



Hosteli Unigeddau'r Elenydd

Elenydd Wilderness Hostels

Rhif Cofrestru Comisiwn Elusennau / Charity Commission Registration number: 1115946
www.elenydd-hostels.co.uk Swyddfa Gofrestredig / Registered Office: 7 Azalea Close Cyncoed Cardiff CF23 7HR Llywydd / President:
Trevor Fishlock

NEWSLETTER 31 - SPRING 2018

Celebrations to mark the 10TH anniversary of Dolgoch

Last November we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Trust purchasing Dolgoch. The precise date of the anniversary was Thursday 9th November 2017, but the main celebrations took place on the following Sunday when a large number of members and Trustees were present.



Central to the celebrations was an excellent decorated cake supplied by Nicky. Nicky also supplied some interesting photos of the hostel and some of the various members who have been involved in Dolgoch over the past decade.

Photographs of the building from 2007 show what a massive undertaking it was for the Trust to acquire Dolgoch. (see the before and after photos below) In the 2007 photo the sagging barn roof is evident.

There were also pictures displayed which show the major work done on the access track.



2007



2017

Dolgoch has improved out of all recognition over the past 10 years and goes from strength to strength. Last year we had over 1,700 overnights and seem likely to reach a similar total this year. Whilst we do not have accurate figures for the whole of the period, it is certain that we have provided over 10,000 overnight stays for hostellers over the last decade.



Di Bell, Marilyn Barrack, Bill Hine

Dolgoch owes its success to the energy and vision of the members of the Trust who acquired it back in 2007. We were fortunate to have two of these “pioneers” at the celebrations, namely Marilyn and Bill.

~ Colin Hughes, Dolgoch manager

News from Ty'n Cornel

There was good occupancy at Ty'n Cornel in 2017, with more bed nights since the high numbers in 2013. Most of the increase since 2016 has been in private-room and whole hostel bookings. There is excellent news about the water supply as it has passed all the Council's recent tests. That means the acidity is in the correct range and there have been no harmful bacteria in the kitchen water since 2009 when the UV filter was fitted. A new vehicle gate has been installed on the track to the south of the hostel to stop sheep getting into the hostel grounds.



The new woodburning stove and its surround look very attractive and work well, with the common room much more comfortable in winter. And the new table looks very smart too.

~ Richard Hollins, Ty'n Cornel manager.

Cambrian Mountains Initiative



There is a recognition that the Cambrian Mountains are a special area and they almost became a National Park in 1972. However, due to local opposition the order to create them was not confirmed by the then Secretary of State. More recently the Cambrian Mountains Society (<http://cambrian-mountains.co.uk>) has been campaigning for many years for the area to be given 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' status. This has not yet happened and now there is a different project underway to promote a regional identity for the Cambrian Mountains.

The current proposal is looking into a designation as a Parc Naturel. There are 51 of these in France plus Parcs in 22 other countries. The idea is that development and the environment are on an equal footing and that communities, landowners and

organizations come together to write a charter for the region to promote a regional identity and brand. The aims include attracting more visitors to the area and improving markets for

agricultural products. The latter has already started to happen with the promotion of Cambrian wool and lamb.

A tourist map of the area is planned and local businesses could pay to be included on the map. There are many other ideas that could be developed and a series of meetings were held in February to publicize the project.

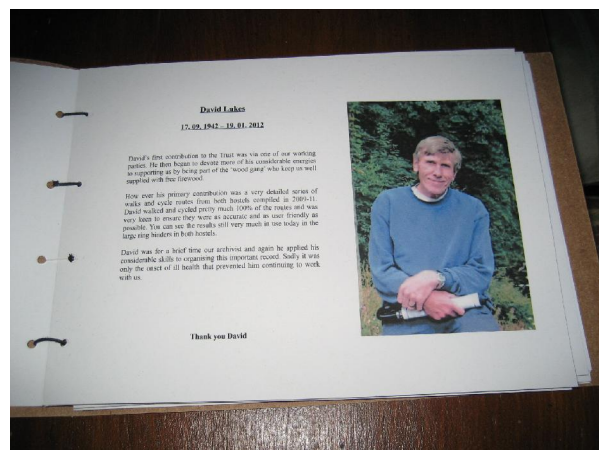
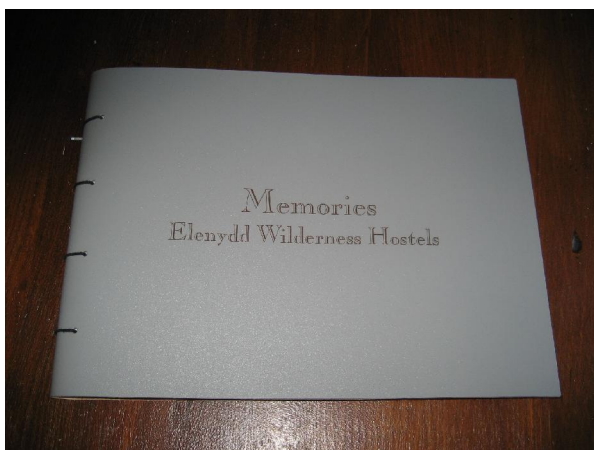
<https://www.facebook.com/VisitCambrianMountains>

The project is being co-ordinated by Dafydd Wyn Morgan and Esther Wakeling and is still in its early stages. Look out for more news and developments and come to our AGM on the 7th July, when after lunch at Dolgoch, Esther will explain more about the project.

Memory Books

Next time you visit Dolgoch or Ty'n Cornel, have a look at the Memory Book that has recently been compiled – there is one at each hostel. The book acknowledges the valuable contributions made to the Trust by members who are very sadly no longer alive. What a wonderful way to remember these special people, and the variety of ways that they helped the Elenydd hostels.

Thanks to Pearl Chalk for co-ordinating this.



A Holly Tree

There are some great old trees in the Doethie valley within a few miles of Ty'n Cornel. In early January this year I had visited some aged and gnarled alders on the wet slopes above the river to collect seed to grow and plant back on the streamside. Back in November 2015 the West Wales Rivers Trust had organised the planting of over a thousand native trees in patches along a 4 mile stretch of the Doethie Fawr by volunteers, including some EWH wardens, to help encourage the return of the salmon, and I had been able to add some of these young alders.

I was making my way upstream towards the hostel, trying to resist the temptation to collect more crab apples from the scattering of apple trees up the valley, heading for the holly tree I had visited each winter for many years to collect berries. There are only two wild holly trees in the area as far as I know: a female tree whose berries have proved very fertile, and a few yards upstream on the other side, a male tree. All the holly growing at Dolgoch and Ty'n Cornel, some of them in the new hedges, are offspring of this 'mother tree'. Holly is one of our few native evergreens, and, slow-growing and shade-tolerant, it can form wonderful dense hedges. The foliage used to be cut to feed animals in the winter.

I had arrived at the place below the ruins of Dinas about a mile and a half downstream of Ty'n Cornel: imagine my surprise to find that the old holly tree was no longer standing upright on the

bank but was lying across the river, the roots torn out, and the glossy green foliage now brown and withered and dead.

In January 2017 the beautiful old 'mother tree' had been absolutely covered with bright red berries and I had collected pocketfuls. Each berry has four seeds packed in it in segments and they have to be 'stratified' (kept outside in pots of soil) for at least 15 months to break their dormancy. I shall be sowing these soon and hoping to put some back beside the Doethie Fawr. The sheep have a different agenda, and, sadly, one of our neighbours will not allow planting of trees on his side of the river, so things are not easy for them. I am hoping that some parts of the old holly will shoot back up on the steep bank above the river.

On another wildlife topic, surveys have shown just a handful of pine martens in mid-Wales, so for the past three years the Vincent Wildlife Trust has had a project to release additional pine martens into carefully selected locations in the area. The animals have radio collars so that they can be tracked and there are cameras to record the activities of these delightful creatures. Lots more information from their website and blog:

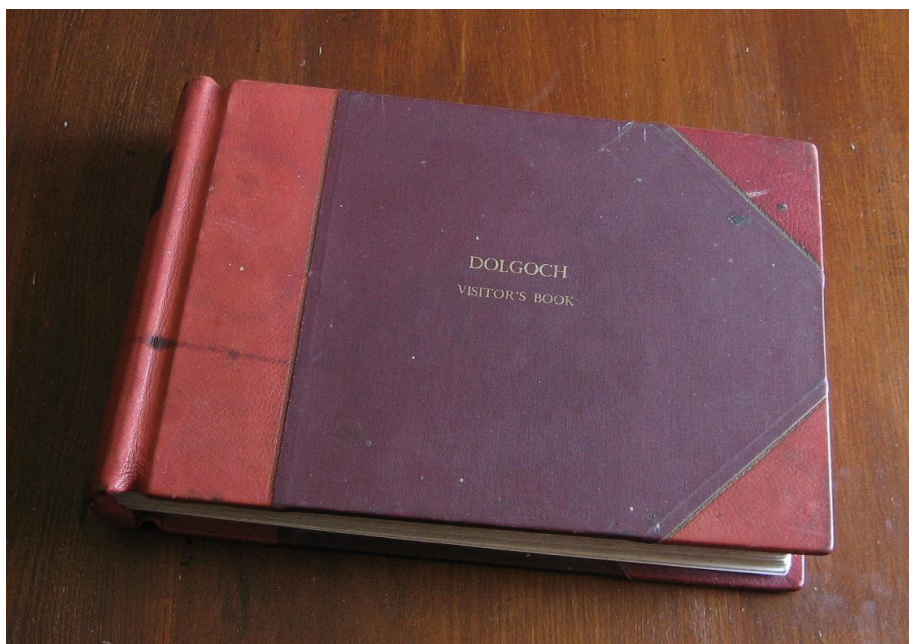
<http://www.pine-marten-recovery-project.org.uk/news/final-pine-martens-released-in-wales>

~ Bill Hine, March 2018

Our publicity and membership leaflet has recently been updated and reprinted, including some new photos and a refresh of the design. Copies are now at both the hostels and more are available from Marilyn Barrack. We have done quite a small print run this time, so that they can more easily be kept up to date.

Visitors' Books

When the Trust took over the running of Dolgoch and Ty'n Cornel hostels Arthur Green, one of our members, very kindly made each hostel a beautiful traditionally bound visitors' book. These books are works of art with leather covers, marbled end-papers and thick pages inside. Now after 10 years, the one at Dolgoch is full, so thank you very much Arthur. Arthur is currently working on a replacement. The books are a wonderful record of the people who have visited our hostels and it is a joy to turn the pages and read the many and varied comments.



Green Vouchers

New! To encourage greener travel and reduce carbon emissions, the Trust has just introduced a discount scheme. If you travel to our hostels on foot or by bicycle, you will be offered a green discount voucher. The voucher entitles you to a **half-price night** on a subsequent visit to either hostel.

We are hoping this will encourage more visitors to arrive 'under their own steam' (including by electric bike) in line with our environmental policy of trying to reduce our carbon footprint.

Valid for a year, from one month after your original visit. The return visit must be booked directly with either Richard/Janet 01980 629 259, email tyncornel.bookings@btinternet.com (for Ty'n Cornel) or Gill 01440 730226, email gill.keen@dolgoch.org (for Dolgoch).

There are great walks from Cynghordy or Llanwrtyd stations to the hostels, and lovely bike rides from Llandovery or Aberystwyth stations for example. Or get the bus to Tregaron or Llanddewi Brefi. (See www.traveline.cymru) So get your diaries out and start planning...

Full details and conditions are on the back of the vouchers or can be obtained from Richard or Gill.

Dates for you diary

Sat 12th May 2018	Open meeting Ty'n Cornel	All welcome
Sat 7th July 2018	AGM at the Talbot Tregaron	Please note that bookings for Friday 6 th and Saturday 7 th July cannot be made online – they can only be made by contacting Marilyn Barrack: barglam@yahoo.co.uk tel. 02920 732289
Sun 8th July 2018	Open meeting Dolgoch	All welcome

For subsequent dates in 2018, please look on the Elenydd Hostels website.

*Minutes of the open meetings are available to all members – please contact Janet Hollins:
email: janet.hollins@btinternet.com tel: 01980 629259*

And most importantly, come and stay at the hostels this spring and summer! It's easy to book on the Trust's website at

<http://www.elenydd-hostels.co.uk/en/booking>



