



Elenydd Wilderness Hostels

Hosteli Unigeddau'r Elenydd

Charity Commission Registration number/Rhif Cofrestru Comisiwn Elusennau : 1115946
www.elenydd-hostels.co.uk

Newsletter 11

January 2009

New Year Greetings to all

Hopes had been high of giving news of a safer and smoother approach to Dolgoch in 2009 but alas and alack the weather that has created such a picturesque scene throughout the Elenydd has cruelly conspired to defeat even the Forestry Commission's mighty array of earthmoving machinery. As these notes are penned a thaw has set in and hopes rise but the Trust is dependent upon the contractor - the FC and, all importantly, the weather.

The good news is that both our hostels have topped the 1000 bednight figure - not surprisingly Ty'n Cornel a few less than last year but holding up well alongside our newly acquired Dolgoch. The final totals were Ty'n Cornel 1060 Dolgoch 1268.

LOGOS

The appearance of four of these in the heading to this Newsletter may perhaps have perplexed some, but financial support merits recognition and thanks to the donor organisations. We are pleased to be able to do this by inclusion of their respective logos. Those of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and the European Union need no explanation. The logo on the left hand side is that of Awards for All Wales, an offshoot of the Big Lottery from which Ty'n Cornel received a grant of £3433. Details of how this was spent appeared in Newsletter 8. The logo on the right is that of Communities First, a programme set up by WAG to assist disadvantaged communities in Wales. Again Ty'n Cornel benefited from a grant of £1987 which was spent on the work outlined in Newsletter 9.

Mm, mention of logos - why does the Trust not have one? So -

ELENYDD LOGO COMPETITION

Can you help design a logo for the Trust? We are looking for something which can be used on the website and all official Trust documents. The prize is a consecutive two night stay for two at either hostel. Entries should be submitted to Steve Griffiths either by email steve.y.griffith@royalmail.co.uk or by post to 26 Claignar Gardens London N3 2HR by the closing date 1st March.

DOLGOCH

In our last Newsletter we requested people's views on the use of gas and electricity at the hostel which produced a helpful response from a number of you.

The Trustees at a meeting called to discuss these issues and after considering the input of readers made the following decisions :-

1. To keep the gas lighting on the ground floor as presently fitted
2. To install battery served electric lighting on the stairwell. We are grateful to Arthur Osborne for carrying out the work which does now eliminate the inevitable health and safety hazard of negotiating an unlit staircase.
3. Lighting in the dormitories would be limited to the use of hand torches and a number of these have been supplied by Arthur.
4. To install free standing photo-voltaic panels behind the corrugated iron barn to provide electricity for
 - (i) UV water filter
 - (ii) ventilation for the new showers
 - (iii) ignition for the new gas boiler - the latter will provide hot water during periods of low sunlight
 - (iv) any excess power to be used for clothes drying

DOLGOCH PROJECT

Our Project Manager Peter Gregory and Administrator Christine McLafferty have been heavily involved in behind the scenes work in obtaining quotes for the first stage work on the hostel which involves reroofing the main hostel building including the lower lean to roof and also the adjoining barn using so far as possible existing materials. Doors and windows will also receive attention or, replacement in the case of the bedroom at the far end of the building. Quotes have been received and considered and appointment of the chosen contractor made. Commencement of work is imminent.

TY'N CORNEL

Readers' attention is drawn to a four page article by journalist Jane Macnamee in the current(February) issue of "tgo", The Great Outdoors magazine. This paints a vivid and appealing word picture of the hostel and the surrounding countryside backed by some superb photographs. Acquire a copy if you can.

Previous Newsletters have given some idea of the works of maintenance and improvement hostel manager Richard Hollins has overseen, carried out or, where professional expertise was needed, planned the work's execution. Richard though asked, was too modest to summarise the achievements he was principally responsible for. However, to give an idea of how constant heed to the hostel's needs is required we list a few of the many jobs attended to between September and December of last year:-

fitting sheet insulation in sloping attic, building storage cupboard above fridge, 3 bunk ladders fitted, Welsh language signs fitted, indoor gloss painting, hand-built wooden seat for porch, hedge trimming as well as numerous routine jobs like changing the bedding and arranging laundering, cleaning indoors and outdoors.

Richard is grateful for the help he receives from working parties, individuals and dedicated wardens but he and the Trustees would like to see more of you involved. A volunteer to take

on the task of compiling a list of volunteers and would be volunteers and a note of their skills would be a great start! Is there anyone out there prepared to do this?

CHRISTMAS CARDS

These provided another success story for the Trust. All cards were sold producing a profit of nearly £400. Our grateful thanks go to Frances Passey who was alone responsible for making them available and also to those who purchased them. Frances has now set her sights on a set of postcards.

WARDENS' TRAINING COURSE

Local man and historian John Morgan has an intimate knowledge of the former farms and other buildings in the area of our hostels. Many of these sadly are now only piles of stones. John has kindly agreed to give a talk and presentation at Ty'n Cornel on the Saturday evening about the old dwellings some of which one inevitably stumbles across when walking in the Elenydd and will undoubtedly provide us with a fascinating glimpse into the past and a way of life few will remember.

First overnight on the Friday evening will be at Dolgoch provided Project building work does not preclude it. Trainees will transfer to Ty'n Cornel late Saturday afternoon for the talk and completion of the course on Sunday. There are places still available on the course. Anyone wishing to take part in the course should contact Marilyn Barrack as soon as possible. Those interested in a future course are encouraged to give their names, postal/email addresses and phone number to Marilyn so that they can be contacted when one is set up.

WARDENS

There are still gaps for both hostels so those qualified who wish to take up a slot please contact Joan Meek (01283 537440) or Marilyn Barrack (02920 732289) or warden@elenydd-hostels.co.uk

It is essential that all wardens who have not already done so supply 3 passport type photos to Russ Johnson, 1 Gordon Road, Horndon on the Hill, Stanford le Hope, Essex SS17 8NP (tel. 01375 675999). Russ has requested that these be sent after the 28th February.

Out of season (November - March) usage of our hostels is generally limited to weekends. A few people have expressed interest in wardening for a weekend. Whilst this is not appropriate during the high season (April - September) the Trustees feel that it would be advantageous both from the hostellers' and the Trust's point of view for hostels to be wardened over weekends (Friday and Saturday) in the low season. Accordingly the Trust would be delighted to hear from anyone interested in doing so. Again please contact Joan Meek or Marilyn Barrack as above.

HERITAGE

Our Trust we venture to say is, in a small way, making history and we boldly predict will continue to do so. However, our hostels already have their own history, pre Elenydd Trust and pre YHA. There are items we know of giving an insight into their past, but how easy for these to be forgotten and lost forever. Happily our Member David Lukes, who first raised the matter, has "volunteered" to take on the position of "Trust Archivist".

David aims to create archive files to store copies of all relevant items but of course he does need help. Members and others are urged to send or notify him of anything that they have or know of which is of historic interest or may become so. Thus in the not too distant future

when visiting the hostels you may be able to glance through an account of the opening of Ty'n Cornel as a Youth Hostel in 1960 or read a fascinating letter written in 1944 by a girl in the Women's Land Army working at Dolgoch. Those of you who can, please help David in his quest. His address is 11 Dunvegan Way, Bedford, MK41 8PE.

Tel. 01234 364363 Email david.lukes@ntlworld.com

SPONSORED WALK

Jeffrey Matthews has again agreed to organise this year's walk which will take place on July 18th. Full particulars when known will appear on the Trust's website and in the May Newsletter.

TWM SIÔN CATI QUATERCENTENARY CHALLENGE WALK

On the 16th May Clwb Cerdded Crwydro Caron Walking Club will be organising a walk in celebration of the life of the Welsh folk hero Thomas Jones of Tregaron (Twm Siôn Cati) who died in 1609. The walk will begin at Twm's cave in Rhandirmwyn and finish at his home in Tregaron. Ty'n Cornel will be a staging post on the walk.

Publicity for the Trust and its hostels, particularly Ty'n Cornel, was very much in the minds of the organisers when planning the walk. A thank you by way of help and support for the event would we feel sure, be appreciated.

Full details including entry forms are available at www.walktregaron.co.uk or by telephone 01974 298150.

FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF

Mention was made in Newsletter 10 of "The Spirit of YHA". The book provides an excellent photographic record of the YHA's earlier hostels as well as an interesting and comprehensive history of the YHA's formation and growth. For those who enjoy dipping into the past the Trustees can thoroughly recommend its purchase at £20 post free - telephone 01629 592700. All profits go to the YHA Small Hostels Fund.

BOOKINGS

A reminder that these can be made through the YHA's Contact Centre on 08707708863 or on line at www.yhabooking.org.uk Bookings less than seven days ahead should be made through our member Chris Mason telephone 0178 2253274.

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 21 st February	Trustees Meeting at Tetbury
21 st and 22 nd March	Wardens' Training Weekend at the two hostels
Sunday 5 th April at 10.30am	Committee Meeting at Dolgoch open to all
Saturday 6 th June at 11am	Annual General Meeting at the Village Hall, Llanddewi Brefi followed by an open afternoon at Ty'n Cornel
Saturday 18 th July	Sponsored Walk

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