside that is on their doorstep this summer."



# radio days – the wireless in wales

In this age of digital TV and satellite transmissions it is difficult to imagine the thrill which 'steam radio' used to generate.

But a special project is recording for posterity those golden days when the pictures were created by the commentators as entire families huddled around primitive receivers in their front rooms.

The oral history project is the latest step in the development of the Wireless in Wales/Gwefr Heb Wifrau museum charitable trust which was established in Denbigh in 2002.

It was the brainchild of former Mayor of Denbigh David Jones with the object of promoting interest in the history of broadcasting in Wales, which he saw as one of the key factors in the survival of the Welsh Language.

Sadly, David, an engineer with the Independent Broadcasting Authority, died of cancer two years ago, just a few weeks before fulfilling his dream of opening a Wireless in Wales exhibition in his home town.

Cadwyn Clwyd Rural Development Agency has given a grant of £4,200 through its Denbighshire Community Heritage Project using funding received through the Rural Development Plan which is financed through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Assembly Government, and further funding has come from Denbighshire County Council and Denbigh Town Council. The exhibition, featuring radios and other equipment which trace the history of broadcasting in Wales, is housed in Canolfan Iaith Clwyd, the Welsh language study centre. David's wife, Vesi, has taken over as the driving-force behind the project and is now chairman of the Trustees who are pressing ahead with the oral history project. Cadwyn Clwyd Community Heritage Project Officer Adam Bishop said: "The late David Jones had gathered together a fascinating collection of radios and equipment from the early days of broadcasting.

"This is a wonderful project that will preserve the memories of those days when the radio was the chief link with the outside world and also with the huge part it has played in preserving and encouraging the Welsh language.

"Oral history is a hugely important resource and the recollections of how people tuned in to news of the great events of those early days and also to their other memories of listening in to favourite programmes will create a



*Wired for sound: from left, Vesi Jones, Clwyd Wynne and Bobi Owen with some of the radios collected in Denbigh.*

priceless historic archive."

Project leader is Clwyd Wynne and another trustee is local historian Bobi Owen, who said: "One of the first religious broadcasts came from St Mary's Church, Denbigh, in 1934. "But people will have their own memories of things such as the Tommy Farr fights, which were listened to by thousands, the ITMA shows during the War and, more recently, Radio Luxemburg and Radio Caroline."





# putting flintshire's food on the map



*Food, glorious food, from left, Elen Jones, of Mabis; Lowri Williams, Cadwyn Clwyd; Rebecca Alfonso, Flints County Council; Fred Boneham, Mold Town Council; Andrea Mearns, Cittaslow; and John Les Tomos, Mold Food Festival and Cadwyn Clwyd Director.*

An ambitious project will put the food of Flintshire into the spotlight – and onto more plates.

The plan is to map out who is producing what and how much and to see how it can best be marketed.

A study carried out by Menter A Busnes, backed by rural regeneration Agency Cadwyn Clwyd, has identified a host of people producing everything from buffalo meat to beer and herbs to honey.

The aim is to find out if Mold could be the hub for Flintshire's food, marketing it to the public and to the region's hotels, restaurants and cafes.

It is a hugely exciting project, according to John Les Thomas, landlord of the Royal Oak, in Hendre, near Mold, and chairman of the successful Mold Food Festival.

He said: "If we're going to encourage local businesses to use local produce then they have to be able to guarantee supply, there has to be quantity, quality and sustainability.

"What we would like to see would be that we can bring all this together under one roof as an outlet in Mold where shoppers can drop in and which attracts visitors to the town and the county.

"Ideally it will also supply hotels and restaurants and perhaps even local schools."

Cadwyn Clwyd has brought together a number of organisations in the project including Mold Town Council, Flintshire County Council and Cittaslow Mold – part of the international network of towns which aims to promote the quality of life.

Cadwyn Clwyd is backing the study through their Flintshire Agri-Food Project and Project Officer Lowri Williams said:

"We want to create a Flintshire food brand that is special, produced and prepared to the highest standards and to show that we really care that the consumer enjoys it and wants to come back for more.

"We want to help them discover the richness, variety and quality that Flintshire has to offer because we have a network of really good food producers and we need to make people aware of this.

"The Mold Food Festival is one of the most popular in North Wales and attracts people from far and wide and we need to build on that success."

The study was conducted by Elen Jones, of MABIS, part of Menter A Busnes which provides specialist support to individuals, businesses, public bodies and community groups that need assistance to develop.

She said: "Consumer demand is rising and people want to know where food comes from and they want to know about the carbon footprint of the food they buy and eat.

"We are also looking at the public sector as a possible market and at how local authorities procure food for schools and hospitals and whether we can meet that demand."



# search on for a new wave of water power

Denbighshire's rivers, lakes and streams could go online again to produce a hydro-electric power revolution. Up to the 1960s many remote farms and estates – even whole villages – harnessed water power to provide electricity and now rural regeneration agency Cadwyn Clwyd wants to revive the practice. They have launched a project to revive small-scale hydro-electric power production in rural Denbighshire and are looking for suitable sites. One of the sites being considered is in the hills above Gwyddelwern at Ty Ucha'r Llyn where Dylan Parry is the sixth generation of his family to farm. His grandfather, Trefor Parry, installed a hydro-power scheme with a turbine driven by water channelled from the lake above the farm. It provided lights for the house as well as powering farm machinery including the milking machine and it even churned the butter which Trefor Parry's wife sold in nearby Corwen. Dylan's father, Ifor, now 77, remembers it well and said: "My father must have put it in in the Thirties – there

were a lot of farms that had hydro schemes in those days because there was no electricity.

"It was marvellous what they could do – they were very inventive."

Cadwyn Clwyd's Energy project Officer Silas Jones has identified a number of sites where hydro power was once used and he said: "There were literally hundreds of them and we want to see how many could still be viable.

"I believe that Llandegla once had the electric lights in the village powered by a local hydro scheme and so did many of the great houses like Rug as well as many farms like Ty Ucha'r Llyn.

"We are looking for sites where old schemes used to operate and for brand new sites. They need a consistent flow of water and a good drop or head of pressure and there is a significant amount of grant funding available for community scale renewable energy projects."

The lake above Ty Ucha'r Llyn is over 16 feet deep in places and has never dried up – even in the heatwave summer of 1976.

A pipe carries water down

to the farm where it was used for the animals – the house was supplied with drinking water from a well that actually comes up inside the property. Ifor Parry recalled: "The turbine was able to chop Swedes and grind corn for animal feed. It even churned the milk for butter and powered the milking machine we got in 1947 as well as lighting the house. "Then my father managed to get hold of old submarine batteries and we used them store the power and that meant the lights worked better and didn't flicker. "You had to be careful with it though because it was a 110 volt DC – direct current – system and could give you a real kick."



*Ifor Parry, left, and Cadwyn Clwyd's Silas Jones.*



# pub goes green by royal appointment

Youngsters in Corwen are gardening by Royal appointment thanks to an enterprising pub landlady. The Eagles Hotel in the town square is turning its back garden into community allotments as part of the Pub Is The Hub scheme backed by Prince Charles.

Landlady Lesley Hughes was inspired by seeing TV chef and environmentalist Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's River Cottage TV programme. She said: "I saw him hold a strawberry fayre with fruit grown at River Cottage and involving the whole community and I thought I'd like to do that."

"The next morning the leaflet came through the door about Pub Is The Hub so we took it from there."

Where she took it was to rural regeneration agency Cadwyn Clwyd who had recently launched the three-year £175,000 project in Denbighshire, first Pub Is The Hub scheme in Wales—Pub Is The Hub, whose patron is Prince Charles, has been running since 2001 in England.

Cadwyn Clwyd Rural Services Officer Helen Roberts said:

"We thought it was a brilliant idea and exactly the sort of community project that Pub Is The Hub is all about."

"Lesley runs what is a very family-orientated pub and her intention is to get everyone involved, young and old, and for the food produced in the allotments to be served up on the menu

in the pub."

Lesley and husband Keith have been at The Eagles for five years and she added: "So much food these days is processed that children don't know where it comes from."

"We want to show them how it gets from seed to plate and we want them to get involved and they've been very enthusiastic and we will have a Children's Gardening Club here on Saturdays in the school holidays."

"We want to involve everyone so we are building raised beds so that older people and the disabled can come along too – we want the whole community to join in and for the more experienced gardeners and growers to pass on their expertise and enthusiasm to the youngsters."

Prince Charles believes rural communities are facing unprecedented challenges and the country pub which, he says, "has been at the heart of village life for centuries, is disappearing in many areas".

He wants to see more pubs offer new services such as a post office or a shop and that's the goal of Cadwyn Clwyd's Helen Roberts who said: "We want the village pub to be at the heart of the community."

"Many pubs are under threat and we want to get the community involved as well as the landlords in thinking about what they can do to save their local."

"This is the first time it has been done in Wales and I know the Prince of Wales is watching it very closely."



*Corwen junior gardener Ella Roberts, watched by friends Elliott Roberts, Lois Watkins, Morgan Jones, Frankie Pierce and Bethany Pierce, with, from left, Helen Roberts, of Cadwyn Clwyd, builders Neil Edwards, Gavin Roberts and Eric Becker, Eagles landlady Lesley Hughes and Ella's mum, Natalie Roberts.*



# glittering career beckons for sarah

All that glitters may not be gold - but it's a business opportunity for Sarah Jackson.

The 25-year-old is turning her talent for creating beautiful jewellery into a business, with a little help from rural regeneration agency Cadwyn Clwyd.

"Basically I had been making jewellery for myself and my friends for a number of years and it stems from that," said Sarah, who lives in the village of Treuddyn, near Mold, with partner Darryl Williams.

"I probably started making jewellery about five years ago. I would go into a shop and either I would like something and it had a huge price tag attached or it was not quite what I wanted and I felt it needed something extra adding.

"I made things for myself and then friends would see me wearing it and ask where I got it and then I would make something for them."

But it was the arrival of baby son Lewys – he was one in February - which made Sarah consider a career for herself, which she could carry on at home and build around her need to care for Lewys.

And so SL Jewellery and Accessories was born, a sophisticated on-line retail business.

Cadwyn Clwyd has stepped in to help Sarah through its Flintshire Enterprise Bursary Scheme, a £130,000 start-up fund to help young people aged 16-30 with a new business or community enterprise.

Sarah, an ex-pupil of Castell Alun High in Hope, said: "I wrote to Cadwyn Clwyd after seeing an article in the local press about the bursaries and they've been a great help."

She has diversified into engraved gifts for weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, christenings, as well as a selection of bags, while her jewellery selection offers wide varieties of sterling silver and costume jewellery accessories. She can also offer gift wrapping and vouchers through her website.

Judging by the glowing commendations of satisfied customers, self-taught Sarah has already made a promising start. Her website is [www.sljewelleryandaccessories.co.uk](http://www.sljewelleryandaccessories.co.uk)

Cadwyn Clwyd Project Officer Sian Roberts said: "We believe everyone has a business idea in them but not everyone has the confidence to try it out.

"Starting out in business is a scary prospect but we can take that fear away by being able to help financially and with expert advice and guidance.

Applicants can ask for up to 80 per cent of the cost of the support they need to a maximum of £1,000 with the remaining 20 per cent to be funded themselves, including using others time as the match funding.

The money can be used to buy equipment or pay for business premises or other services.

In exceptional circumstances the scheme can even consider applications for more than £1,000.



*Cadwyn Clwyd Project Officer  
Sian Roberts with jewellery  
maker Sarah Jackson from  
Treuddyn.*



# pupils leave their mark on heritage project

Deep in the forest something has stirred – the ruins of a 200-year-old shepherd's cottage have emerged from the trees and undergrowth of a wood in North Wales. For almost fifty years the walls of the building and its adjoining walled paddock were cloaked by the pine and spruce plantations of Coed Nercwys but now they have re-emerged as a reminder of the area's farming heritage.

Children from the nearby Nercwys Primary School have been involved in the project by the Clwydian Range Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Forestry Commission and rural regeneration agency Cadwyn Clwyd,

Now the pupils have left their own mark on the area's history by burying a time capsule within the restored walls – in it are pictures and information about each of them for future generations to discover.

Leading the project in the 25th year of the AONB is Countryside Officer David Shiel who said: "Four years ago these were just derelict walls but before the forest was planted in 1964 this was open moorland and right on the crest of the hill was an old shepherd's cottage.

"The crop of trees was taken out by the Forestry Commission and we began restoring the old walls and our aim is to make a wild flower meadow."

The work on the walls has been done by local craftsmen led by Richard Jones of Countryside Skills, who said: "We even found a few things the original builders had left behind 200 years ago, an old wall hammer and a tiny comb which was probably for use on a moustache.

"We actually put our own capsule in as well with all the coins from a 1p to a £2 and a walling hammer of our own."

Project Officer Keira Derbyshire said: "This project opens a door to the past and shows how Coed Nercwys has developed



"It is particularly important the way local schools have played a part in the restoration and in leaving their own mark for future generations."

Flintshire County Councillor and chair of the Clwydian Range AONB joint advisory committee Carolyn Thomas said: "I've been walking here for the past ten years and it is a beautiful place with a fascinating history. "This restoration project really adds to our picture of what was here before."

Another with memories of the area, which was known as Mynydd Bugail or Shepherd's

Mountain, was Ray Davies, now 89, of Mold who said: "I used to come here nearly 80 years ago collecting whinberries to sell in Mold.

"It's great to see it restored again. There used to be lots of curlews, you would see 20 or 30 at a time and hear them calling – it would be nice to see them back too."



*Nercwys School pupil Sophie with the time capsule watched by her friends.*



# web walks celebrate a flintshire great

Walkers retracing the footsteps of famous 18th century Flintshire figure Thomas Pennant have a new online aid to their rambles.

The well-known Pennant Walks around Whitford now have their own bilingual website complete with interactive guides at [www.cymdeithasthomaspennant.com](http://www.cymdeithasthomaspennant.com).

It is the brainchild of the Thomas Pennant Society, the group founded in 1990 to commemorate the achievements of the traveller, naturalist and scientist who inspired Darwin. Local historian Paul Brighton said: "We want to promote interest in Thomas Pennant and enable more people to enjoy the five walks created in his name through what we call Pennant Country around Whitford.

"He was an interesting and fascinating man and there is growing interest in him. Simon Schama included his description of his Tour of Wales in his History of Britain. "Pennant rubbed shoulders with many of the great and the good of the 18th century. He met Voltaire in France and knew Sir Joseph Banks and the great industrialists John Wilkinson and Thomas Williams."

The website has been created by Mike Roberts, of web design company Delwedd, thanks to a £5,000 grant from rural regeneration agency Cadwyn Clwyd through their Flintshire Footpaths Project.

Mike Roberts said: "Visitors to the website can look at the routes and download and print them out, there is an embedded Google map of each walk page which you can zoom in and out of using Google Earth and the Society members can update information on the site.

"Using handheld I-phones and Blackberries you can even carry all the information with you as you walk and each walk has a Flickr album for uploading pictures which can even be done there and then from a mobile phone.

"We want to encourage people who enjoy these walks to share their experiences through comments and pictures – it should be a whole new walking experience."

The website was launched at a special event at Holywell when local historian the Rev Bill Pritchard gave a talk on Pennant's Tour of Europe in 1765 and Mike Roberts gave a demonstration of the website.

The Thomas Pennant Society was formed in 1990 after a group of friends came across the neglected grave of Moses Griffith, an artist who accompanied Pennant on his travels, in the churchyard at Whitford.

They raised £3,000 to tidy the grave and in 1996, the 200th



anniversary of the publication of his best-known book *The History of the Parishes of Whitford and Holywell*, the five walks covering 26 miles were plotted and an annual lecture organised.

*Mike and Jen Roberts of Delwedd with members of the Thomas Pennant Society, from left, Norman Closs Parry, chairman; Mike Chinery, Meirion Griffith, Dr Goronwy Wynne, president; Ryan Jenner, and Paul Brighton.*