

Report from the Secretary and Committee Officers 2024

We have had a busy year since last year's AGM. Here's a snapshot:

At the start of the summer Francis Morgan edited the summer edition of **The Dy'vorian** magazine before stepping down from the role in order to focus on writing and photographing all 500 species of birds in Arizona for what will be an impressive coffee-table book. We are very appreciative of the time he has given to the role and for permitting the use of his template for use by Brynymor Digital Press for future editions.

You may recall, the ODA received an exceptionally generous £32,000 donation from an ODA member, Year of 1967. Throughout the summer ideas were discussed on how best to utilise the donation resulting in plans to invite four Primary Schools, St Helens', Sea View, Terrace Road and Townhill to participate in the Dynevor Days Initiative, with the latter school as a guest. In September the schools were invited to participate in the first of the three years that the initiative will run, ensuring Year 6 pupils would have an opportunity to enjoy an outdoor learning experience, funded by the donation, commencing in the academic year 2023-4. A fifth school, St Thomas, was added as a guest as the term progressed. In addition, ten waterproof cameras were purchased by the donor and two delivered to each of the participating schools to ensure pupils and staff wouldn't risk damaging their phones on outdoor expeditions. To enhance the educational opportunity provided by the outdoor learning experience, a [website](#) has been designed paid for with additional funding by the donor, in order that pupils can follow up on their experiences by uploading photographs, written material and art-work etc. Recently, discussion has been underway to extend the website's functionality to enable ODA members to add their memories of the trips and visits they made when they were pupils at Dynevor. You will be notified of this as soon as there's news.

Early in September ODA members and non-member past pupils from the late 1970s to the late 1990s enjoyed a **Music Night** at the Wig and Pen, Swansea, organised by Jeff Vaughan. Finding a venue with exclusive access proved impossible, but with a section of the venue reserved for us, we could all sit together to enjoy the entertainment. Buttonsville opened the evening followed by the Dynevor Scratchband who despite missing key musicians did us proud.

The **Joint Annual Lecture** returned to our calendar of events in October. The 'lecture' attendees were treated to a superb concert by Past President Mal Pope on his '50th Year Jubilee'. The event this time was organised by staff at the UWTSW in conjunction with the ODA. The ODA thanked Mal by making a £100 donation to his preferred charity: Everyone Deserves a Christmas.

The **ODA Annual Lecture** followed in November and was delivered by Past President Stuart Batcup on 'Thistleboon House: Why, When and How?' Again, the ODA thanked Stuart for his time by making a £100 donation to All Saints Church, Mumbles, the charity of Stuart's choice.

In January the 44th edition of **The Dy'vorian** was published, which, given we didn't have an editor to take over from Francis Morgan was a feat in itself. Andrew Clemes worked as copy editor, Pam Bashford as acquiring editor and overall editor on TOD 44. Articles were collated at Brynymor Digital Press, by Ben who was educated at Dynevor, not as a pupil but as an undergraduate. Prof. Ian Walsh, Provost at UWTSW Swansea, generously covered the cost of printing **this** edition.

A Coffee Morning was held in Dynevor Café later in January 2024, once again for ODA members and non-member Dynevor pupils and staff. Attendance was disappointing in part due to an earlier than planned kick-off time for the Swansea match arranged to fit in with programme scheduling. A couple of regular non-members are keen to continue organising the event, so we will consider trying one more coffee morning later in the year in order to gauge interest.

Early in March Hywel Davies, ODA President, presented a cheque for £100 on behalf of the ODA at a youth club at the YMCA held for **Young Carers Swansea**. The sum will be used to provide a pizza evening and quiz night for the children. Without a club such as this they would have limited time to spend with peers outside of home.

The **Annual Lecture for 2024** held in March was delivered by Peter Phillips, a former Deputy Head at Dynevor, on 'Place and Person: Peter Goes to Prison from Dynevor'. Peter requested the £100 donation from the Association be made to the Swansea branch of The Samaritans, where he is Director.

In April, before the AGM, Hywel Davies will present the **President's Award** to five very worthy UWTSD students at Dynevor. Each student has overcome significant challenges in order to complete their course and will receive £300 each.

With the **Golf Day** and **Annual Dinner** in May and plans afoot for further activities later in the year, including the Joint Lecture in October, the committee is constantly busy, but more has gone on behind the scenes.

Phil Stone oversees the use of **Zoom** and, more recently, **Teams**. **Zoom** facilitates communication between ODA members and committee meetings. **Teams** is utilised for all university-based meetings and lectures; however, it has not been a smooth transition. We are working towards improving the experience.

Communication using Mailchimp has been enhanced by Robert Treharne Jones. His skills in the use of the technology far surpass those of your secretary! Monthly news and updates are now circulated, keeping ODA members informed. If you are not receiving these emails, and wish to subscribe, please contact Pam Bashford on pam_bashford@hotmail.com

News is also shared with ODA members and non-members by Steve Way who regularly posts on **Facebook**. Very pleasingly the number of 'followers' has increased over the year by 38, and at the time of writing stands at 625, significantly higher than our current membership.

Membership: It is inevitable that as years pass since Dynevor School closed, membership numbers will decline, however, your committee continues to work hard engaging with members and non-members through events throughout the year.

The **Dynevor Revisited website** continues to be administered on a day-to-day basis by Pam Bashford and Phil Stone resulting in items being uploaded in a timely manner. Additionally, their input has reduced the hours spent, and billed for, by the webmaster. Last summer all editions of TOD were password protected, with only members being able to access the magazines. There has been a recent change to the menu structure of the website. 'Photographs' with a drop-down menu, includes Find Your Years, Runions and Annual Dinners, along with a new section of photos from as yet Unidentified Years. This last section will ensure photographs of pupils and events are preserved for the future. A number of requests for assistance to locate information on deceased family members has been received. The most recent, on Charles Shoemake, Year of 1933, was researched by Tudor Price. As a

result, Charles' name is to be added to the WW2 Roll of Honour at the school; he sadly died at the age of 22, in Burma, as a prisoner of war.

As Hon. Sec. to the Association, I wish to end this report by thanking Committee Members for their time and hard work this past year; without them we would not have such a vibrant, forward-looking Association. Nihil Sine Labore!